

*These minutes are subject to approval at the meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup> 2007*

**Biddenden Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the meeting held in the Old Village Hall on**  
**October 9<sup>th</sup> 2007**

Present

Cllr A Barfoot

Cllr C Friend

Cllr Mrs E Cansdale

Cllr T Lupton

Cllr Mo Charlton

Cllr H Richards

Cllr M Conway

Cllr J Rymer Jones - **Chairman**

Cllr C Daly

Cllr P Whapham – **Vice Chairman**

Also present – Cllr N Bell, Ashford BC and 10 parishioners

**1 Apologies for absence**

Received from Cllr Mrs Ashcroft

**2 Members Register of Interests**

There were no alterations

**3 Items raised by parishioners present**

Mr D Linnett felt the fact that the Post Office Relocation Fund accounts were not made available to the PC for scrutiny should be minuted.

Mrs R Ashton queried the cost to the parishioners of the Audit Commission's enquiry into the complaints raised by Ms Clark and D Linnett. (*Unknown at present*) She also asked what they hoped to achieve as a result of their complaints. Mrs Ashton expressed the view that the Jubilee Meadow site behind Old Mill Court would be a suitable location for a new doctors surgery.

Mrs D Marshall queried the annual cost to the villagers of paying for the Jubilee Meadow (£2,600) and felt the building of a village surgery on a small part would be welcomed by parishioners as the new Headcorn surgery would be a long walk from the bus route.

Mr B Wingham was of the view that part of the Jubilee Meadow could be used for a doctors surgery as the field was bought by villagers for village use.

Mrs D Clayden was of the view that a contributory factor in the Audit Commissions costs was the fact that the council had been evasive in answering questions raised earlier by some councillors and parishioners.

Mr T Churton queried who owns the short stretch of road between the main road and the village car park. (*The ownership is unknown*)

**4 Minutes of the meeting held on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2007**

These were approved and signed by the Chairman with the following addition to para. 9 suggested by Cllr Richards,

“The Council had requested details of the Post Office Relocation Fund but Mr Hunt (the Treasurer) had declined on the basis that this was a (non Council) fund to support the Postmistress and the expenses of the moves to new accommodation”

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## 5 **Reports from Group chairmen**

### Car park and toilets

Cllr Daly had obtained quotes for tidying the car park hedge and trees and all agreed the quote from "Over the Hedge" for £225 initial work and £80 twice a year for maintenance be accepted.

A "short term only" waiting sign for £64.63p was also agreed.

A proposal to install CCTV in the car park was agreed but Cllr Daly was asked to obtain two more comparative quotes to the one from "K & S Security" before a final decision could be taken. Cllr Lupton was anxious that the correct surveillance procedures be adhered to in any scheme.

Now that the Post Office scheme is virtually complete the Clerk was asked to arrange for the independent accountant to carry out a final "back check" of all income and expenditure.

### Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow

Cllr Richards said working parties were under way and one recent task had been the removal of tree guards.

As regards various comments on the Jubilee Meadow made in 3 above Cllr Richards said the Stewardship Grant scheme allowed unrestricted educational access to the field but not general access.

He agreed to look at a further repair needed to the school path gate.

### Traffic and pedestrians

Cllr Friend said a Group meeting would be held next week.

He referred to the imminent improvements to the main road by Cot Lane and the fact that the High Street south side pavement is now in KCC's 2008/9 budget. Cllr Richards asked that the pavement outside the "Old Royal George" be levelled for easy access.

### Gordon Jones Field

Cllr Charlton circulated a list of the remedial works necessary following the RoSPA inspection.

It was agreed that the whole play area needs refreshing and Cllr Charlton said he would visit some suppliers to get an idea of possibilities. He would discuss with Cllr Mrs Cansdale and report at the next meeting.

The Clerk was asked to contact Tenterden Tigers re some sacks of lime "dumped", also he was asked to see play area graffiti was painted out in black.

### Police

It was noted that our Police Community Support Officer was in training and could be in post by December. Cllr Lupton felt that nearer the time of deployment the Council should clarify what we expected of the Officer. Cllr Daly confirmed this would be done in consultation with the local police HQ at Tenterden. It was agreed that at the appropriate time a household drop would be made advising all parishioners of the new appointment and his/her role.

### Housing

Applicants for the vacancy in Cheeslands had been confirmed as having village connections.

The Rural Housing Trust was noted as being interested in a further "affordable housing" development.

#### KAPC/Parish Forum

Cllr Conway reported that Ashford BC's "Core Strategy" would be delayed until June 2008. He also said ABC were generally supportive of "infilling" within the village envelopes. ABC lettings policy had also been covered.

Biddenden was one of eight villages in the Ashford Borough that was likely to be a "growth point" and developments could trigger Section 106 agreements whereby the village gained a community asset from the development. There would be local meetings chaired by ABC to explain 106 possibilities.

#### Youth

Cllr Daly had attended an ABC Kent Youth Meeting today and felt there were some exciting possibilities. He would make a budget bid for next year.

#### Website

Cllr Lupton circulated a paper setting out his recommendations and it was agreed it would be considered again at the November meeting. Cllr Conway said he felt it important that the Council's website be distinct from any general village website.

### **6 Ashford Borough Council report –Cllr N Bell**

Cllr Bell mentioned six points,

- ABC had been advised by government that to reject a gypsy site it must have an alternative available.
- He confirmed Cllr Conway's comments re section 106 agreements
- There is a possibility (but no certainty) that the "blue box" scheme may become universal in the Borough
- Biddenden Post Office is not in the Kent list of closures
- As regards the "Core Strategy" it is possible that the Inspector examining Ashford's proposals may give some "binding caveats" to any approval
- "Score on the Doors" is a new Ashford initiative to drive up hygiene standards at catering outlets. It has been well received.

He also reported that the PO ramp would be considered by the Planning Committee on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Cllr Bell said that if the village really wanted a new doctors surgery it should be proactive in suggesting a site.

### **7 Audit Commission**

The clerk reported that following discussion with the Commission they had stated they now had all the information required and hoped to issue their findings by early November.

### **8 Finance (see attached)**

Cllr Whapham said how useful he thought the print out of the Council's current financial position was as a result of the new finance package which the clerk was mastering. Cllr Lupton asked if the monthly approval of payments sheet could include the up to date bank balance.

Cllr Lupton also said a Finance Committee meeting had been arranged for October 23<sup>rd</sup> to set out the 2008/9 budget. Any bids for inclusion to the Clerk please.

9 **Planning** (see attached)

Possible new doctors surgery

(Cllrs Mrs Cansdale, Conway and Daly declared an interest)

The Chairman said four possible sites had been mentioned,

- a portion of the Jubilee Meadow behind Old Mill Court
- a portion of the Millennium Field car park
- an area near Sandeman Way
- The ABC Cheeslands recreation round play area

Cllr Lupton said Tapley Field near the Old Workhouse may also be a possibility as it belongs to the Consolidated Charity. (He asked it be noted he is Treasurer of the Charity).

Councillors rejected the MF car park option and felt the doctors practice had itself rejected the Jubilee Meadow site in view of some village opposition. The Council would work with the doctors as appropriate over the remaining sites.

10 **Correspondence** (see attached)

Cllr Richards said copies of letters concerning agenda items ought to be circulated in advance to all councillors. The Clerk said he would do this but there would always be an element of judgment as to what should be included.

A draft reply to Ms Clarks's letter of October 1<sup>st</sup> was circulated to all councillors and they agreed it was an appropriate response.

11 **Other matters for information**

Cllr Mrs Cansdale drew attention to loose tiles on the roof of the bus shelter.

The Chairman mentioned a Tenterden Leisure Centre sports bursary for young talented athletes and other sports people aged 11 to 25 that is available to any sports discipline where the applicant is of high potential.

12 **Items for November meeting**

2008/9 budget; PCSO; Jubilee Meadow; Website

13 **Next meeting November 13<sup>th</sup> 2007**

Graham Smith, Parish Clerk 01622 890596

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