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Biddenden Parish Council

APPROVED minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 4 July at 7.30 pm in the village hall, Biddenden

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

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Wayre due to work commitments
Cllr Stevenson-Rouse due to personal commitments
Cllr Tydeman due to personal commitments

4 parishioners present.

2. Parishioners' Questions

None.

3. Any declarations of interest in items on the Agenda

Cllr Boulding declared an interest in the wall at East Wing, Cloth Hall.

4. Any alterations to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

None.

5. Approval of the unapproved minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2017

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

6. Any matters for information not on the agenda

a) The Bowls Club has asked to put up a big banner on the Bowls Club hedge from April – June each year. It was noted that it had already been put up on the hedge. **It was agreed** that the banner was too big and should be smaller and that it should be attached to the Bowls Club fence facing into the Gordon Jones Playing Field. The banner must not be put on the hedge as it will kill it.

b) The final recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Ashford Borough Council have been received. The report and detailed maps can be seen at: consultation.lgbce.org.uk and www.lgbce.org.uk.

c) The salt box in the churchyard is full of dead flowers/compost etc. People should be using the bins. **It was agreed** to write to Biffa asking them to empty the bins and to the church asking them to ensure people don't put rubbish in it. Cllr Bell asked that any email to Biffa should be copied to Cllr C Bell.

d) It was reported that the vicar had told the Chairman that the church may run out of

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room in the graveyard in the future. The first step would be to see if they could move some of the old graves. There are only eight burials at most in one year. It was noted that Smarden were using a small area apart from the main graveyard. It was noted that some money had been allocated in the North Street development for cemeteries. **It was agreed** that the Chairman should speak to the vicar further.

e) **It was agreed** that the hedge at the front of the PO car park should be cut.

f) It was reported that the Horticultural Society was happy to snip overgrown shrubs on the village green in the absence of the gentleman who usually looks after it due to illness. **It was agreed** that this should be done and that the Horticultural Society compile a report of shrubs/plants that needed to be taken out and replaced.

g) The Biddenden Allotment Society have an open day on 8/9 July and that they would appreciate councillors attending. Cllrs Boulding, Lidgett and Bizley undertook to attend over the weekend.

7. Report by Borough Councillor, ABC

Cllr Bell reported that over the last few months there had been a number of tragic events. A high level meeting was held at ABC following the Grenfell fire to check what the situation was in Ashford and to look at their own procedures for both security and fire. An independent fire inspection service has been commissioned to look at protocols and also at protocols for displaced people. ABC is in pretty good shape and they do review these things.

At the Cabinet meeting held Thursday before last ABC approved the next stage of the Draft Local Plan. It was noted that Gladman had succeeded in getting planning permission in Smarden and were looking at land in other villages across the borough. The new version of the Draft Local Plan shows that Biddenden has no additional sites approved. Gladman follow an aggressive business model. They do not talk to the councils but put in for planning permission and then go to Appeal.

The draft local plan will provide better protection although it cannot guarantee 100%, but it does provide a strong defence. ABC will defend its plan robustly and tenaciously and has a planning QC lined up. ABC is in a much more defensible position.

Cllr Bell was asked about the commencement of building in The Weavers. He undertook to chase it up. The PC was asked to send an email to him regarding the lack of activity.

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

Details have been received from ABC of where parishioners can view the draft local plan and the dates of the consultation which runs from 7th July – 31st August. The document of the Main Changes can be viewed at and comments made at www.ashford.gov.uk/consult. Details of the consultation will be put on the parish council website, noticeboard and submitted to the Parish Magazine.

Further to the information provided at the last meeting regarding Gladman wishing to possibly develop 30 acres to the rear of North Street, the Clerk has spoken to a parishioner who is a town planning consultant and is willing to meet to discuss the matter further and advise the council. **It was agreed** that Cllrs Lidgett, Parks, Stevenson-Rouse and Wayre will meet with the parishioner to discuss the matter.

With regard to a parishioner requesting the redrawing the village envelope, this and neighbourhood planning were discussed at the meeting held on 11 October 2016 and the following was agreed: *The majority of councillors felt that a Neighbourhood Plan and a*

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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.

It was noted that ABC is happy to work with councils wishing to fix boundaries. However, doing so will not prevent sites outside the boundary/envelope being put forward around the village for development and in cases where permission is given the boundaries would need to be redrawn.

9. Reports from Group Chairmen

PO, Car park and toilets: A hole developed in the electricity cable into the PO and an electrician had to be called out last weekend as an emergency and UK Power Networks being called out as the problem was not within the PO. This has resulted in the post office having to be closed at times due to it being unsafe due to blue flashes from the meter box. The path down the side of the post office has been dug up and the cable fixed. UK Power Networks have come back and fixed the path.

There is a major problem with some cars being parked in the PO car park all day and residents parking cars in there permanently. Letters have been placed on their windscreens asking them not to park there as they are there for more than the permitted 4 hours. This seems to have made no difference and KALC and the PCSO have been asked for advice as there is not enough parking for others visiting the village. Polite letters have been put on the cars but it has had no effect and in one case the letter was torn up and dropped in the car park.

Following a visit by the Clerk on 30 June at 9.00 am to the PO and checking of the car park re lines, it was noted that the car park was full. Several cars are understood to belong to a nearby residence and other belong to employees of a business in the High Street. **It was agreed** that the landlord of the residence will be informed of the issue and that a letter to all businesses will be delivered suggesting that staff park in the Millennium Field car park to help alleviate the problem. Details of a clamping company will be looked at to see if it would be of help in the village.

An alternative quotation for re-lining the car park has been sought from Acculine.

Fly tipped plastic containers have removed from the PO car park.

A new two year electricity contract has been signed with SSE.

The Chairman stated that there was an issue relating to the PO which should be discussed in closed session at the end of the meeting and he sought permission from councillors to do this. **Agreed.**

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: A meeting of the working group was held on 13 June and the following recommendations made:

Work to be carried out in 2017/8

Jubilee Meadow: It was confirmed that the Jubilee Meadow is rolled every spring. It is recommended that the grazier be requested to mark on a map the stream line areas with orchids so that these can be avoided.

Hedge Cutting: It is recommended the following hedges are cut in autumn 2017:

- the internal hedges of the Jubilee Meadow
- the Millennium Field Hedge from the Southern corner to the top of the oak avenue
- all the roadside hedges

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Opening up paths: It is recommended path from the Middle Pond to the Sun Dial is side pruned to open it up. JW and FS to lead.

Statues: It is recommended that the statues are oiled. FS to liaise with Clerk re purchase of oil.

Mowing, ragwort and dock pulling: It is recommended that the mowing and weed pulling programme continue as in past years.

Scrub clearing around top pond: It is recommended to remove small woody growth from western bank (JW to lead).

Work for inclusion in 2018/9 Budget

It was noted that the lower pond will need dredging and the willows pollarding in late summer 2018, as this will involve using contractors to also consider carrying out some tree work around the top pond which will be needed within a couple of years. It is suggested that a quotation be obtained for the following work (likely to be of the order of £2,500), some of which might be delayed depending on the cost:

- Pollarding willows around lower pond
- Clearing scrub from west bank of lower pond
- Dredging pond and removing spoil to sunken area in Jubilee Meadow
- To prune back the larger oak trees around the top pond (optional)
- Pollarding middle willow at top pond (optional)

It is recommended that funds for this work be included in the Council's budget for 2018/9.

Apart from the above costs in 2018/9 will be in line with previous years, provided no unexpected maintenance is required.

Thinning of young woodland

Sometime in the next few years the woodland will need to be thinned. The tailings could provide material for encouraging pedestrians to keep on the footpaths within the woodland, and help preserve the fragile blue bells and other plants in Spring.

Hedge Laying

If funds were available in the current year approximately 150 metres of hedge at the top of the oak avenue would benefit from being laid. The cost is approximately £12/metre (Total £1800).

The recommendations were discussed. Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr T Bizley. **Unanimous**

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: An issue has arisen regarding the boundary wall of the East Wing, Old Cloth Hall. In the past the council has looked at removing the ivy from the wall but the wall is not in good repair. It is currently uncertain who owns the wall past the boundary of Old Cloth Hall and enquiries are being made to KCC and ABC as the land doesn't belong to the PC. Cllr Wayre has been asked to take an active look at the wall. The issue was discussed and **it was agreed** that the parish council should not take on responsibility for maintenance of the wall. The Clerk was asked to check to see if the wall is listed and to check with the land registry as to who owns the last section of the wall.

Gordon Jones Field and Play Area: A meeting is being arranged with the Football Club as requested at the last meeting.

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There has been an unprovoked dog attack on the Gordon Jones playing field. The attack was by a dog off the lead against a dog on the lead. The dog did sustain an injury. The owner of the injured animal has asked the council to ban dogs being off-lead on the Gordon Jones Playing Field. The Clerk responded that whilst the matter is very distressing a dog ban can't be placed on the basis of one report. However, the owner was advised of the correct procedure for reporting the attack to either the Dog Warden or the Police. Cllrs agreed with action taken

A picnic table has been re-fixed into the ground as the bolts were removed.

It was noted that the quotation for extending the fencing at the side of the play area had not been received. Cllr Parks agreed to chase it up.

Obtaining quotations for the multi-use trail is underway.

The meeting was closed at 20:58 for refreshments and re-opened at 21:13.

Police Liaison: PCSO Burden had provided list of recent crimes.

Police UK shows that 11 crimes were reported in April 2017:

Anti-Social Behaviour	1
Burglary	2
Other Theft	1
Vehicle Crime	1
Violence and Sexual Offences	6

An email was received from Sergeant Bloomfield regarding Speedwatch. This had been forwarded to the Speedwatch group.

It was reported that PCSO Burden will be leaving in August to start another job. PCSO Moorey has left and is working in Folkestone. There are no replacements and no PCSOs in training coming through. There is only one constable on duty in Kent now. The Clerk was asked to widen the net to include St Michaels, Rolvenden and Woodchurch in terms of asking other parishes if they wished to meet the Police and Crime Commissioner as a group and to inform them of the changes above. Those who have not replied so far should be chased up.

KALC and Parish Forum: BPC has advised that it wishes to sign the joint letter to the Planning Minister and final copy is awaited.

Planning and Housing: Nothing to report.

Community Project Fund: All the donations have been sent to the agreed recipients with the exception of VHMC as they have not come back with the clarifications requested prior to releasing the cheque.

Allotments: An update on the beekeeping issue is awaited.

Village Hall Management Committee: No report given.

Health and Safety: The report was circulated.

John Mayne School: The newsletter was noted.

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10. Finance

- a) *Payment of payments to be made.* Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr D Boulding. **Unanimous.**
- b) *Note accounts to 30 June 2017.* The accounts were noted.

11. Planning – to note decisions and any plans tabled

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
17/00840/AS	Biddenden	6 Worsenden, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EH Formation of new access from the highway and porous driveway	Support
17/00841/AS	Biddenden	5 Worsenden, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EH Formation of new access from the highway and porous driveway	Support
17/00866/AS	Biddenden	Acorn House, 3 The Nightingales, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8HN Proposed detached 4 bay oak construction garage resubmission of application 16/01714/AS	Support
17/00899/AS	Biddenden	Weald View, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EH Erection of front boundary fence. Single storey rear extension	Support
17/00912/AS	Biddenden	Rosedene, Headcorn Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8JW Proposed replacement dwelling and garage; change of use of land to extend residential curtilage	Support
17/00913/AS	Biddenden	Agricultural buildings at Weeks Land Farm, Weeks Lane, Biddenden, Kent Prior approval for the change of use of 2 agricultural buildings and land within their curtilage to 2 dwellings	Support
17/00884/AS	Biddenden	Little Meadow Farm, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8ER Erection of a two storey side extension with integral garage. Replacement of existing derelict workshop. Replacement of dilapidated timber shed housing external electrical supply. New timber-framed building for hydrotherapy pool. Replacement of existing stable block with new carer accommodation	Support
17/00938/AS	Biddenden	Pullen Barn Farm, Headcorn Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8JA Agricultural building for livestock housing (resubmission of application 15/00699/AS)	Support
17/00990/AS	Biddenden	Derby Cottage, Benenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8DJ Demolition of existing bungalow and replacement with chalet bungalow, new drive access off road, parking & garage. (resubmission of application 17/00510/AS)	Support
17/00876/AS	Biddenden	Little Hare Plain, Hareplain Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8LL Proposed holiday let accommodation, the change of use of agricultural land to tourist use, creation of track and parking area.	Supported by majority

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12. Correspondence – There were no comments made.

13. Items for future consideration

The possibility of the existing graveyard being full.

14. Next meeting: Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 5 September 2017 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

No Full Council meeting in August

The meeting was closed in order to discuss an issue relating to the Post Office as agreed. Members of the public were asked to leave the meeting.

Post Office

It was agreed that the matter discussed was not the business of the Parish Council but a matter for the business and the Post Office to resolve.

All Welcome

Alison Swannick
Parish Clerk

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