

BIDFORD ON AVON PARISH COUNCIL

In the County of Warwickshire



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 31st March 2008 at the Parish Council Meeting Room, Bramley Way

PRESENT

Cllrs. Ms. Deacon, Hendey, Hill, Langston,
Sandle and Spiers

Also present. County Cllr. Barnes,
District Cllrs. James, Pemberton – Cllr, Slaughter had sent
in his apologies
Approx. 30 members of the public and 1 member of the
press

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

Both the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council had sent in their apologies. The Clerk requested members to elect a Chairman for the Meeting. Cllr. Sandle, Chairman of the Amenities Working Group was proposed and this was carried.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received, and accepted from Cllrs. Mrs. Keeley, Gerrard, Hiscock and Williams

3. DECLARATION TO INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

All members of the Council are respectfully reminded that in order to comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 20th August 2007 if any matter arises during the meeting in which they have Declared an Interest which could be personal or prejudicial they should declare so and leave the room.

Cllr. Hill declared a non prejudicial interest in planning application Nos. 08/00342/FUL and 08/00452/FUL as he lives nearby.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25TH FEBRUARY 2008

Cllr. Ms. Deacon proposed the Minutes be accepted as being accurate and they were signed by the Chairman

5. YOUTH FORUM

None wished to speak

6. PUBLIC FORUM

All the members of the public present were concerned about the new play area at the rear of the Fire Station.

The Chairman advised them that, as the item was not on the Agenda, the Council would listen to their concerns but it would not be possible for them to reply or make any decisions. Residents were unhappy with this and accused the council of hiding. The Chairman reiterated that it was a statutory requirement that the council may only debate and decide upon items that are on the Agenda as members have to be given time to consider the issues.

- A resident read from the minutes of the December meeting, when the approval of the cost of the swing had been approved. He added that, although the council could not answer the questions, he would like them noted – namely:
 - Who was going to pay to clear up the mess
 - Who was the bright spark who came up with the idea
- Other issues brought up by a number of residents included:
 - Under age drinking in the village
 - Breaking of bottles and litter
 - Graffiti
 - Graffiti on the skate park in Studley and Stratford-upon-Avon

The Chairman then invited PC Tony Lambert, Community Safety Officer at Stratford, who has been working in partnership with the Parish Council to explain the reasons behind the new play area. He advised that the play area had not been a quick whim, but had evolved after a lot of consultation between the Parish Council, Stratford District Council, Warwickshire County Council and other community groups within the village to see what could be done to prevent the increase of anti social behavior within the village.

- The Big Meadow, which is the area many residents perceive as the ideal place for all the youth to be, is only feasible during the spring/summer months when

it is light and therefore safe to walk over the bridge and play on the Big Meadow. However, the Police do not consider it a safe place in the dark winter months.

- The Police bear the brunt of the complaints which in the main involve groups of youngster congregating in areas in the village, in a manner which many elderly find intimidating, so the Police end up moving them from one place to another. And the most frequent question asked by the youngster when being moved on is “where do you want us to go? There is nowhere to go in this place”
- Bidford-on-Avon has grown between 30% and 50% in the last 20 years and although things have improved for adults – it now has a supermarket, pubs, restaurants, shops – there is nothing for the youth. The current youth centre is a shambles. Also, many youngsters like to go somewhere which is not organized by adults
- Courts Way car park was identified as an area where the youth have been meeting for a number of years – Police have been able to verify this – hence the identification of the field at the rear of the Fire Station as the ideal place.

After an hour of discussion regarding this issue, the Chairman closed the forum advising that the matter would be added to the Agenda for the April Parish Council Meeting on 28th April. This was considered too late, so it was brought forward to the Planning Committee Meeting on 14th April. However, it later transpired PC Tony Lambert would not be available and finally it was agreed a meeting between the Parish Council and its Partners, and the Residents would be arranged for Thursday 17th April. Invitations, issued by the Parish Council, would be distributed by SDC Cllr. Pemberton.

In the meantime, invitations to attend an event organized by the Bidford Youth Action together its partners, on Wednesday 9th April was extended to the residents and appropriate invitations had been left on the chairs set out for the public.

All the members of the public left after the Public Forum

7. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

- Police have 21 days to justify their demand for an increase. If this is not acceptable, the appropriate deduction in the council tax would take place in the next financial year as the cost of reissuing the council tax would exceed any reduction from the Police demand.
- Cllr Barnes had met with the Chief Constable regarding Bidford Bridge. He was advised that there are other bridges in the same position. He had also attended a freight meeting and would be attending another one shortly concerning how to improve the enforcement of the 10T weight limit on the bridge. The Police have written to the firms whose HGVs use the bridge illegally.
- Bridge maintenance, as required by the Environment Agency will be taking place. The Clerk advised that she had been told this would be delayed until October so as not to have to close the bridge during the summer months, thus

restricting access to the Big Meadow and other amenities in Barton and Marlcliff.

Cllr. Barnes then left the meeting

8. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

- Eon had finally been persuaded to attend a committee meeting to answer questions regarding electricity supplies to rural areas. Letter regarding this is attached to the Minutes
- Flood – enforcement letter had been sent to landowners requiring them to clean ditches etc.
- Gypsy encampment, which was illegal, had caused problems for the district. A Temporary injunction has been obtained.
- A survey on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Survey had been carried out and this is attached to these Minutes.

9. CLERK'S REPORT

This was read out and a copy, showing proposals and decisions made, where appropriate, is attached to these Minutes of which it forms part.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

- **WALC** – Invitation to “The Next Step – Making the Most of your Role as Parish Councillor” Sat. 12th April 10.00am – 4.00 pm, Warwick Town Hall *Members made the comment that it would be better if this type of workshop was arranged for after the elections of 1st May 2008. None could attend*
- **John Maples MP** –
 - Copy correspondence following floods in Bidford and Broom – *The contents were read out. It would appear the Environment Agency does not believe anything more can be done regarding the River Avon, which is already classed as a High Risk System. Any interested resident is welcome to the Parish Council to read the letter in full. With regards to the River Arrow in Broom, the Parish Council has been in correspondence with the Environment Agency regarding possible defences. It appears that the ground conditions are not as good as they would have liked and they are assessing the situation further. They will continue to keep the Parish Council advised.*
 - copy of correspondence regarding Bidford Bridge – *reply from County Council attached*
- **Worcs. County Council** – Waste Core Strategy – Notice of Withdrawal of preferred options reg. 28 - *Noted*
- **Audit Commission - confirmation of Clement Keys as external auditors** *Noted*
- **The Royal British Legion** – Invitation to attend the Annual Service of Thanksgiving taking place in Bidford-on-Avon on Sunday 6th July 2008 *Noted and councillors would advise the Clerk before the deadline of 8th May*
- Email from Parish Council regarding a petition to 10 Downing Street (circulated) – *The Clerk informed members she had received an email from*

WALC regarding this issue and advising that NALC was the appropriate body to approach. Members agreed with WALC and instructed the Clerk to write to WALC stating that although the Council appreciates the need to improve standards, it feels that an excess of legislation will end stagnating the system as fewer and fewer members of the community will stand for a position that will require more and more man hours, and is carried out on a purely voluntary basis. It feels a balance should be found, especially with regards to smaller councils.

- Donation from resident for £20 for the upkeep of cemetery – *Noted with appreciation*
- Letter from unknown residents – *this had been circulated to members who asked it be noted but as it was anonymous no further comment could be made.*

11. CPD/INSTITUTE

The clerk would like to join The Institute of Local Council Management to continue her development. Cost is £50 per annum + £15 administration fee. The Council approved this request.

12. STREET LIGHTING

- New rates for the unmetered electricity had been advised, effective from 1st April. They are 9.9779p and valid for a period of 12 months. This is for energy from renewable sources.
- A quotation for the removal of the now defunct wooden street light had been received - £429.00 excluding its disposal. In view of the high cost, the council agreed not to remove it for the time being.

13. JUBILEE CLOSE PLAY AREA

The clerk had obtained a quotation for replacement swings – between £2,700 and £3,700. It was proposed that before this expenditure be considered, an inspection of the current swing take place and see if any repairs can be carried out at a considerable lower price. This was carried.

14. LENGTHMAN SCHEME

Approval has now been received from County Council and the clerk will now liaise with County Highways. It was agreed it was essential that the work carried out be of the nature that would be of benefit to the village and could be appreciated.

15. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- **08/00342/FUL – Mark Lee, 15 Old School Mead B50 4AW**
Erection of conservatory off the kitchen at the rear of the property. Width 3950 x Span 3300 x Height 2963
No representation

- **08/00452/FUL – Mr and Mrs. B. Edkins 38 The Meadows B50 4AP**
Demolish existing aluminium lean-to conservatory and construct new white PVCu conservatory on dwarf wall
No representation
- **08/00525/FUL – Thomas Field, 46 Old School Mead, B50 4AW**
To install a hard standing on front garden for 1 car 5m x 5m approx
The Council is very concerned that creating hard standing areas, where there currently is grass, will prevent water naturally draining and instead create a run off of water in an area that was flooded (bottom of Victoria Road) last summer. Furthermore, there is the issue that it is close to the road.
- **08/00603/TREE – Mr. and Mrs. Getgood 108 High Street B50 4AQ**
T1 eucalyptus – remove 2 lateral branches
Support subject to approval by the arboricultural depart.
- **08/00624/FUL – Mr. J Coton, 2 Chapel Gardens B50 4AG**
Conservatory extension
No representation

The meeting was temporarily suspended whilst the above planning applications were being considered – from 9.20 pm to 9.37 pm, when the council was advised that a change in the date for the meeting with residents was required. Details of this are recorded under the Public Forum section of the Minutes

16. ACCOUNTS

Purchases :	£27,061.18
Wages:	2,032.48
Inland Revenue	2,179.93

Payments Received

Fees	£8.50
Meadow Hire Charges	435.00
Burial fees	185.00
Donation	20.00
Allotments	360.00
Grant for CCTV	1,191.00
Grant Bidford Youth Action	5,000.00

It was resolved Cllrs. Hendey and Langston sign the cheques

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

- **FLAME BUS** – A joint venture that aims to provide a “One-stop-Shop” for all council services. It will visit Bidford on Thursday 10th and 24th April between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm – please note the Parish Council Office will operate from FLAME Bus on those days.