

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

UNAPPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 8 December 2015 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Biddenden

Present: Cllr C Friend (Chair) Cllr A Lidgett
 Cllr D Boulding Cllr S Parks
 Cllr P Harris Cllr J Tydeman

19 Parishioners attended.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that item 9. Co-option, would be taken just before item 15. Staffing. This was **agreed**.

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr E Cansdale due to personal commitments
Cllr E. Stevenson Rouse due to illness

2. Parishioners' questions

Parishioners asked questions regarding their concerns relating to the Syrian refugees being taken in by Ashford Borough Council and the possibility of a family living in Biddenden. Concerns were expressed regarding housing, jobs and education. Cllr Bell stated that none of the Ashford council housing or housing association homes would be used for Syrian refugee families. The borough council was looking for private rental properties, ie private landlords. It was not a certainty that any Syrian refugee family would be settled in Biddenden mainly because the specific help and services they would require are not easily accessible in Biddenden.

Other questions included:

- a) The broken barrier in the PO Car Park – *This is being dealt with and repairs will take place shortly.*
- b) Dog mess – there has been an increase in dog mess on the footpath in Cheeselands. *Dog waste bags are available from the Post Office. A notice is going into the Parish Magazine.*
- c) There have not been any PCSO surgeries since the new PCSO started. *The Clerk will contact the PCSO to ask when these will take place.*

3. Any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

Cllr Lidgett declared a personal interest in planning application 15/01478/AS as the property is located in the same road.

4. Any changes to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

None.

5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 November 2015

There being no further comments or amendments to the minutes, the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November were deemed to be a true and proper record.

Proposed by: Cllr A Lidgett Seconded by: Cllr J Tydeman. **Unanimous.**

6. Matters for information not on the agenda

None.

7. Report by Cllr Bell, ABC

Ashford Borough Council charges less council tax than any other local authority in Kent. However, it should be noted that the council tax in Ashford Borough is likely to rise.

The Government has announced that its intention is that government funding for councils should be zero in a few years' time. That is why ABC have set up a property company which buys property in order to rent to the private rentals market in order to raise capital to help plug the hole caused by the reduction in funding. This will have no impact on either council housing or housing association properties as these properties are not dealt with by the property company.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Bell and asked if there were any questions. There were no further questions. Cllr Bell took his leave of the meeting stating that if any of the parishioners attending wished to speak to him outside the meeting they were welcome to do so.

8. Ashford Borough Council Local Plan to 2030 - Site submissions for Biddenden

An Open Meeting was held in the Village Hall on Saturday 21 November from 10 am – 1 pm. The prospective developers for sites BD4 and BD8 each provided displays and representatives to talk to parishioners about each prospective development. It is stressed that no decision has been made by ABC or the Parish Council in favour of either developer. Parishioners were able to write comments and put them in a Comments Box. Feedback from ABC has been received and circulated to councillors. The information was noted and **it was agreed** to wait until plans were submitted.

9. Co-option

This item was taken before item 15.

10. Reports by Clerk, Group Chairmen and Parish Council Representatives

Car Park, Toilets and Post Office: The Clerk has asked ABC if the Toilet Grant could be reapplied for but was told that the grant was ending and could not be reapplied for under the previous arrangement. The last email implied that the grant was stopping for all.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: The contractors have been chased up to find out when they will be back to complete the tree works. A reply is awaited.

Quotations have been requested for the work on the potholes in the top section of the Millennium Field car park.

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: Discussions are ongoing with KCC regarding reinstating a stile on land behind Mansion House Close.

The Post Office now has a supply of dog bags and an article about dog mess has gone to the parish magazine.

A meeting has been arranged for 14th January with KCC regarding the traffic flow around the village green.

Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area: Copies of the leases with the Squash Club, Bowls Club and VHMC have again been sent to VHMC as requested at the last meeting.

Awaiting news from VHMC regarding the increase in car park contribution to £350.

Play Area: A meeting was held on Friday 4 December at 4.30 pm. Documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The analyses of the four quotations was considered, ranging from £51,000 to £113,000. Some changes were asked of the contractor who submitted the lowest quotation. The changes increased the amount to £54,526, inclusive of a discount applied. This may impact upon the BPC contribution. After careful consideration, **it was agreed** to progress the plans with this contractor. **It was agreed** that the Clerk should write to previous clients for references and to look at the company finances. Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr D Boulding. **Unanimous.**

A number of possibilities for grant applications was discussed in order to raise funds.

The quotation for renewing the mowing contract has arrived and another quote is being sought for comparison.

Planning and Local Housing: The development on the garage site at The Weavers went to the Planning Committee and has been approved.

Police Liaison and Neighbourhood Watch: There were 7 crimes reported in October 2015

Anti-Social Behaviour	1
Criminal Damage & Arson	1
Vehicle Crime	1

The offensive sign on the Tenterden Road has been removed.

Neighbourhood Watch: Nothing further to report.

KALC: Chairman and Clerk to attend a LGPS (Local Government Pension Scheme) Workshop on 26th January to find out more information regarding pension schemes due to new workplace pension regulation.

An Extraordinary meeting of Ashford KALC will be held on 9 December.

Parish & Urban Forum: Nothing to report.

Recycling: Cheques have been written and sent to successful applicants following the last meeting.

Village Hall Management Committee: The next meeting is on 10 December and VHMC will be considering the £50 pa increase to the car park contribution.

Health and Safety: Nothing to report.

Allotments: Nothing to report.

John Mayne School: The December newsletter had been circulated.

11. Finance

a) Approval of cheques for payment. **Agreed.**

b) Note accounts to 30 November 2015. Noted

c) Budget 2016/17 – The Finance Committee minutes of 1 December 2015 were noted and its recommendations for the acceptance of the 2016/17 budget as put forward. It was noted that the precept had been increased by 3% per annum. Proposed by: Cllr J Tydeman Seconded by: Cllr P Harris. **Unanimous.**

After consideration of the above, **it was agreed** to accept the budget for 2016/17 as presented. Proposed by: Cllr P Harris Seconded by: Cllr J Tydeman. **Unanimous.**

12. Planning – to note decisions and any plans tabled

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Support
15/01478/AS	Biddenden	Agricultural building south of Tatu Barn, High Halden Road, Biddenden, Kent Prior approval for change of use of part of an agricultural barn to one dwelling house	Object as no plans available to view
15/01548/AS	Biddenden	Guy House, River Hall Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8JF Prior approval for change of use of agricultural building to a dwelling and associated operational development	Support
15/01552/AS Full Planning Permission	Biddenden	20 High Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AH Erection of a two storey rear extension and internal alterations of utility room and W/C to ground floor and ensuite to second floor as well as velux windows to rear elevation.	Support
15/01553/AS Listed Building Consent	Biddenden	20 High Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AH Erection of a two storey rear extension and internal alterations of utility room and W/C to ground floor and ensuite to second floor as well as velux windows to rear elevation.	Support

13. Correspondence

The Correspondence list was presented. There were no comments or questions.

14. Items for future consideration

Model Publications Scheme
Risk Assessment
Business Continuity Plan

9. Co-option

Mr Tim Bizley had put himself forward for co-option to the council. He was invited to talk about himself and why he wished to become a councillor. Councillors asked questions. Mr Bizley left the room whilst a vote was taken. The vote was unanimous and Mr Bizley was duly co-opted to the council.

15. Staffing (The meeting was closed to the public)

The Clerk had carried out an appraisal with the cleaner on 4 December 2015. The work

carried out during the year had been excellent and a pay increase of 3% recommended to start from 1 January 2016. Proposed by: Cllr D Boulding Seconded by: Cllr J Tydeman.
Unanimous.

It was also recommended that a Christmas Bonus of £25 be paid. Proposed by: Cllr A Lidgett
Seconded by: Cllr S Parks. **Unanimous.**

**16. Date of Next Meeting: Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 12 January 2016 at 7.30 pm in the
 Village Hall**

The meeting Closed at 21:10.

Alison Swannick
Parish Clerk

