

BENINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Benington Parish Council Meeting

13 March, 2013 8.00 pm

Benington School

Minutes

Present: H E L Jones (Chair) K Grundy
C Brown M Spicer

In attendance: P C Harrison (Clerk), and 9 members of the public.

69. Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received from Cllr Karen Mays. Cllr Richard Bott was absent.

70. Declaration of Interests : Cllr Mike Spicer declared that as he serves on the Village Hall Committee, there may be a conflict of interest with item **9 Correspondence Received** (c) Jenny Cobb, Car Park at Benington Village Hall.

71. Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 09 January, 2013 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

b) Review of Actions

- **Jubilee Seat.** The Chairman stated that the Jubilee Seat is now ready for installation, but no suggestions have been received regarding wording for the plaque. The Clerk and Chairman agreed to put together the wording, which will make reference to the Queen's Coronation as well as the Diamond Jubilee.
- **Cllr Spicer to investigate the possibility of a School Crossing Patrol Officer.** Cllr Spicer reported that Ms Heather Hill, Herts County Council, Road Safety Department came out to do a survey, and concluded that there was not enough foot traffic to justify a School Crossing Patrol Officer. Cllr Spicer also contacted Ms Anne Hardy, School Travel Plan and a meeting is to be arranged with Cllr Ken Grundy and Head Teacher, Mrs J Munns to discuss this matter.

72. Roads

72.1 Gritting of Whempstead Road

The Chairman read out an email from Mrs Sue Hewlett requesting that the Whempstead Road from the crossroads to the A602 is gritted in bad weather. The Chairman stated that this area of road comes under the jurisdiction of Watton-at-Stone Parish Council, and they have tried many times in the past to get this area of road gritted without success. Highways state that it is inadvisable for Parish Councils to take on the gritting of roads, due to Public Liability and Health and Safety concerns. The Chairman said that road gritting is outside of the Parish Council's remit.

72.2 Highways to be informed of the following:

Pot Holes in Shummary Lane, Walkern Road.

73. Planning

73.1 Decisions

LPA Ref: 3/12/2119/LB

The Bell P. H. 4 Town Lane, Benington, Herts SG2 7LA
Listed Building Consent to put in Fire Alarm detectors.

BPC no objection.

EHC permission granted.

LPA Ref: 3/12/0661/FP/LP

New Mead Nursery, Walkern Road, Benington, Herts SG2 7LS
Residential development of 2 no. 4 bedroom detached dwellings together
with 3 no. 2 bedroom terraced dwellings (2 dwellings as shared ownership
via housing association).

BPC Objection in part.

EHC permission granted.

The Chairman informed the meeting that due to a change in Government legislation, four or less houses on a development site do not need to include affordable housing.

73.2 LPA Ref: 3/12/2063/FP

Garage site to the North of 9 Three Stiles, Benington, Herts SG2 7LD
Demolition of the existing 3 no. garage blocks and erection of 4 no. two storey
semi-detached houses with three bedrooms, private amenity space and car
parking.

The Chairman stated that the above application has been returned to South Anglia Housing for clarification on one or two points, such as parking etc. If recommended for approval by East Herts Planning, the application will go to the Development Planning Committee. The next Development Planning Committee meeting is on 22nd May, 2013.

The Parish Council resolved to meet the cost of a report commissioned by residents and carried out by Mr Dean Goodman of Philip Dean Limited re: LPA Ref: 3/12/2063/FP Garage site to the North of 9 Three Stiles, Benington, SG2 7LD. Invoice submitted to the Clerk for £250.00 plus VAT.

74. Recreational Facilities

74.1 Recreation Ground – Appointment of Treasurer

The Chairman stated that before the Parish Council approve David Warren as Treasurer to the Benington Recreation Ground Charity Trust (BRGCT) the Parish Council would like clarification of one or two points. The Parish Council to write to the BRGCT on this matter.

74.2 Playground

In Cllr Mays absence, the Clerk circulated a copy of the proposed new signage for the playground. It was resolved to order the new sign at a cost of £130.00 plus VAT.

75. School

Cllr Grundy reported that Benington School is still very popular. Sixteen pupils are due to start in September, with only six leaving, therefore an increase of ten pupils. The school is to apply for an additional classroom, and has operated well within budget for this financial year. The Chairman and Cllr Spicer expressed concern regarding expansion of the school due to traffic congestion in the Walkern Road and problems with parking.

76. Finance

76.1 Expenditure 10.01.13 to 13.03.13

| Date Paid | Name | Details | Total |
|-----------|--------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 25.01.13 | Mr Peter Kingsnorth | Website Maintenance 01.10.12 to 03.12.12. | £ 120.00 |
| 31.01.13 | Mr Stuart Dudley | Litter Picking | £ 120.00 |
| 25.02.13 | East Herts District Council | Emptying of 6 dog waste bins from 01.04.12 to 31.03.13 | £ 1080.36 |
| 25.02.13 | CDA | Annual Membership | £ 30.00 |
| 25.02.13 | Triographics | Printing of Village Shop Questionnaire | £ 54.00 |
| 28.02.13 | Mr Stuart Dudley | Litter Picking | £ 120.00 |

76.2 East Herts Council – Tax Base 2013-2014

The Clerk summarised the above letter from East Herts Council which sets out the Government grant to assist parishes with the impact of the Council Tax support scheme.

76.3 Approval and signing of revised official precept form.

The official precept form, revised due to the above grant, was approved and signed at the meeting.

76.4 New Homes Bonus

It was agreed that the money received from the New Homes Bonus should go towards new playground equipment and the War Memorial.

76.5 Annual Audit risk assessment register.

A risk assessment register drawn up by the clerk, based on the auditor's recommendations, was approved by the Council.

76.6 Review of effectiveness of internal audit document.

A Review of effectiveness of internal audit document drawn up by the clerk, based on the auditor's recommendations, was approved by the Council.

76.7 Appointment of qualified internal auditor to complete Section 4 of the Annual Return.

It was resolved to appoint Helen McCash of McCash and Hay, Accountants as internal auditor.

77. Correspondence Received

(a) River Beane Restoration Association Re: Donation.

It was resolved to donate £25.00 to the River Beane Restoration Association.

- (b) **Nick Hurd MP – Cabinet Office, Charitable Incorporated Organisations.**
The Clerk summarised the above letter, for information. Letter circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

(c) **Jenny Cobb, Car Park at Benington Village Hall.**

The Chairman read out a letter from Jenny Cobb, requesting on behalf of the Village Hall Trustees and the School Governors, £600.00 for repair work to the Village Hall car park. Mrs Cobb also requested that the Parish Council budget to commit an annual sum to car park maintenance.

A discussion ensued on the various other events in the village where the Village Hall car park might be used. Cllr Grundy pointed out that with events such as the ‘Snowdrops’ and Chilli Festival, money was earned by the Village Hall through the selling of teas and lunches.

It was resolved to grant the Village Hall a donation of £600.00 but not to commit to budget an annual sum. The Chairman stated that if money was required next year for maintenance of the car park, the Village Hall Trustees would be required to put forward another application to the Parish Council..

78. War Memorial

The Clerk explained that an Historic Building Grant could be available from East Herts Council towards the repair of the War Memorial in Benington Churchyard. Two quotes will be put forward to East Herts Council as soon as received by the Clerk.

79. Proposed Village Shop

Cllr Brown reported that the next Village Shop meeting will be on 25 March, 2013 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. The meeting will be to decide whether the proposed shop is going to be feasible. Also, the legal structure to develop it, and to consider whereabouts in the village it should be positioned. A Quantity Surveyor will be in attendance to give an idea of costs. The shop will not be brick, but portakabin or log cabin style to reduce costs. Funding will most probably come from the Plunkett Foundation, District Council and foundations that support rural communities. No lottery funding is available.

80. Members’ Points of Information

Cllr Spicer stated that work on the quotes for new equipment for the playground is still on-going but should be finalised by the next meeting.

81. Date of next meeting: The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10 pm. The next meeting will be the Annual Parish Council Meeting, followed by the Annual Parish Meeting on 8 May, 2013 starting at 7.30 pm in the school.