

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 9 July 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr T Lupton (Chair) Cllr P Harris
Cllr D Boulding Cllr A Lidgett
Cllr E Cansdale Cllr H Ruse
Cllr F Chalk Cllr J Tydeman

2 parishioners attended

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr C Friend due to personal commitments.

2. Parishioners' questions

- a) A question was asked about the continuation of the payment of recycling credits by ABC. It was stated that an undertaking had been given that the payments would continue until the next election but they would probably be reviewed at this point. A notice had been placed in the parish magazine stating that any recycling went towards the recycling credits not just what was taken to the recycling area at the Gordon Jones Playing Field.

3. Any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

4. Any changes to the Register of Members Interests

There were no changes to the Register of Members' Interests.

5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 June 2013

There had been the addition of the word "current" in front of the word "safety concerns" in point b) on page 2013/445 of the minutes. There being no other amendments or comments upon the minutes they were deemed to be a true and proper record of the meeting.

Proposed by: Cllr A Lidgett Seconded by: Cllr F Chalk. **Unanimous.**

6. Matters for information not on the agenda

A notice regarding the remaining casual vacancy on the council will be put on the notice board and in the Parish Magazine for August and September with a deadline of 20 September.

7. Report by Cllr Bell, Ashford Borough Council

The new recycling system has been rolled out, but not all wheelie bins have been distributed yet. If parishioners have not yet received their bins, then they should speak either directly to Ashford Borough Council or to Cllr Bell.

It was noted that some of the bins are being put across driveways rather than to the side. This can be dangerous on the country lanes.

8. Southside Pavement

The Council has not yet received a response to the email sent Cllr Hill regarding Phase 2 of the southside pavement project.

9. Housing Needs

ABC has identified next two possible sites 8 and 10 (to east of the A262 between the village boundary and Dashmonden). Tessa O'Sullivan is identifying the landowners and will get in touch with them.

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

Car Park, Toilets and Post Office: The Electricity supply for the toilets and post office has been switched to E-on as agreed at the last Council meeting. This is effective from 3 July 2013.

PO/Toilets insurance subsidence cover is now in place.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: A new five bar gate is being purchased for the Jubilee Meadow.

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: The council's comments regarding the three triangular areas were passed to Kent Highways.

Quotations have been sought for two open wooden clad bins and are still awaited.

Work on refurbishment of the village sign has not yet started.

The return of the jubilee stone is being followed up.

Speedwatch: An agreement letter had been circulated to councillors regarding the funding of £500 towards the joint purchase of the equipment with other councils.

The Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths Working Group meeting notes were recirculated electronically as hard copies were circulated for the meeting held on 11 June.

A summary of the current position was given by the Chairman. The topic has been raised several times and at the meeting held on 14 May the concept of having a speedwatch group within the parish was supported and Transport, Pedestrians and Footpaths Working Group was asked to look at the issue and return to the Council with its recommendations on how it should be operated and with costs. A total of £280 had been budgeted for speedwatch but it was going to cost more than this to go into it. At the meeting held on 11 June the report presented by the Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths Working Party was noted and discussion took place as to whether BPC should be renting or buying a speedwatch unit, and in line with the information at that stage agreed it was preferable to move forward with purchasing a unit and a figure of £500 agreed. A letter was then received from Cranbrook and Sissinghurst PC stating that they had purchased the equipment and were looking for other councils wishing to participate in the scheme to pay one fifth of the £2300 cost plus a share of the maintenance costs for a share in the ownership of the unit. BPC has gone beyond the point of agreeing to do it and now needs to agree on how to do it.

Councillors were asked for their views. The following points were highlighted:

- a) Do not have all the information required to make a decision
- b) No idea of the maintenance costs
- c) What are the overall annual maintenance costs likely to be?
- d) Who will be using the equipment?
- e) Insurance of equipment
- f) Identifying suitable sites and considering the safety of the participants

It was noted that a great deal of information regarding numbers of people stopped etc was in the speedwatch newsletters already circulated to councillors. The PCSO had offered to bring a police speedwatch unit out to demonstrate it.

It was **agreed** that the matter be referred back to the Transport, Pedestrian and Footpaths working group for a more detailed and complete proposal answering the above questions and recommending whether it is the PC or a speedwatch group that should be running it such as Neighbourhood Watch. The matter will be discussed again at the September meeting. The Clerk was asked to contact parish councils who run a speedwatch scheme regarding its effectiveness and their views.

Dog bins: The two new dog bins have now been fitted.

Litter bins: 2 new black litter bins are now required: 1 to replace the black dustbin by the Gordon Jones Playing Field car park. The Clerk had a quotation in the sum of £548.32 plus VAT and was awaiting quotes for two wooden bins. **It was agreed** to purchase the two black bins.

It was noted that the hedge around the bin in the hedge in the lay bay beside Biddenden Place needed to be clipped.

It was noted that a sign advertising businesses in Smarden had been put up at Bounds Cross and did not look like an authorized sign. Kent Highways would be contacted.

Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area: : A meeting with Biddenden Juniors took place on 2 July to discuss mowing and drainage. A paper has been circulated containing recommendations for the Council to consider.

- a) Biddenden Juniors were to look at slitting.
- b) The mowing should include the uncut areas of the field to the ditches and strimmed around benches and goal posts.
- c) Clear ditches.
- d) The wooden posts by the car park are rotting and two have been removed and all need to be replaced.

It was agreed that the recommendations above should be carried out.

It was noted that that the agreement with Biddenden Juniors cover the period of September to May each year.

An order for play bark has been place for the play area and weeding. It was due to be delivered on 17th July at 0700. It was agreed that available councillors and parishioners meet on Sunday 21st at 0900 to move the bark into the play areas and spread it.

Quotations for the repainting of the rockers and seesaw have been requested as well as any remedial work required on the rope climb into the tower.

Shaylers Fun Fair had requested whether they could hire the GJ Playing field in September and this had been agreed by the Council. However, they would only have been able to use the area behind the tennis courts due to football matches and this was not satisfactory. They were offered the Millennium Field, which they had used two years ago, but this was declined.

BEST have been given permission to tidy up the bonfire site prior to the Tractorfest on health and safety grounds.

Police Liaison: There has been vandalism in Pook Lane and a barn burnt out.

It is understood that there is a Community Warden for Biddenden. To be investigated.

Planning and Local Housing: A second house in Sandeman Way has become available for part ownership. Notices have gone up in the village.

KALC: Nothing to report.

Parish Forum: Nothing to report.

Recycling: A notice inviting applications to the Recycling Fund have gone into the Parish Magazine for August and September and will be put on the notice boards. The deadline is 20 September.

Village Hall Management Committee: A car boot sale was held at Headcorn Aerodrome and approximately £780 raised.

Community Led Plan: The launch of the completed Community Led Plan takes place on Tuesday 10th July at 7.00 pm. The Mayor of Ashford will be attending. The plan would be put forward for adoption at the September meeting.

Health and Safety: Nothing to report.

Allotments: A very successful open day has been held.

John Mayne School: Concern still remain about losing pupils to Ashford due to house moves and the lack of affordable housing stock in the village.

The meeting was closed and a break was taken for refreshments at 2050. Cllr Ruse left the meeting.

The meeting reopened at 2110.

11. Finance

a) Approval of cheques for payment. The payment list had been circulated. Two additions were made due to invoices given in at the meeting (Biddenden Club House, hire of village hall, and payment for refreshments for the CLP launch). There being no other comments or additions, the payment schedule was agreed for payment. Proposed by: Cllr D Boulding Seconded by: Cllr P Harris. **Unanimous.**

b) Bank Accounts. The Clerk had been asked to research suitable bank accounts for an amount of BPC money in order to bring it down under the £85,000 threshold at its current bank. A table of accounts was circulated. **It was agreed** that the Clerk should look at savings accounts with building societies.

12. Planning

The planning schedule was presented and the following planning application considered.

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
13/00658/AS	Biddenden	Little Ponds, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EH Change of use of land from agricultural land to garden	Support

13. Correspondence

The Correspondence List had been circulated. Councillors were asked if they had any comments or wished to see any correspondence on the list. There being none, items for action were considered:

22/6 Email on behalf of Horticultural Society asking if they could work on the unfinished western tip of the village green (see email) and possible installation of an outside tap by the toilets.

***It was agreed** that the tip of the village green could be turfed and Cllr Cansdale would approach a parishioner regarding turf and liaise with the Clerk.*

*It was noted that a garden tap had been installed in the ladies toilet. If any problems occur it may need to be relocated to the disabled toilet. **It was agreed** that the tap should stay in the ladies toilet and the issue would be revisited if there was a problem.*

Undated Speedwatch agreement letter for consideration. *The matter was discussed under Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths.*

14. Staffing

Since the last meeting clarification has been received from ABC that Biffa will be emptying the bins along the main roads and in the churchyard and recreation ground as well as carrying out a weekly litter pick. In view of this there is currently no need for a Lengthsman. **It was agreed** that any work needing to be done is arranged on an ad hoc basis using local contractors. In light of this, the draft job specification had not been drawn up.

The effect of this arrangement on the Street Cleaning Grant requires further investigation as the grant was based on expenditure incurred by the Parish Council.

15. Items for future consideration

- a) Community Led Plan
- b) Speedwatch
- c) Sign for Cheeslands

16. Date of Next Meeting: **Parish Council Meeting**, Tuesday 10 September 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

All Welcome