

BENINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Benington Parish Council Meeting
13 January 2016 8.00 pm
Benington School

Minutes

Present: R Bott (Chair) K Daniel
B Morcomb J Jaques
B Taylor

In attendance: J A Haire (Clerk), Mike Hawes and 8 member of the public.

- 01. Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllr Hughes.
- 02. Declaration of Interests :** The Chairman advised that one of the possible sites for development in Benington was owned by his family.
- 03. Minutes of the Last Meeting**
 - a) **Acceptance**
 - The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 11 November 2015 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.
 - b) **Review of Actions**
 - **Drop off box outside school** The Benington Parish Council decided to wait for guidance from the school
 - **BT flooding problem outside the village hall.** The Chairman confirmed that John Birnie had cleared the path, and that the drain in the bottom of the BT service box had resulted in considerable improvement.
 - **Defibrillator application** Cllr Morcom advised that two defibrillators had arrived and would be installed shortly. With respect to the training requirement (which involve watching a DVD), details would be placed on the website, and on the facebook page by Cllr Jaques. One defibrillator will be installed in the entrance to the Village Hall. As the Methodist Chapel had not responded to the site request, it was proposed to approach Ernest Doe about providing a site.
 - **Bus Shelter Library** The Chairman had measured for the shelves but they had not been made.
 - **Litter bin** The Chairman confirmed that the new litter bin had been installed.
- 04. Village Pond**
 - **Pond Fence** The Chairman and Cllr Taylor agreed to make temporary repairs to the fence at the end of February, and further repairs when the pond was drained later in the year. Cllr Taylor to get quotes for kiln dried posts.
 - **Timetable** Following discussion it was decided that draining and clearing the pond would be postponed until September in view of wildlife activity in the coming months. The Chairman advised that it may be necessary to hire a digger. The Chairman would contact Herts Wildlife Trust to seek guidance on how to introduce plants/native species etc. – outstanding.

05. Roads

- **Gulleys** The Chairman reported that requests had been sent to Cllr Crofton regarding the Gully Dig Out Programme.
- **Gravel spilling on to the footway outside No 66 Walkern Road** Cllr Hughes had visited the Residents of one of the two houses at the end of November. They expressed concern that the gravel had caused a nuisance and was a risk to the safety of pedestrians. It was agreed that a letter would be sent from the Parish Council confirming this meeting. The Residents had agreed that both houses between them would clear and properly manage the stones. Cllr Hughes was advised at the meeting that in the fullness of time plans would be made to introduce some paving stones or a small block paved area to prevent this situation happening in the future.

06. Planning

- Planning Application Decision 3/15/1860/CLP – 3 Braceys Benington – replacement of conservatory with single story rear extension – Certificate of use/development granted
- Planning Application Decision 3/15/1900/FUL - The Black Barn Walkern Road Watton At Stone - Change of use from offices to Osteopath and Sports Injury clinic – Planning Permission granted subject to conditions.
- Planning Application Decision 3/15/1799/FUL - Benington Park Benington - Conversion of two stables into micro-distillery - Planning Permission granted subject to conditions.
- Planning Application Decision 3/15/2074/HH – Benington Lordship – rear entrance extension - Planning Permission granted subject to conditions.
- Planning Application Decision 3/15/2075/LBC – removal of ramp to café door - Planning Permission granted subject to conditions.
- Planning Application Decision 3/15/2213/HH - 71A Town Lane Benington – proposed extension to existing garage - Planning Permission granted subject to conditions.
- Planning Application Decision 3/15/2276/LBC – Benington Park – Change of use of two stables into micro-distillery - Planning Permission granted subject to conditions.
- Planning Application Decision 3/15/2253/HH - 2 Whempstead Road Benington – rear extension – Planning Permission Refused.

The above planning notifications were read out by the Chairman. There were no objections by BPC to any of the consultations.

07. Recreational Facilities

- The Chairman had spoken to Peter Warren regarding the new Pavillion and agreed that Mr Warren would give a progress report at the BPC Meeting in March. Mr Warren advised that the Pavillion would be completed during 2018, and that a report of the AGM would be published in the next edition of the Benington Parish Magazine. To date no programme had been prepared regarding timescales for the construction of the Pavillion.

08. Fair

- Benington Parish Councillors had requested Mike Hawes, Chairman of the Fair, attend this meeting to explore ways in which BPC could support the Fair. Mr Hawes outlined the history of the Fair, and advised that the primary

objective of the Fair is to provide an enjoyable day for the community of Benington, whilst at the same time raising funds for good causes in Benington and the surrounding area. Mr Hawes advised that the Fair Treasurer is investigating the Fair becoming a Charity. There was discussion about investments that the Fair had recently made in order to avoid hire charges. It was agreed that the best way forward was to arrange a meeting in the Bell Public House to discuss the possibilities, and Mr Hawes agreed to advise the Councillors of a suitable date in February.

09. School

- Cllr Crofton had indicated that it was likely that funds would be available for a new footpath outside the School. Cllr Daniel commented that lorries making deliveries to the school had ruined the existing footpath, and Peter Kingsnorth had suggested a solution to this would be to erect bollards. Mr Kingsnorth and Cllr Daniel had measured the area, and noticed that the path narrowed significantly in certain places towards the village pond. They had produced a photo impression of the bollards and suggested that these be in metal which would be more durable than wood, and would match the black railings. It was agreed to forward this to Cllr Crofton.

10. Finance

- **Budget** – the Budget for 2016/2017 was approved
- **Precept** – The official precept form for 2016/2017 was approved and signed at the meeting.
- The accounts for the third Quarter of 2015/16 were presented to the meeting.

11. Correspondence received

- Suitability of sites for development in Benington – a link to the details had been placed on the Benington website. All sites were designated as unsuitable.
- Lamp post (direction of beam) and path subsidence had been reported to BPC by Lisa Rose following advice from Hertfordshire Council. These issues had been forwarded to Highways for resolution.
- Raffle Hosein had written to the Parish Council regarding a branch falling on to the footpath outside the Croft. This had been cleared promptly by the Croft. It was agreed this was not a matter for BPC.
- Request for donation from Hertford Museum – it was agreed that Cllr Jaques would investigate if the school could visit the Museum or link the Museum with the curriculum. A decision regarding the requested donation would be made at the March meeting of BPC.
- Regarding the request from Parishioners for information regarding Councillors, it was agreed that each Councillor would prepare a profile to be published in the next edition of the Parish Magazine.
- Herts Traffic and Transport Data Report - it was agreed that the Chairman would obtain figures relating to dangerous areas in the village where the most traffic accidents occur. He expressed concern that there were problems on the route between Hertford and Stevenage and that Benington was in danger of becoming a rat run.

12. Members' Points of Information

- **Christmas tree on the Green** – Cllr Jaques sought views from the Councillors regarding the tree which had been erected on the Green. Cllr Taylor advised that the tree had not been secure and had required a lot of positional support. Cllr Jaques put forward the suggestion that a taller tree be erected this year, and agreed to investigate the possibility of the lights being linked to a car battery.
- **Lychgate Bench** Cllr Daniel advised that the lychgate bench was rotten. The Chairman had agreed to supply oak for a replacement bench to be made. It was agreed that Cllr Daniel would approach the Church to establish the requirements. It was further agreed that the Chairman would speak to Harry Bott about this matter.
- **Flooding** It was reported that the Chairman had been in discussion with the Council regarding flooding in Blacksmiths Hill. There was discussion about this happening due to ditches having not been maintained. The ditches in Duck Lane were thought to be ineffective and the problems were getting worse. Dave Cotton reported that recently he had been flooded to the height of the handle on the back door. It was agreed that the Chairman would again contact the Council regarding this matter.

13. Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 09 March 2016 at 8.00 pm in the School

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.14 pm.