

Biddenden Parish Council

**APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on
Tuesday 1 June at 7.30 pm in the Old Village Hall, Biddenden**

Present: Cllr R Hunt (Chair) Cllr C Friend
 Cllr J Wright (Vice Chair) Cllr G Latter
 Cllr T Bizley Cllr J Montgomery
 Cllr D Boulding Cllr S Newman
 Cllr E Cansdale

ABC Cllr N Bell

Mrs A Swannick (Clerk)

2 parishioners attended.

1. Apologies for absence

None.

2. Any declarations of interest in items on the Agenda

Cllr J Montgomery: Planning Application 21/00831/AS
 Cllr J Wright: Planning Application 21/00831/AS

3. Any alterations to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

None.

4. Approval of the unapproved minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2021

There being no comments or amendments the minutes were deemed to be a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr D Boulding Seconded by: Cllr C Friend.
Unanimous.

5. Planning – to note decisions and any plans tabled

6. Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
21/00783/AS	Biddenden	Land at, Old Elmstone Cottage, 98 North Street, Biddenden, Kent Outline planning permission to consider access for the erection of a detached 2 storey dwelling	Support
21/00802/AS	Biddenden	Summer Hill Barn, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8ER Proposed conversion of garage to annexe for barn with glazed link (resubmission of planning permission 18/00704/AS)	Support
21/00805/AS	Biddenden	Magnolia, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EQ Erection of detached garage plus replacement of single storey rear extension Reason for objection: It is unusual to build so close to the boundary. It is not in keeping with other properties in the road.	Object

1. Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
21/00831/AS	Biddenden	17 High Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AL Proposed replacement garage	Support
20/01074/CONA/AS	Biddenden	Birchley House Farm, Fosten Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8DZ Discharge of conditions 4, 5 & 6	Support
j21/00918/AS	Biddenden	Forge Field Oast, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8ER Revision to planning permission 21/00142/AS (Single storey link extension and conversion of former stables to create residential extension to oast) to alter internal layout and minor external modifications along with external boiler housing	Support
21/00938/AS	Biddenden	Oaklands, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EQ Single storey rear extension	Support

TREE APPLICATIONS

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
21/00091/TP	Biddenden	The Studio, Frogshole Farm, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EY T3 - To fell due to cracked crown as outlined and stated within arb report.	Support

2. Report by Borough Councillor Neil Bell, ABC, to Parish Councillors

Cllr Bell detailed the results of the KCC and ABC elections. He stated that the ABC portion of the council tax had gone down by 10%. The property company set up, separate from social housing, to invest in housing on a commercially basis, made almost £1m last year.

A meeting is being held with Kent Highways to discuss Castletons Oak and Cllr Wright is attending.

3. Parishioners' Questions

A parishioner who lives in the vicinity of Castletons Oak crossroads stated that they would like to see an extension of the proposed 40mph speed limit half a mile further up to his house where accidents frequently happen.

Discussion took place. The matter was discussed further under agenda item 6.

4. Any matters for information not on the agenda

An application for a replacement memorial tree was made. Whilst the council's policy is not to allow more memorial trees as the row is full, as this is an application to replace a tree that has died, **it was** agreed that the issue be passed to the Chair of the MF and JM working group to contact the applicant and organise the replanting.

The noticeboard by the Rectory fence is in a poor condition. **It was agreed** that the Clerk would investigate details of joiners and for a double door board.

A call was received from the Playschool to say that the gate to the school at the top of the path from the Millennium Field car park is broken and needs replacing. The gate into the Jubilee Meadow further down also needs to be replaced. **It was agreed** that the gate be repaired and the gate into the Jubilee Meadow from the footpath as well as checking on all other gates is to be made.

An email has been received from a parishioner regarding supporting their compensation claim against Southern Water. KALC has been consulted on whether the Parish Council should do this. After discussion **it was agreed** that whilst the Parish Council was happy to be supportive and help rectify any issues by communicating with Southern Water, the Parish Council was acting to rectify these issues across the parish and could not get involved in an individual compensation case.

The Clerk is currently querying the precept payments. The Parish Council requested a 2% increase, but the 1st instalment received is a little more than expected.

Ashford Borough Council has given the go ahead for both co-options due to the resignations of Mark Clixby and John Tydeman. These will take place at the July.

5. Proposed development at East End, Benenden

A representation has been made to the TWBC Local Plan objecting to the development at East End, Benenden. The Parish Council has been asked to support the Friends of East End by attaching a copy of their representation to its own. This is awaited. However, the points made by the Parish Council can only be those that affect Biddenden directly. **Agreed.**

6. Traffic Issues:

- **Village Centre Road Junction:** Work began on 24 May. Councillors will be aware that there have been objections despite the consultation that took place. A meeting was held on Tuesday 18th on the village green to look at plans.

The village sign has been removed by crane. Photographs were taken of the base as there is no existing documentation relating to it. Documents have been provided by the History Society for the council to look at and copy relating to the renovation that took place in the 1990s. The Parish Council already has details of the 2013 renovation. The Jubilee Stone has been moved. The Bethersden Marble removed from the village green has been taken to Mr Lidgett for storage as he is already storing some on behalf of the Parish Council.

There have been complaints regarding damage to the Bethersden Marble on the High Street caused by lorries mounting the pavement to pass each other. KCC were informed and have subsequently put lights further up the road near the Rectory. However, SCP person was not allowed to assist people crossing the High St outside the school entrance on 28/5. When asked, he told parents that he had been instructed by KCC not to offer assistance because it will cause delays in the traffic flow timing. There was a near misses for two young girls this morning, 28/5. KCC have been informed and they have put a solution in place to be in operation from 7th June when school returns until the village green works finish. The school has been informed of the new arrangements.

Next year will be the centenary for the village sign. It is suggested that a complete renovation takes place. It was done in 2013 but the two maydes are showing signs of weathering and their faces are now missing.

- **Castletons Oak Crossroads/Benenden Road:** The proposed Castletons Oak scheme was sent to the PC for discussion at the last meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk send an email to Highways and this was done. A very helpful reply was received. The proposed plan has been slightly amended and this should be available by the date of the meeting. The amendments to the speed limits have been put out for consultation by KCC and BPC has put details on its website, on the noticeboard and on the Biddenden Community Facebook page.

An email was also sent to the Chairman by a parishioner whose property is affected by the crashes. Cllr Bell is meeting Kelly Garratt to discuss Castletons Oak on 8 June at noon. Cllr Wright will also be attending. **It was agreed** that the Clerk and Cllr Wright would work on a response following the meeting on 8th June.

Further discussion took place regarding the junction.

- **High Halden Road:** No report.

- **HIP (Highways Improvement Plan):** Groups have been established for different roads. Meetings have been held with to discuss issues. No-one has come forward with issues in Chulkhurst and **it was agreed** that individual residents in Chulkhurst could be approached. The parishioner present was invited to join a road group.

7. CCTV

Nothing further has happened as the council's solicitors have been contacted regarding any changes that need making to the Squash Club lease. A reply has been received providing the solicitor's fees. **It was agreed** to instruct the solicitor to carry out the work.

8. Electric Car Charging

Telephone calls have been made to a couple of companies. Further research is required.

9. Risk Assessment

A change was made for the term Post Office3. Proposed by: Cllr Montgomery Seconded by: Cllr T Bizley. **Unanimous.**

10. Open Spaces Strategy

An update to be given and brought forward in July

11. Equal Opportunities Policy

The policy was adopted. Proposed by: Cllr C Friend Seconded by: Cllr J Wright. **Unanimous.**

12. Social Media

To be discussed in July.

13. Community Broadband

A UK Gigabit Voucher launch took place on 19 March. **It was** agreed to put details on the Biddenden Community Facebook page and on the Parish Council website. A community within Biddenden has done this, but it was not easy to achieve.

14. Group Reports:

a) Working Group Reports

i) Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow (Cllr Friend)

Due to the retirement of John Wheadon from the MF and JM Working group, alternative arrangements would need to be made. John did a great deal of work

on the field ensuring that it was kept in good condition and generously giving his time as a volunteer. A letter of thanks has been sent to him thanking him for his time and expertise.

The Council needs to put alternative arrangements in place. **It was agreed** that contractors be asked for quotes for mowing and hedge cutting etc.

Living Forest have been asked to do the tree audit (date confirmed for 28 June).

The work to the fencing in the Jubilee Meadow down the side of Vine House has been delayed. The matter has been chased several times, but the contractor's supplier is having difficulty getting hold of the equine fencing required. As soon as it is received the work will commence.

ii) Traffic, Pedestrians, Footpaths, Cycling (Cllr Wright)

The felt roof on the southbound bus stop by the Weavers has not been renewed for many years. It currently does not let water, but it may be wise to budget for its replacement in the near future. However, **It was agreed** to look at bus shelters for the bus stop at Woodlands.

The Parish Council discussed whether the Borough Cllr should automatically be included in all KCC meetings to do with highways and the parish council. **It was agreed** that the Borough Councillor's input would be required on certain matters. However, Highways is mostly a KCC issue rather than ABC whose responsibilities lie with Planning, Housing, Waste Collection, parking enforcement etc.

Two hedges have been noted for mention: the hedge or shrub outside the Toll cottage property (their garden) is growing and restricting the very dangerous and already limited view to the right when arriving at the junction from Biddenden. This needs to be cut sooner rather than later. The Clerk was asked to report these issues. The Give Way sign is also currently obscured by vegetation.

In relation to Castleton's Oak, it was suggested that many accidents occur due the curve in the road obscuring the traffic coming from Cranbrook. Approaching from Biddenden a quick look to the right appears clear - only for vehicles to suddenly appear – where they have been hidden in this dangerous blind spot.

It was agreed to look at the feasibility of providing one bus shelter for Woodlands. It may be possible to access funding

iii) Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area (Cllr Bizley)

Nothing to report.

iv) Conservation (Cllr Wright)

Nothing to report

v) Community Project Fund (Cllr Friend):

One application has been received and recommendations will be given at the July meeting.

vi) Long Term Improvement Development Plan - LTIDP (Cllr Hunt)

Nothing to report.

b) Other reports:

i) Police Liaison: The most commonly reported crimes reported in March 2021 are as follows:

Burglary	4
Other Theft 2	2
Anti-Social Behaviour	1
Vehicle Crime	1

ii) KALC (Cllr Hunt/Cllr Wright)

Event details have been circulated.

iii) Barber, Car Park, and toilets (Clerk)

The plumber has been called out as the ladies' toilet was blocked.

iv) Tenterden Forum (Cllr Friend)

Nothing to report.

v) Village Hall Sports Committee (Cllr Friend)

Nothing to report.

vi) Health and Safety (Clerk)

A report was circulated.

15. Finance

a) Payment List: The Payment List was presented. Proposed by: Cllr G Latter Secoded by: Cllr C Friend. **Unanimous.**

b) Note accounts to 31 May 2021 – to be circulated later as the statements are not available

16. Correspondence

There were no comments.

17. Items for future consideration

Annual Return

Communications – Councillors were asked to consider how to improve ways of communicating with parishioners. This discussion will take place at the next meeting.

18. Next meeting: **Parish Council meeting**, Tuesday 6 July 2021 at 7.00 pm – **All Welcome**

The meeting closed at 21:34.

Alison Swannick 07783 223450
Parish Clerk