



who has recently left his post after many years of keeping children safe whilst crossing the road.  
**Agreed.**

d) Posters are being put up around the village but are not being taken down. Individuals and groups are politely asked to remove their posters once their event has taken place.

The Council wished to thank those who organised the Christmas Tree on the village green and the Christmas celebration event.

## **7. Report by Cllr Bell, ABC**

*Submitted by Cllr Bell and read out in Cllr Bell's absence.*

"I can confirm that the target date for the production of the finalised (not draft) local plan has been extended due to the work required on the feedback from the public consultation and is still some months away.

I continue to meet with councillors, the local plan working group and planning officers regularly not just to lobby to have the North Street housing number reduced, but also to protect us from further allocation of general needs sites elsewhere around the village.

Whilst recognising that we may have to settle for simply phasing the houses in two tranches over a period of years, I do continue to push for a lower number.

In response to concerns from residents, I contacted Kent County Councillor Mike Hill regarding the lack of heating in the John Mayne school and, I'd like to register my thanks to him, as I know he took up the issue with vigour and impressed upon a number of KCC officers the need for urgent action.

I also met with the new head of John Mayne school, Mrs. Sharon Lewis who is clearly a charming and effective leader whom we're lucky to have in office. Sharon deserves our thanks for her prompt and effective handling of the heating issue which predates her arrival and has the matter in hand. I briefed Sharon on the potential planning outlook in Biddenden and I'm happy that lines of communication are established and open should issues arise.

In response to concern raised about the effect of housing on school places, I've additionally been in contact with the KCC education planner and KCC are confident that they and the school can react to any additional pressure on places.

Finally, could I put on record my thanks to both yourself as clerk, Alison, and all the parish councillors who quietly put in so much time and effort working for Biddenden and its residents. You get little or no thanks and much ill-judged criticism, but please be assured that whilst I don't always see eye-to-eye with you all, for what its worth, my estimation is that you all do a fantastic job.

Merry Christmas - and if someone would buy a round of drinks in the Red Lion on my behalf, I'll settle up later!!! (Sorry I'm not there!!)"

## **8. Ashford Borough Council Local Plan to 2030 – Site submissions for Biddenden**

The Ashford Development Update for October has been sent through and circulated to councillors. It is available on [www.ashford.gov.uk/development-update](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/development-update). There is no mention of Biddenden in the newsletter.

A letter has been sent to ABC regarding the Millwood Homes submission on the ABC Consultation site addressing the issue of the 75 homes that they mention. An acknowledgement has been received.

The chairman briefly closed the meeting to allow a parishioner to ask a question regarding the position of the original building proposed for the North St development. The meeting was re-opened.

## 9. Telecommunications Mast

A meeting was held with Shared Access on 10<sup>th</sup> November. Attendees were Phil Wright (Shared Access), Cllr Chris Friend and Mr Tom Lupton (VHMC). Discussion took place regarding the possibility of using an existing floodlight. However, the documentation sent through on 25<sup>th</sup> November, circulated to councillors together with the meeting notes, shows the mast being put in the bottom right-hand corner of the Millennium Field car park. It was noted that there could be issues with this location as there is a protected strip running along the car park as Southern Water have got drains running underneath it. Councillors had been made aware of this.

The meeting was closed to allow a parishioner to ask a question relating to the mast. The meeting was then re-opened.

It was noted that a telecommunication mast would require planning permission.

**It was agreed** that the Clerk would write to Shared Access stating that the parish council was still interested in the scheme but informing Shared Access of the issue with the drains but was open to alternative site options as it may be preferable for a mast to be sited by the squash club or bowling club in the form of a floodlight. Proposed by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse Seconded by: Cllr E Cansdale. **Unanimous.**

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

**Car Park, Toilets and Post Office:** The fire alarm has been fitted and serviced. Enquiries are being made regarding a maintenance/call out contract.

A second quotation for the repainting of the white lines is being sought.

**Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow:** The hedges in the Millennium Field have now been cut. The hedge down the side of Jubilee Meadow/Millennium Field car park will be done during the school holidays as it couldn't be cut due to cars parked.

A note will be sent to Michael Palmer thanking him for the excellent work that he has done on the hedges.

**Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths:** An email has been received from the church regarding work around the lych-gate following a discussion they had with Action with Communities in Rural Kent. **It was agreed** to meet with representatives from the Church and ACRK in the New Year.

The noticeboard on the High Street will be removed shortly for renovation work.

An invoice has been received from Cranbrook & Sissinghurst parish council in the sum of £36.50 for the repair of the speedwatch device. **Agreed**

**It was agreed** that the Speedwatch Group wished to continue using the equipment.

**Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area:** The hedge next to the tennis courts has been cut and an invoice sent to us.

**Planning and Local Housing:** Nothing to report.

**S27 and S43 Working Group:** No further meetings have taken place and there is currently nothing to report. The Working Group will speak to the landowner.

**Police Liaison and Neighbourhood Watch:** An email has been received from Sgt Jasmine Bloomfield (attached). It has been clarified that the PCSO's for Biddenden are Angie Burden and Paul Moorey and not as detailed in the email.

Three crimes were reported in September 2016:

Other Theft	1
Vehicle Crime	1
Violence & Sexual Offences	1

**KALC:** Nothing to report.

**Parish & Urban Forum:** Nothing to report.

**Community Project Fund:** The meeting is due to take place prior to the 3 January meeting.

**Village Hall Management Committee:** Nothing to report as the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December was postponed.

**Health and Safety:** A screw has come out of the metal plaque on the viewing stone and needs to be put back in. The door on the squash club embankment fence was found open. There appear to be problems closing it. The door will be chained shut until it can be fixed.

**Allotments:** Nothing to report.

**John Mayne School:** It is understood that there have been problems loading information onto the website. The school intends to issue two newsletters per month.

## 11. Finance

a) Approval of cheques for payment

*Sarah Tigg – Cleaner:* It is suggested that a sum of £25 be paid as an annual bonus added to her December salary. **Agreed**

b) Note accounts to 1 December 2016. Noted and duly signed at the end of the quarter as being correct

c) Budget 2016/17 and to note the unapproved minutes of the Finance Committee held on 6 December 2016. **Agreed** subject to the changes in concurrent functions and Council Support Grant being made following confirmation of new grant rates from ABC.

To increase the precept by 3% to £51283 for 2017/18.

**Business Rates:** Following the last meeting the Clerk applied to ABC for Business Rates relief. A rebate has been credited to the BPC account in the sum of £10812 back dated to 2010 and the Clerk

has submitted the form to ABC to claim it.

Parish Magazine: The costs for the quarterly parish magazine runs have been checked with the editor. The cost of the quarterly magazine run to approx. 1230 homes is £1500 per year. The parish council currently contributes to the 4 quarterly magazines. However, the current contribution of £1181 does not cover the cost of these quarterly issues and it is suggested that the budget figure is increased to £1500 per year with a 3% increase every other year rather than yearly. **Agreed** but the Clerk was requested to obtain copy invoices to confirm this amount prior to any payments being made.

The above items and recommendations were proposed by: Cllr P Harris Seconded by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse. **Unanimous**

## 12. Planning – to note decisions and any plans tabled

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
<a href="#">16/01638/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Agricultural buildings at New House Farm, Gribble Bridge Lane, Biddenden, Kent</b> Prior approval of proposed change of use of an agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (resubmission of 15/00166/AS)	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01569/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Randolphs Farm, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EQ</b> Conversion of barn into annexe	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01681/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>4 Worsenden, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EH</b> Erection of single storey rear/side extension	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01682/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Appleby, Frittenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8LG</b> Erection of a single storey double garage	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01687/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>East Ongley Farm, Ongley Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8HF</b> Resubmission of the prior approval for the associated operational development in accordance with prior approval 15/00931/AS	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01714/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Acorn House, 3 The Nightingales, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8HN</b> Proposed detached 3 bay oak construction garage	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01715/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Acorn House, 3 The Nightingales, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8HN</b> Proposed single storey side and rear extension, garage conversion to habitable room, rooflights to facilitate loft conversion and render/wood panelling to front elevation	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01759/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Rogley Barn, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8ET</b> Two storey extension; new sewage bio-system	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01772/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Coach Barn at, Rogley Barn, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Kent</b> Change of use and conversion of existing coach house to single dwelling	<b>Support</b>

## 13. Correspondence

7/12 Community Energy Fund. The Clerk was asked to look at possible funding sources. ABC

was suggested as a possible source to find out who to contact.

**The next item was taken in closed session.**

**14. Staffing**

New pension arrangements: The council was updated.

The ad hoc staffing committee is to be convened to discuss current pension arrangements.

It was agreed to increase the cleaner's salary as discussed from 1/1/17. Proposed by: Cllr S Parks  
Seconded by: Cllr D Boulding

**15. Information items**

The letter to the PCC was discussed. The Chairman updated the meeting on this issue following a conversation with the Rev Alex Bienfait.

**16. Items for future consideration**

17. Date of Next Meeting: Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 3 January 2017  
at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

***Please note that Parish Council Meetings in 2017 will be held on the FIRST Tuesday of the month***