

Biddenden Parish Council

APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held virtually on Tuesday 5 May 2020 at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr J Tydeman (Chair)
Cllr M Clixby
Cllr C Friend
Cllr G Latter

Cllr J Montgomery
Cllr J Wright

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

No parishioners requested to join the meeting

1. Election of the Chairman for 2020/21

It was proposed that Cllr J Tydeman be Chairman for the year 2020/21. Proposed by: Cllr C Friend Seconded by: Cllr J Wright. **Unanimous.** Duly elected.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr T Bizley
Cllr D Boulding
Cllr Cansdale
Cllr R Hunt

3. Election of the Vice Chairman for 2020/21

It was proposed that Cllr C Friend be Vice Chairman for the year 2020/21. Proposed by: Cllr J Montgomery Seconded by: Cllr G Latter. **Unanimous.** Duly elected.

4. Any declarations of interest in items on the Agenda

None.

5. Any alterations to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Councillors were reminded that any alterations to a councillor's Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests at any time or at a meeting to either the Clerk or directly to ABC.

There were no alterations.

6. Approval of the unapproved minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2020

There being no amendments or comments on the unapproved minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2020, the minutes were deemed to be a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr J Wright Seconded by: Cllr C Friend. **Unanimous.**

7. Any matters for information not on the agenda

A co-ordination meeting has been taking place weekly between BPC, BBC, Neighbourhood Watch, the Food Bank, Biddenden Transport and All Saints Church, and councillors have been receiving copies of the minutes. All the groups are working extremely hard to help parishioners by doing their shopping, collecting prescriptions and even just keeping in touch. The Parish Council wishes to thank all volunteers involved.

Discussion took place regarding the cost to volunteers of fuel as they have been paying for their own. However, given the rural nature of the parish the mileage between shops and parishioners can be large. The Chairman reported that Biddenden Transport paid their volunteers 45p per mile and that this was the amount allowed by HMRC. The parish council should be helping volunteers as they were financing the operation themselves. The parish council was not able to pay individuals directly and it had been agreed with Biddenden Transport, which is a constituted body with annual accounts and a bank account, that they would administer payments on behalf of the parish council. **It was agreed** that the parish council would give £300 pcm to Biddenden Transport to pay out to volunteers of BBC upon receipt of a completed form detailing mileage etc. Proposed by: Cllr C Friend Seconded by: Cllr J Wright. **Unanimous**

Discussion took place with Cllr Bell regarding the possibility of applying to his Ward Member's fund in the sum of £500 to cover back payments from the beginning of the lockdown. He asked that the Clerk email him with this request.

8. Report by Borough Councillor

Cllr Bell reported that ABC continues to administer the small business rates scheme and noted that in excess of £22 million had been paid out. Approximately 88% of clubs in Ashford Borough had been paid. Those that have not applied are being chased up.

Financial difficulties will be faced given that the borough council has had to find £4 million to cover additional costs caused by Covid-19 pandemic. The government has given £1.3 million but it is suspected that the remainder will have to be covered by the borough council's reserves, which it can do.

Planning permission has been granted to turn the derelict Newtown Railway works into Ashford International Film Studios. Netflix and Amazon have shown an interest in the development.

9. Parishioners Questions

No parishioners requested to join the virtual meeting.

10. Receipt of nominations to existing committees and groups and other Council nominated positions

The membership of committees and working groups was **agreed** for 2020/21 as follows:

Committees

Finance Committee: Cllr E Cansdale; Cllr D Boulding; Cllr R Hunt; Cllr J Tydeman; Cllr T Bizley (Committee membership is 3 or more councillors)

Internal Review Committee: Cllr D Boulding; Cllr J Tydeman; Cllr C Friend (Committee membership is 3 or more councillors)

Planning and Local Housing: Cllr E Cansdale leads. All Councillors are members of this committee.

The above memberships were proposed by: Cllr C Friend Seconded by: Cllr G Latter.
Unanimous.

Working Groups

LTIDP: Cllr C Friend, Cllr R Hunt, Cllr E Cansdale.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: J Wheadon; F Sansom; A Copps; M Conway; Cllr E Cansdale; Cllr C Friend. Cllr G Latter. T Lupton (Leads).

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: Cllr T Bizley; Cllr E Cansdale; Cllr J Wright (Leads); Cllr R Hunt.

Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area: Cllr D Boulding; Cllr E Cansdale; Cllr C Friend; Cllr T Bizley (Leads).

Police Liaison: Cllr E Cansdale; Cllr M Clixby; Cllr J Montgomery.

Community Project Fund: Cllr C Friend (Leads); Cllr D Boulding; Cllr R Hunt; Cllr E Cansdale

Old Post Office Working Group: Cllr J Tydeman (Chair), Cllr E Cansdale; Cllr M Clixby
Cllr J Montgomery

Regeneration Working Group: Cllr J Wright (Leads); Cllr G Latter; Cllr T Bizley; Cllr M Clixby (a new name for the group is to be put forward)

The above memberships of Working Groups were **agreed**. Proposed by: Cllr M Clixby
Seconded by: Cllr J Wright. **Unanimous.**

Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back

Parish Council appointed positions 2019-20

The following appointments of councillors was **agreed**:

KALC and Parish & Urban Forum: Cllr R Hunt; Cllr T Bizley

Village Hall Trustee: Cllr C Friend

Tenterden Forum: Cllr C Friend

Biddenden Consolidated Charity:

Co-optative Trustees: Mr Mark Scott (to February 2021 – five years); Mr Nigel Gould (to December 2023 – five years)

Representative Trustees: Mrs F Brockman (to December 2022); Mrs M Farris (to December 2022); Ms P Harris (December 2020). Representative Trustees are appointed for a period of four years. There are three parish council appointed trustees out of a total of five: Mrs F Brockman, Mrs M Farris and Ms P Harris.

The above appointments/memberships were noted and agreed.

11. Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.

The Parish Council insurance is with Zurich and there is a three year contract in place. The renewal documentation is enclosed and the premium for 2020-21 is £1,393.53 including taxes. The renewal was **agreed**. Proposed by: Cllr C Friend Seconded by: Cllr J Wright. **Unanimous.**

12. Review of the Council's and/or employee's memberships of other bodies

2019-20

KALC		748.46 excl VAT
CPRE		36.00
Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRE)		75.00
Satswana		150.00 excl VAT
Society of Local Council Clerks (Clerk))	196.00
ALCC (Clerk))	

Membership of Kent County Playing Fields Association had lapsed. The annual subscription is £20 and **it was agreed** to re-join.

All above memberships were **agreed**. Proposed by: Cllr J Wright Seconded by: Cllr C Friend.
Unanimous

13. Traffic Issues

It was reported that there had been an accident at Castletons Oak. The speed of vehicles had increased at Woolpack Corner.

Nothing further has been heard regarding the village green junction options. Cllr Friend will be chasing Kent Highways.

The ditches by the turkey farm on Benenden Road had been cleared by the owner.

14. Reports from Group Chairmen (if necessary):

Old PO, Car park and toilets: The lease of the Old PO is now complete. Invoices are being drawn up for the tenant.

The contract with SSE for the electricity and toilets will finish in July 2021 and a new contract with Pozitive Energy has been signed as the broker used to find the best price has identified them as the best prices and the rates have been tied in.

A water meter will be put into The Old Post Office as soon as the Lockdown is over. It is likely to be an ordinary meter rather than put in by Castle Water. The Clerk will look into changing the supplier (Castle Water) as they charge 6 months in advance rather than for the water used.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: The paths will shortly be cut, although the grass needs to grow a little longer. In the meantime the order has been given to D&S Chestnut Ltd to crown lift all the oak trees in the avenue from the top to the bottom of the Millennium Field. This will allow the mower to get under the trees properly. The woodchip will be left on site for use on the footpaths.

Normally the ground would be rolled but the weather went very quickly from being too wet to too dry and so this will have to take place next year.

The hedge was due to be cut, but due to Covid-19 this has been delayed and therefore missed the window, so it will have to wait until the birds have finished nesting.

Any work on the field outstanding due in the winter but was delayed due to weather conditions will now have to wait until the end of the year.

It was noted that the top pond was now filling up.

A meeting will need to be held in due course to look at where to plant the trees, that Cllr Clixby is kindly looking after.

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: An email was received from a parishioner saying that there are plenty of litter bins in the village centre but that it might be a good idea to have them regularly spaced going up to towards Bloomsburys and along the main road from Cot Lane to the Recreation ground. Councillors discussed the matter and concluded that the current bin provision was adequate so no further action was required.

A report has also been made regarding the recreation ground sign on the Tenterden Road. The sign has been hit and is not pointing where it should. The clerk was asked to get a contractor to turn it in the correct direction.

Gordon Jones Field and Play Area: A visit has been carried out by Shared Access to look at the playing field to see what equipment is required for the reparation work. Further details on this are awaited.

Work to raise the ground beneath the roundabout in the children's play area has taken place.

Cllr Bell reported that several comments in a recent ABC survey mentioned the play area on the Gordon Jones field and were complimentary.

Multipurpose trail: No report. The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr Bizley.

Police Liaison: The "Your Area" part of the Police UK site is currently not operating. However, PCSO Kate Richards had sent a report which was circulated. **It was agreed** that a letter be written to PCSO Richard's superior officer as she does an excellent job in the parish.

KALC: Nothing to report.

Tenterden Forum: Nothing to report.

Community Project Fund: A meeting will be held shortly. Only one application had been received.

Regeneration: Nothing to report at present as replies on issues are awaited.

LTIDP: Nothing to report at present.

Allotments: Two tenancy agreements have been terminated and two new allotment tenants have taken these allotments on from the waiting list. There is currently a short waiting list of 3.

Village Hall Management Committee: Nothing to report

Health and Safety: A report had been circulated.

15. Finance

a) Payment of cheques

The list was circulated and **agreed**.

b) Note accounts to 30 April 2020 – The internal auditor is currently doing the annual audit for 2019-20 and confirmation of figures was awaited.

c) Annual Return – The external auditor has just published details for the 2019-20 Annual Return and this is being done in order to send to the accountant.

16. Planning – to note decisions and any plans tabled

17/01896/CONB/AS	Biddenden	<p>Garage blocks between 16 and 17, The Weavers, Biddenden, Kent Discharge of condition 10</p> <p><i>10. No construction activities shall take place, other than between 0730 to 1800 hours (Monday to Friday) and 0730 to 1300 hours (Saturday) with no working activities on Sunday, Public and Bank Holiday. Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy CS1 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.</i></p> <p>https://planning.ashford.gov.uk/planning/IDOX/default.aspx?docid=1323633</p>	Support
20/00283/AS	Biddenden	<p>Castweazle Lodge, Castweazle Farm, Fosten Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EL Change of use of land, erection of front porch, side conservatory & rear extension</p>	Support
20/00506/AS	Biddenden	<p>Barn at, Dashmond Farm, High Halden Road, Biddenden, Kent Proposed demolition of existing agricultural buildings (approved under 19/00186/AS) and erection of new dwelling</p>	Support
<p>20/00518/ASf https://planning.ashford.gov.uk/Planning/SearchResults.aspx?new=true</p>	Biddenden	<p>2 Ibornden Cottages, Frittenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8LG Proposed driveway, proposed 5 bar gate and removal of lay-by style parking to existing dwelling house to provide access</p>	Support
20/00525/AS	Biddenden	<p>Squirrels Oak, Tenterden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8BL Proposed incidental use outbuilding</p>	Support
20/00557/AS	Biddenden	<p>Little Omenden Farm, Biddenden, Ashford, TN27 8QP Proposal: Variation of conditions 2 & 10 on planning permission 19/01739/AS (Demolition of agricultural barn and erection of two dwellings) to change approved plans/design</p>	Support

17. Correspondence

The Correspondence List had been circulated. There were no comments/requests for information.

18. Items for future consideration

- Review of policies and procedures
- Review of Asset Register

19. Staffing

Discussion took place regarding the Clerk's annual salary review.

20. Next meeting: Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 2 June 2020 at 7.30 pm Date of the Annual Parish Meeting to be confirmed

The meeting closed at 20:45

Mrs A Swannick
Parish Clerk