

## BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

### APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11 October 2016 at 7.30 pm in the New Hall, Biddenden

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

Mrs A Swannick (Clerk)

Borough Cllr N Bell, ABC

Approximately 80 parishioners attended.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and read out a statement. A parishioner disagreed with some of the statement and insisted that their own comments be read out. The Chairman obliged.

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Cllr P Harris due to work commitments.

#### 2. Parishioners' Questions

The Chairman outlined the procedure for parishioners questions and stated that the time allowed for this item would be extended to 20 minutes. As the duration of a parish council meeting could only be three hours, if business allowed there may be further opportunity towards the end of the meeting.

Parishioner's questions commenced at 19.34. Cllr Lidgett read out three questions that had been submitted together with the answers.

- a) **Millwood Homes have stated that a comprehensive community building can only be delivered with the development of a minimum of 75 properties on the North Street site, as it would not be economically viable with fewer houses. BPC has formally accepted a maximum of 25 units, a position confirmed by a Parish Councillor at the public meeting. ABC has recommended 45 properties plus a satellite community facility on that site. So why is a new village hall being proposed and what funding will be available for this or other facilities without building 75 homes? *The letter from Millwood Homes on the Haveyoursay website has never been copied or discussed with the parish council at any point either by Millwood Homes or ABC. The parish council stands firmly behind its recommendation for 20-25 houses. However, given the nature of developers, it cannot be any surprise that Millwood would like to build more homes. This is not supported by the parish council.***

*It is correct that any Section 106 money alone would not cover the cost of a new village hall. This has been made very clear in both the statement attached to the council's questionnaire and in the minutes of the last meeting. As has also been made clear, the landowner has offered a sum of money towards a village hall as a whole community benefit. This is all clear and a matter of public record. There is no financial gain for the parish council or its councillors. Any such suggestion is erroneous in its judgement and offensive to the council as a body and councillors alike.*

*It must be clarified that the parish council would have to use S106 money for a WHOLE community benefit. Ashford Borough Council will not allow the money to be used as a "dip in pot" by the council. However, other village bodies may apply for use of it by going through the whole application process directly with Ashford Borough Council.*

- b) **Considering the public concerns over the questionnaire (described by some as "flawed"), will the Parish Council withdraw it and review the needs of the village using the comprehensive Biddenden Community-Led Plan of 2013?** *The council will not be withdrawing its questionnaire. Question 1 invites other ideas. The questions relating to a village hall are to save having to send out a second questionnaire. It has been made very clear that there is a deadline in order to get the community benefit into the next Draft Plan. If agreement over a whole community benefit cannot be made then the offer from the landowner will cease.*
- c) **If the questionnaire is not withdrawn, will residents who just answer No for Question Two and answer no other question, and provide their name and address, have their views counted?** *Parishioners are invited to reply to the questionnaire with their views. Views will be counted according to each of the questions answered by parishioners themselves. That is the simple and correct way to do it. Whether you agree with the questionnaire or not, please answer the questionnaire appropriately and give your view.*

Questions were then taken from the floor.

- d) **The questionnaire for the Community Led Plan was a two stage process: the village was asked which question they would like asked before formalising it. If the same process had been followed this time might we not be in a better place?** *The BPC questionnaire was not done the same way as there is a time limit in which to get the answers back to ABC. Cllr Bell stated that the timetable that BPC is trying to fit in with is extremely tight. The timetable is set by ABC and not the parish council.*
- e) **Why the rush? Why will the landowner give money to one option?** *Cllr Bell stated that the timetable was led by ABC for the Local Plan. If Borough Councils did not have local plans that would mean that landowners would have a "free for all" and there would be no control over planning. The parish council is trying to amend the local plan. The timetable is not going to wait for Biddenden or BPC. There are tens of thousands of houses allocated and planned and it is a hefty statutory process – that is the reason for the rush. As regards the amount of money that the landowner, borough councillors are*

*not permitted to negotiate with landowners or developers. The number of houses agreed/built will not be determined by any benefit offered by the landowner/developer, who have statutory 106 obligations. There are certain statutory payments but above and beyond a parish council can negotiate with a landowner.*

- f) **Why wasn't the Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow Working Group consulted given the Jubilee Meadow is a possible site?** *Reference was made to question 3 of the questionnaire: "Would you like to see a new hall built on the existing site or would the Jubilee Meadow (between the school & the sports club car park) be the favoured site. – On existing site, Jubilee Meadow (between school & Sports Club), Neither". No decision has been made about where a possible village hall would be built – three options have been suggested.*
- g) **It was stated that some of the funds raised to purchase the field was from a public appeal.** *Any development could be for community purpose only not for commercial development.*
- h) **If people answer "No" to question 2 and do not answer the rest of the questions will their vote be counted?** *As has been stated earlier, answers will be taken from the questionnaire and will be counted. If question 2 is answered "no" there is no point answering the rest of the questionnaire, so it will be counted.*
- i) **Has anyone looked at the deeds as it was agreed to pay Mr Shingles more if the land was built on?** *This issue was looked at when the Drs Surgery was ongoing.*
- j) **The Chairman of VHMC and Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadows Working Group echoed what the parishioner said in question f) above. VHMC had written a letter to the parish council and awaited a response. If a consultation process like the Community Led Plan took place acceptable sites could be identified. There is a need to slow down. The pc needs to check that there is such a rush and could not a broader form of words be found regarding a community benefit? BPC will write to VHMC. It had to be specific otherwise a developer could appeal against it. BPC had met with the strategic planners at ABC and are trying to keep to the timetable set out.**

Parishioners questions ended at 8.00 pm.

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

Cllr Bizley re planning application 16/01475/AS as it was next door  
Cllr Lidgett re planning application 16/01356/AS as it was up the road from his home

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

None.

**5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13 September 2016**

There being no comments or amendments to the minutes they were deemed to be a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse. **Agreed** by those who attended the meeting.

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

BT and Ashford have been contacted regarding Biddenden's adoption of the Worsenden telephone box. Paperwork is awaited.

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

Cllr Bell stated that the Boundary Reviews were currently taking place. He then took questions from the floor.

Questions were asked regarding:

- The breakdown of S106 payments and the amount that went to KCC for education and ABC
- A cycle path from Headcorn to Tenterden
- An increase in dog waste in the village

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

A letter dated 9 September was circulated by ABC to the Clerk but was confidential until 15/9 when it was made public and so it was not possible to discuss it at the last meeting.

The letter states "Most of these Omission sites have been received previously through the call for sites in 2013/2014 and were rejected through the SHELAA (Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment) or the SA (Sustainability Appraisal) processes which were published as background documents to the draft Local Plan."

"However, 28 of the total Omission Sites are completely 'new' submissions or are larger areas than were previously submitted which we have never assessed. With regards to all the omission sites, we will be undertaking/reassessing the site assessment work, in accordance with the processes carried out previously for the SHELAA and SA"

It is understood that there is nothing to be done at the present time as the assessment/reassessment processes by ABC have to be carried out.

A representation by Millwood Homes to the ABC draft local plan had been circulated.

**9. Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllrs Stevenson-Rouse and Lidgett attended a Neighbourhood Plan presentation by Simon Cole of ABC on 21<sup>st</sup> September. A report from the councillors and a copy of the presentation by Simon Cole had been circulated to all councillors.

Councillors discussed whether a Neighbourhood Plan was suitable for Biddenden. The costs of such a plan and the ongoing updating of the plan were considered. An example of redefining the Village Envelope was also discussed. The majority of councillors felt that a Neighbourhood Plan and a redefinition of the Village Envelope would not be in Biddenden's interests as it could be overridden by the Borough Council. It was **agreed** not to take the issue further for the time being.

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

***Car Park, Toilets and Post Office:*** A date for the fire alarm service is awaited along with a quote for putting in two breakable alarm points and the a service/call-out contract.

A second quotation is being sought for the repainting of the white lines in the PO car park as the cost is over £500.

The Valuation Office has now produced the draft rateable values for the Car Park, Toilets and PO as follows from April 2017. The car park and premises will be £1075 and the public conveniences and premises will be £4150.

Amount paid for Car park and spaces for 2016-2017 was £520.30. Public Conveniences was £2008.60.

Cllr Bell offered to look into the issue and the Clerk was asked to email him the details.

***Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow:*** The contractor has been contacted regarding the hedges in the Jubilee Meadows and the Millennium Field and he has agreed to do the work shortly.

***Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths:*** The order for the refurbishment of the noticeboard in the High Street has been sent.

***Mini SID:*** Report to be given. The sites would appear to have been assessed without the council's knowledge by KCCA. meeting with the Community Speedwatch Manager has taken place today and the sites were confirmed a being fine for police purposes. KCC assess on a different basis and therefore it is unlikely that Biddenden could have a mini SID on that basis.

***Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area:*** The hedges in the play area and down the left side of the Gordon Jones Playing Field from the tennis courts to the car park have been cut.

The snagging items in the play area have been dealt with by the contractor. Additional works have been completed.

The contractor has suggested that a contact who does playground inspections could be spoken to in order to do a regular play area inspection and will provide a report of any necessary work to be done. Currently we have one annual report done by its current

contractor which has not always been satisfactory. It was agreed to obtain further details.

The Council has been approached by a company wishing to improve broadband etc in the area and has identified the playing field as a site. The company is happy to come and do a presentation. Councillors are asked to consider this scheme to see if it is of interest. It was agreed to explore the issue further.

*Planning and Local Housing:* Nothing to report.

**S27 and S43 Working Group:** Cllr Stevenson-Rouse gave a summary of the current position and read through the group report (*these have been put on the parish council's website*).

The letter from VHMC (previously circulated) was read out and considered. **It was agreed** that it would be replied to once the results of the questionnaire were known.

The chairman of VHMC stated that the VHMC had representatives of the clubs on it and was a good starting point for consultation. His concern was that BPC might get to the end of the process and nothing good would come out of it rather than something positive for the community.

Further discussion took place regarding S106, the timetable, number of houses and community benefit. **It was agreed** that the Clerk would write to the VHMC chairman to suggest a meeting between VHMC and the Working Group.

*Police Liaison and Neighbourhood Watch:* In July 2016 there were 14 crimes reported:

Anti-Social Behaviour	3
Burglary	2
Criminal Damage & Arson	2
Other Theft	1
Vehicle Crime	1
Violence & Sexual Offences	5

It was noted that the PCSO no longer prepared reports for the parish council meetings.

It was **agreed** that the Clerk would contact the police regarding a speed trap being put on the Sissinghurst Road near the School as there had been complaints regarding speed.

*Neighbourhood Watch:* Report to be given at the meeting.

**KALC; Parish & Urban Forum:** The KALC AGM is to take place shortly. Councillors were asked to let the Clerk know if they wished to attend.

**Community Project Fund:** A notice asking for applications has gone into the parish magazine. The deadline date is 31 October 2016. A meeting will be scheduled prior to the December council meeting.

Biddenden Juniors have been in contact to say that they had an offer to purchase a container for cash and therefore would not have paperwork. Cllrs felt that an invoice or receipt would be required. The Clerk was asked to check with ABC Planning regarding any permissions relating to the siting of the container.

**Village Hall Management Committee:** Report to be given, if any, by Cllr Lidgett at the meeting.

**Health and Safety:** Nothing to report. The play area issues had been addressed.

**Allotments:** The parish council will arrange for the outside of the hedge to be cut.

**John Mayne School:** No newsletter yet available.

## 11. Finance

a) Approval of cheques for payment. Proposed by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Unanimous**

b) The accounts to 30 September 2016 were noted.

The 2015/16 parish council accounts have been signed off by the External Auditor with no comments or actions required. The Annual Return is on the website.

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

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
<a href="#">16/01335/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Frogshole Farm, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EY</b> Installation of shared sewage treatment plant	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01356/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Echo Barn, High Halden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8JG</b> Demolition, and replacement, of existing outbuilding	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01381/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Dargle Cottage, Tenterden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8DN</b> Single storey garden annexe for residential use	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01388/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Agricultural buildings at Weeks Land Farm, Weeks Lane, Biddenden, Kent</b> Prior notification for the change of use of 2 agricultural buildings and land within their curtilage to 2 dwellings	<b>Support</b>
<a href="#">16/01475/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>14 The Weavers, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AP</b> Erection of two storey extension	<b>Support</b>

### 13. Correspondence

The Correspondence List was noted and there were no requests relating to it.

The Chairman stated that further questions could be taken.

#### *Parishioners Questions continued*

- k) **There has been no report in order to make the case for a new hall. The village hall is only one of a number of options. Can you now think of any further options other than cycle way, school?** *No, replies to the questionnaire are awaited.*
- l) **Could any money be divided up?** *It is not legal to give the parish council a lump sum. It has to be for something specific.*
- m) **How long has a new village hall been discussed?** *It has been talked about on and off for many years.*
- n) **More houses will mean that more school places are needed. The school would be a good candidate for S106 money for something like a new school hall on the school field, freeing up the current hall for classrooms etc. If you have a new hall for the school is it a benefit for the whole community? If it is a building use by young children it could cause problems with the public using it.**

The Chairman suggested to councillors that the next item be taken in closed session. Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Unanimous.** Members of the public were asked to leave the meeting.

### 14. Staffing

Cllr Tydeman updated councillors on the clerk's pension arrangements in relation to the new legislation. He summarised the chosen pension fund and agreed to write a paper to be circulated to councillors for information.

### 15. Information items

None.

### 16. Items for future consideration

None.

17. **Date of Next Meeting:** **Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 8 November 2016**  
at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

*All Welcome*