

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12 April 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Biddenden

Present: Cllr C Friend (Chair) Cllr A Lidgett
 Cllr T Bizley Cllr S Parks
 Cllr E Cansdale Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse
 Cllr P Harris Cllr J Tydeman

1. **Apologies for absence**

Cllr D Boulding due to business commitments.
Cllr Neil Bell, ABC

2. **Parishioners' questions**

- An update was requested regarding the church footpath as it was considered dangerous. *It had been reported but KCC currently do not have the funding available. It will be chased up.*

- It was reported that a two puppies had allegedly been poisoned by ingesting meat on the Millennium Field. *The Clerk will ring the parishioner for details and contact the police.*

3. **Any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda**

None.

4. **Any changes to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests**

None.

5. **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8 March 2016**

There being no comments or amendments to the minutes they were deemed a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Unanimous.**

6. **Matters for information not on the agenda**

It was reported that Mr Cleal had now been added to the council's insurance and could now start maintaining the village green. A letter confirming arrangements would be written to him.

7. Report by Cllr Bell, ABC

No report.

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

Nothing further heard from ABC following the Parish Council's letter. Nothing is likely to be heard until after 21 April.

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

Car Park, Toilets and Post Office: The defibrillator has arrived and has been given to the electrician to fit on the toilet wall. It was noted that the defibrillator needed to be registered with SECAMB.

It was agreed to get the CCTV camera serviced.

It was agreed that the white lines in the car park need repainting and that a quote should be obtained.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: A meeting of the Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow Working Group was held on Monday 4 April. A number of recommendations were made for the Parish Council to consider and draft minutes are attached. Concern was expressed regarding people walking over the bluebells in the woods in order to avoid muddy patches and therefore widening the paths in the process. A notice will be sent to the parish magazine.

The "hornet tree" has been felled. Two other trees have since been noted as requiring felling: one is due to the winds blowing it over and the other is rotted. Concern was also expressed regarding the large tree by the bowls club as there are issues with branches, but these can only be seen from the bowls club side. The Clerk has arranged for a tree surgeon to look at all three trees and provide a quotation for work required.

It was agreed that the Clerk should check insurance before writing another letter giving shooting rights for vermin to the current holder.

The current Entry Level Stewardship Agreement with Natural England expires in November this year. If the parish council wish to continue then they would have to enter into the new Mid Tier agreement. Parish Councils are eligible to apply but it is competitive so not every applicant will be accepted. **It was agreed** that a meeting should be arranged with Natural England to see whether the council was eligible to enter into a new agreement.

A Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow working group meeting was held on 4th April. A number of recommendations were made to the council for work to be done during 2016 as follows:

It is now three years since the hedges were cut. It is agreed that all the hedges in both the MF and JM be cut in Autumn 2016, in line with the three year cycle being followed.

The Dipping platforms will be removed when the field dries out.

Proposed by: Cllr J Tydeman Seconded by: Cllr E Cansdale. **Unanimous.**

Apart from the work outlined above work will concentrate on routine mowing.

It was noted that pedestrians are still not staying to the main path through the woodland area, and that recently a temporary bridge had been constructed. The impact of this is to trash areas of wildflowers, particularly Bluebells in the spring, and endanger the environment we are trying to protect.

It was noted that the lower pond will need dredging and the willows pollarded in 2017/18. It is agreed that funds for this work be included in the Council's budget for 2017/8.

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: New posts have been put in on the verge outside the church.

The issue of parking around the school has been addressed by the police and appears to have improved.

A quotation has been received for work to the large noticeboard by the church. This is currently out of order due to the doors having come open and the Perspex being broken in the doors, presumably during the wind last week. **It was agreed** that a second joiner should be contacted.

It was agreed that in the meantime that the Clerk should purchase a laminator so that notices could still be put on the board.

Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area: Mowing of the Gordon Jones Playing Field has been delayed due to the wet ground. The mowing contractor did try, although the mower got stuck, so they strimmed where they normally would. It is the only pitch that they haven't been able to mow due to it being too wet and they suggested that the drainage needed looking at. I have asked them for a quotation as the only ones received so far have been provided by the football club.

Biddenden Juniors have also passed on details of one scheme to provide drainage to the pitch. However, this would require an interest to be taken on the land if ever sold. The Pitch Improvement Provision people have released £8m for grants and Biddenden Jnrs have applied for their scheme and for other grants. They will keep the PC updated.

The Clerk has contacted the Squash Club again about the drainpipe at the front of the building as all the water from the roof is going straight onto the playing field at the front and is causing waterlogging at the front of the building.

Play Area: The preferred contractor has been contacted and the council's intent to use them acknowledged. A meeting has been arranged between the contractor and the Play Area Working Group to discuss the plans further on 27th April. An application has been made to the Lottery Awards For All scheme. The Clerk was asked to check whether work could take place prior to any award being made

Councillors considered the current funding position.

It was agreed that the council would like the new play area to be in place by the school summer holidays.

It was agreed that the council would fund any shortfall if required. Proposed by: Cllr E Cansdale
Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Unanimous.**

Planning and Local Housing: Nothing to report

Police Liaison and Neighbourhood Watch: A report was read out from PCSO Lee Sinden. The crime statistics from 1st March to 1s April 2016 were:

There were **4** theft by findings in the village:

- Kent police no longer take in found property and would like to encourage people to use social media in order reunite people with their property. This can be done through Facebook pages, twitter, etc..
- There has been **1** incident of Anti-Social Behaviour in the village in the last month. Ashford as a whole has very low levels of ASB.
- The main crimes in the area continue to be thefts and break-ins. These are not occurring in the actual village itself but on the outskirts and in surrounding villages.

He gave advice regarding securing properties:

- Keep front gate closed at all times
- Lock all external doors.
- Spotlights can deter.
- Alarm System- particularly those linked to the police.
- Timer switchers for lights when you are out at night or on holiday.
- Keep windows closed particularly at night in the warmer months.

Residents were reminded to be vigilant at all times and to report any suspicious activity via the Kent police non-emergency number 101. Looking at the records the population of Biddenden is good at reporting suspicious activity. The information may seem small, but it can help build a bigger picture.

Next surgery: 14th April 2016- All Saints Church between 100-1100

Neighbourhood Watch: During October 2015 numerous calls were received about youths begging lifts to Headcorn and asking for money, One theft associated. PCSO requested to attend... did not attend. The following are other recent crimes.

- Burglary The Weavers; attempted at Townland Close
- Recovery of stolen vehicle used in violent robbery nr Rye, dumped in Townland Close
- Egerton robbery with violence
- Tools stolen Swain Rd, St Michaels
- Farm intruders 1.30am this morning Swain Rd St Michaels
- Theft from works van at Village Hall Layby
- Damage to vehicle in Glebelands

A reply had been received from the NHW Liaison officer stating that no extra patrols were necessary due to the lack of danger to life. However, this has now been proved incorrect following the terrible events in Headcorn Road. It was suggested that the lack of visible policing could be linked to increase in local crime.

A letter to the police had been drafted and would be circulated.

KALC: Nothing to report

Parish Forum: The format of future meetings is to be changed into a conference format and will take place during the day from 10 am and ending at 4pm. The first will take place at the Rare Breeds Centre on Wednesday 7th September 2016.

Community Project Fund: A number of applications have been made to the fund and a meeting will be organised to discuss them.

Village Hall Management Committee: Date of next meeting is 11 May at 7.30 pm

Health and Safety: A report had been circulated. Items discussed with the MF and JM Working Group were: Bench, Trees and Dipping Ponds. All these items are being addressed.

Allotments: Tenancy renewal letters have been sent out and allotment rents are now being received.

John Mayne School: The April 2016 newsletter was circulated.

10. Finance

a) Approval of cheques for payment: The payment schedule was agreed. Proposed by: Cllr J Tydeman Seconded by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse. **Unanimous.**

b) Note accounts to 31 March 2016: The accounts were noted. There were no comments or questions. The accounts have been prepared for the internal auditor.

The meeting was closed at 20:50 for refreshments and reopened at 21:00.

11. Planning – to note decisions and any plans tabled

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
16/00351/AS	Biddenden	East Ongley Farmhouse, Ongley lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8HF Erection of part first storey & part second storey rear extension, 2 No. porches to front elevation, dormer windows & ground floor bay windows to rear.	Support
16/00269/AS	Biddenden	Woolpack Corner Farm, Benenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8FD Erection of a temporary dwelling to support existing business	Support
16/00327/AS	Biddenden	Woolpack Corner Farm, Benenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8FD Part retrospective application for the construct a new agricultural storage building. Construction of a driveway. Construct an office and farm shop. Retrospective changes to the external appearance and extension of the existing barn. Retrospective erection of two polytunnels used for turkey rearing. Retrospective improvement to the visibility splay.	Support
16/00364/AS	Biddenden	Little Whatmans, Gribble Bridge Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8DF Prior approval for change of use agricultural barn and land within its curtilage to one dwelling.	Support
16/00466/AS	Biddenden	Frogshole Farm, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EY Prior approval for the associated operational development in accordance with prior approval 16/00016/AS (Prior approval of proposed change of use of 2 agricultural buildings to 2 dwelling houses)	Support

12. Correspondence

29/3 Request for a memorial tree from a parishioner in memory of her father. **Agreed.**

13. Items for future consideration

Policies/Procedures will need to be reviewed for the Annual Statutory meeting in May. The allocation for the current year is as follows:

Review of Code of Conduct	Cllr J Tydeman, Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse
Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	Cllr D Boulding and Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse
Complaints Procedure	Cllr A Lidgett and Cllr P Harris
Procedure for handling requests made under FOI	Cllr J Tydeman and Cllr D Boulding
Press and Media	Cllr C Friend and T Bizley
Data Protection	Cllr S Parks and Cllr P Harris
Habitual or Vexatious Complaints	Cllr E Cansdale and Cllr C Friend
Records Management Policy	Cllr D Boulding and Cllr S Parks
Working Groups Policy	Cllr C Friend and Cllr A Lidgett
Health & Safety	Cllr T Bizley and Cllr S Parks

Policies will be emailed out to councillors for review.

14. **Staffing** - This item was taken in closed session.

Councillors discussed the Clerk's review and agreed a salary increase from 1 April 2016.

15. **Date of Next Meeting:** **Annual Parish Meeting**, Tuesday 26 April at 7.00 pm
In the Village Hall
Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 10 May 2016
at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall
Finance Committee, Tuesday 7 June 2016 at
7.30 pm in the Village Hall

All Welcome