

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

12 July 2016

**APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Tuesday 12 July 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Biddenden**

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

Mrs A Swannick – Clerk

Also attending: Cllr N Bell, ABC

Approximately 12 Parishioners attended

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr E Cansdale due to personal commitments
Cllr J Tydeman due to personal commitments

2. Parishioners' questions

a) It was decided in April to meet the ABC development requirement by natural infill. The parish council has gone against what was decided. *The parish council has not gone against what was decided at the parish council meeting of 8 April as this decision followed an open meeting in the village and consideration of two sites shortlisted for Biddenden. The meeting last Tuesday was a Planning Committee meeting to consider the ABC Draft Local Plan and policies S27 and S43 which contained specific development proposals for Biddenden within the new ABC Draft Local Plan. The recommendations from the Planning Committee will be presented under item 9 on this evening's agenda. At this point the parish council will make its formal decision and will respond to the consultation on the ABC Draft Plan which is suggesting 45 houses in North Street.*

b) Will the school be affected? There is no infrastructure. *An email from the proposed developer was read out: "Primary School – KCC are responsible for commissioning school places taking in to account future housing development. Their Commissioning Plan 2016 – 2020 does identify a shortage of Year R school places at Biddenden in 2016 / 17, and acknowledges that measures may need to be taken when looking at total roll forecasts. In the event of a shortage of places, it can be anticipated therefore that any new housing development may only be permitted if it provides financially for improvements to the school such that it can meet the needs of the development.*

Traffic Management in North Street – It is likely that the Highway Authority would require a pedestrian crossing in North Street, and we anticipate that this would form part of a package of measures to reduce traffic speeds – a significant objective of the CLP".

c) It was the view that some views were not taken into consideration at the planning committee meeting. *Each councillor was asked their view and a vote taken on the recommendations and the result was a majority for 45 houses. This is what is being discussed later on the agenda.*

d) It was suggested that perhaps a focus group could be set up to co-ordinate everything. *The Parish Council would work closely with the developers and ABC if the proposed development goes ahead. Views of parishioners would be taken into consideration and in order to get what the village wants in terms of traffic calming and any other benefits that could be available to the village.*

e) The new owners of Greenacres fish farm introduced themselves.

3. Any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

None.

4. Any changes to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

None.

5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 June 2016

There being no comments or additions to the minutes circulated, the minutes were deemed a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr P Harris Seconded by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse. **Agreed**

6. Matters for information not on the agenda

None.

7. Report by Cllr Bell, ABC

An Electoral Review is taking place in terms of boundaries for parish councillors in order to ensure more equally sized electorates.

Cllr Bell updated the meeting on the position of the Tapley Field as ABC had got involved in it and that it was understood that the solicitors acting for Biddenden Consolidated Charity were being slow.

Cllr Bell restated his intention to support 20-25 houses on the development in North Street rather than zero as it would be more likely to succeed. He urged the parish council to support this number. However, the formal decision would be ABC's not the parish council's.

The possibility of a cycle way to Tenterden was discussed as something that might be suggested as a benefit to the village. Other suggestions were the village school and the Drs Surgery.

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

Nothing further heard on this issue from ABC since receipt of the Draft ABC Local Plan to 2030.

9. Recommendations from the Planning Committee Meeting held on 28 June 2016

A Planning Committee meeting was held on 28th June 2016 to discuss the policy proposals S27 (North Street) and S43 (Priory Wood). The minutes of that meeting were considered. Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse. **Agreed.**

Recommendations from the Planning Committee were put to the full council as follows:

It was agreed by majority vote that the Planning Committee would put forward a recommendation for 45 homes to the parish council. However, it was also recommended that the parish council should work closely with the developer.

It was agreed to recommend a change of wording of the policy to “shall not exceed 3 traveller pitches”.

The Clerk was asked to draft a letter to Ashford Borough Council in reply to the draft Local Plan document for discussion at the full council meeting.

Proposed by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse Seconded by: Cllr C Friend.

Councillors were asked to consider the recommendations and to vote upon them as being the council’s formal decision. The recommendations **were not agreed.**

Further discussion then took place. Concern was expressed that if any development was to take place it could lead to a much larger development. Another concern was that there was a need to look at the issue more economically and beneficially as residents were required to help the local economy. A decision had to be made in order to respond to the Draft ABC Local Plan document and councillors were asked their views. Two councillors favoured zero development whilst others would be happy with a development of 20-25 houses.

A vote was, therefore taken on restricting the development to 20-25 homes and the result was as follows:

For: 5 Against: 2

It was therefore **agreed by majority** that the parish council would inform Ashford Borough Council of its formal decision for there to be 20-25 houses rather than the proposed 45 in response to the ABC Draft Local Plan document.

Possible benefits were discussed, e.g. the cycle way. The costs of a cycle way were discussed and it was noted that it is unlikely that this will be affordable at present. Cllr Bell stated that he had received a copy of the initial plans and whilst the plan was potentially expensive there may be other less expensive approaches such as doing it in stages. He suggested that the council might consider commissioning a report to assess whether there could be another approach.

Discussion took place regarding Etchingham parish council and Flimwell and their recent experiences. **It was agreed** that Cllr Stevenson-Rouse would contact Etchingham pc to arrange an informal "fact finding" meeting which would also be attended by other councillors in order to discuss the process they went through and how they negotiated benefits for their village. The findings would be reported back to the council.

The draft of a letter to be sent to ABC was discussed. Amendments needed to be made to reflect the council's decision and the use of language used in the draft document. The new draft would be circulated to councillors for their comment and agreement before it was sent off.

10. Electoral Review of Ashford

A letter had been received regarding an Electoral Review of Ashford. The review will recommend new electoral arrangements for Ashford Borough Council. For parishes, the review can recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils i.e. the number, names and boundaries of parish wards and the number of parish councillors for each parish ward. However, this is only in circumstances where the parished area is to be divided between wards.

It was agreed that the Clerk would respond to the consultation on the council's behalf recommending that a) the remainder of Woodlands, which is currently under High Halden, is brought into Biddenden along with the majority of the site; and b) the industrial units at Bounds Cross be brought into Biddenden as some were Biddenden and others were Headcorn.

Proposed by: Cllr D Boulding Seconded by: Cllr T Bizley. **Unanimous.**

11. Post Office

There has been a poster on the noticeboard from the PO plc stating that the Biddenden PO business is for sale. It has now been removed as it is a legal requirement that the poster goes up for a set period of time to show that it is still "live". It is understood that the postmaster at Headcorn is no longer interested in taking on the Biddenden Post Office in the face of the PO plc's insistence that it follows its PO Local model.

Biddenden Post Office will continue to run as usual for the foreseeable future and the postmistress is looking into what else could be sold in the PO and liaising with Cllr Bell in order to try and ensure that this remains the case.

Discussion took place about what may be sold in the Post Office. The Postmistress will make a proposal to the parish council.

12. Health and Safety Policy

This will be discussed at the September meeting.

13. Press/Media Policy

This will be discussed at the September meeting.

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

Car Park, Toilets and Post Office: Arrangements have been made for the CCTV unit to be serviced.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: It had been reported that cars were going into the Millennium Field car park at around 1 am and causing a disturbance. A parishioner had already informed the PCSO. It was **agreed** to ask VHMC if the squash club cctv unit recorded number plates of cars entering.

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: A contractor has been asked to quote to even up the stones beneath the Lych-gate.

Mini Sid: At the last meeting Cllr Lidgett undertook to get further details on grants etc. for the mini SID. Details of the scheme and the units were discussed. Cllr Lidgett was asked to look into a solar powered unit as the battery life of the units was poor and would require regular changing.

The dog warden should be contacted regarding replacing a damaged dog waste bin.

Noticeboard: A revised quotation has been received but Cllr Lidgett is obtaining a second.

A contractor has been approached to look at the white lines in the car park.

The sign for the Defibrillator is being dealt with.

Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area:

The work on the play area commenced on 11 July and are scheduled to finish on 24 July. A water supply for watering the turf has been located and the parish council has purchased a hose to help with this. The drop posts will be left down for the duration to allow vehicles to get onto the area. No Parking signs have been done to prevent parking in this area. Neighbouring properties have been leafleted regarding the works.

It was agreed that the drop down post keys in the GJ car park would be copied and that the play area contractor would be handed a set so that he can lock them up into position at night.

It was agreed that there should be an official opening ceremony on Saturday 27th August and that Cllrs Hill and Bell should be invited. The press would be informed nearer the time.

Planning and Local Housing: Please see items 8 and 9 above.

Police Liaison and Neighbourhood Watch: PCSO Sinden had submitted a report.

The Police UK site 8 crimes reported in for May 2016:

Criminal Damage & Arson	2
Vehicle Crime	2
Violence & Sexual Offences	4

KALC: An Ashford KALC workshop will take place on 13th July 2016 looking at the Local Plan. Simon Cole from ABC will be doing a presentation. Cllrs Lidgett and Stevenson-Rouse will attend.

Parish & Urban Forum: Nothing to report.

Community Project Fund: Nothing to report. Applications for the next round will be due by the end of October. Notices will go up at the appropriate time.

Village Hall Management Committee: Report to be given at the meeting. The hire charges for the village halls has increased by 5% but equates to a rise of £1-2.

Health and Safety: "No Parking" and "Caution" notices had been placed in the car park. Nothing further to report.

Allotments: Nothing to report.

John Mayne School: At the time of writing this document the July newsletter is not available on the John Mayne website, but it can be viewed when published via the following link: <http://www.john-mayne.kent.sch.uk/News/Newsletters/>

15. Finance

a) Approval of cheques for payment b) Note accounts to 30 June 2016 c) End of year accounts

It was agreed that payment of salaries by BACS is being looked into due to NatWest changing their clearing time to 7 days even if paid into the branch on which the cheque is drawn.

It was noted that a cheque for the full amount for the work on the play area will need to be paid after 24th July. At the point that the invoice is received a VAT refund can be done and the applications to the already agreed grants made. **It was agreed** that once

work on the play area is finished Cllrs Friend and Parks would check the play area and if all is ok they would authorise the Clerk on the council's behalf to pay the invoice.
Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Unanimous.**

16. Planning – to note decisions and any plans tabled

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
16/00902/AS	Biddenden	Timberwood, 9 Headcorn Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8JA Demolition of existing outbuildings and replacement with two storey link attached ancillary annexe to main dwelling.	Support
16/00827/AS	Biddenden	River Hall Oast, River Hall Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8JE Proposed construction of garage and stable building and change of use of land to residential curtilage	Support

17. Correspondence

It was agreed that Biddenden Juniors could use the pitches for a 24 hour football fundraiser. There were no other comments upon correspondence items.

18. Items for future consideration

Meeting re Pension arrangements
Health & Safety policy
Press/Media policy

19. Date of Next Meeting: Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 13 September 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

Note: There is no meeting in August

The meeting closed at 10.20 pm.

Alison Swannick
Parish Clerk