

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

**UNAPPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on
Tuesday 2 January 2018 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Biddenden**

Present: Cllr C Friend (Chair)
Cllr A Lidgett
Cllr J Tydeman
Cllr R Wayre

Mrs A Swannick (Parish Clerk)
Cllr N Bell, ABC

8 parishioners attended.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that the issue of the telecommunications mast would be postponed until the next meeting as there were too few councillors present to have a proper discussion.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr T Bizley due to work commitments
Cllr D Boulding due to illness
Cllr E Cansdale due to personal commitments
Cllr P Harris due to personal commitments
Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse due to illness

The Chairman stated that Cllr Parks had resigned as a councillor as his house move was now back on. He thanked Cllr Parks on behalf of the Parish Council for his contribution and hard work whilst a councillor.

2. Parishioners' Questions

A parishioner read out an article from a farming magazine and gave a copy to the Clerk for distribution.

Discussion took place regarding the parish council's agreement to use the telecommunications company's (Shared Access') own solicitors. After discussion **it was agreed** that the council would instruct its own solicitors.

Discussion turned to the issue of access to the Gordon Jones Playing field and the Deed of Conveyance dated March 1949. Some parishioners felt that Shared Access had "pulled the wool over the council's eyes". The deed of conveyance also stated that the field had to be used for leisure use only. The chairman stated that the council was aware of this.

The discussion over the access continued together with issues relating to the siting of the mast. The owner of a nearby property, who also owns part of the access, stated that he felt

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Shared Access were putting pressure on him to sign documents. The Chairman stated that this was between Shared Access and the owner of the aforementioned property and that he must, of course, not sign anything that he was unhappy with.

Heated discussion continued on access issues and the siting of the telecommunications mast between parishioners and councillors. It was stated that there would be a meeting with Shared Access on 9/ 1 at 11 am and that Cllr Wayre was very welcome to join this meeting.

3. Any Declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

None.

4. Any Changes to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

The Clerk had emailed councillors with new DPI forms and hard copies had been enclosed with the council papers with a request that they be completed and returned to the Clerk at this meeting. Those who hadn't completed their forms were asked to post them to the Clerk.

5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5 December 2017

A vote was taken on the minutes, and it was agreed that the minutes were a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr J Tydeman Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Agreed.** Cllr Wayre asked for his objection to the minutes to be recorded as he believed them to be incomplete and inaccurate.

6. Matters for Information not on the Agenda

It was noted that the parish council has two co-option vacancies.

7. Report by Cllr Bell, ABC

Cllr Bell stated that the Draft Local Plan had gone through the Cabinet and had been sent off to the Secretary of State and DGLC just before Christmas. The next stage is to have a planning inspector appointed and inspected probably in the Spring. Each step increases the plan's strength. In terms of the 5 year land supply ABC believes that it has provided this plus a 20% buffer.

With regard to Gladman, it has not yet gone before the Planning Committee. Further reports have been requested. It is expected that the Gladman attempt to have the land included in the local plan will be rejected as the Local Plan has been decided. Gladman may, or may not, wish to appeal.

Cllr Bell stated that he would inform the parish council of when the Brabourne appeal is to be heard.

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

There is currently nothing further to report.

A gentleman from Gladman contacted Cllr Lidget to discuss the Biddenden Heritage Project document. He refused and referred them to the Clerk and reiterated that all contact should be made through the Clerk. No contact has been made with the Clerk to-date.

9. Telecommunications Mast

Please see the Chairman's opening remarks. The agenda item is to be postponed until the February meeting.

10. Access to the Gordon Jones Playing Field

There are issues attached to access to the Gordon Jones Playing Field via Tenterden Road as a piece of land owned by a nearby property forms part of the access road. In the past access has been allowed without comment for funfairs, leisure purposes, activities run by clubs and even for recycling lorries, mowing contractors, KCC and parents collecting children from school etc. Requests made for compensation from third parties has not been consistent, but does have the potential to restrict the parish council conducting its business. For example, if the multipurpose trail goes ahead there will be a lot of lorries coming in to remove earth etc, so alternative arrangements need to be put in place in case of any issues being raised. To this end an initial approach has been made to the Council's solicitors to look at alternative routes so that the parish council does not run into future problems. It was clarified that this may be a temporary route, not used on a permanent basis.

It was put to the council by Cllr Wayre that an alternative access had been discussed and not reported to the council at its meeting on 5 December. The Chairman stated that this was not the case, but as councillors couldn't remember the exact date, the Clerk was asked to clarify the date after the meeting (*this is clarified post meeting as being 14th December at 11 am*).

The Chairman stated that three councillors met informally at the Bakehouse The purpose was just to walk through the fields to see if there may be an alternative access to the playing field. The Chairman stated that it was the council's duty, due diligence, to look at possible alternative accesses in case the parish council found that access by the normal route was denied. Parishioners participated in the discussion. During discussion with the owner of The Malt House the Chairman withdrew a comment made.

11. Risk Assessment

The Chairman asked each councillor if they had read the Risk Assessment through. Cllr Wayre stated that he was resigning as a councillor with immediate effect and left the table to sit with parishioners.

The meeting was declared inquorate and closed at 8.34 pm.

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Parish Clerk

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