

BENINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Benington Parish Council Meeting
20 July 2016 8.00 pm
Benington Village Hall

Minutes

Present: R Bott (Chair) K Daniel
B Morcom
M Hughes

In attendance: J Haire (Clerk), and 8 members of the public (including Roy Falder, the Parish Clerk from Aston)

- 01. Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllrs Taylor and Jaques
- 02. Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman**
Following the election, in his absence, of Richard Bott as Chairman at the previous Parish Council Meeting, the Cllr Bott signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- 03. Declaration of Interests :** None
- 04. Minutes of the Last Meeting**
 - a) **Acceptance**
 - **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 11 May 2016**
Were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.
 - b) **Review of Actions**
 - **Defibrillator** The Chairman advised that one defibrillator had been installed in the entrance to the Village Hall, and the other defibrillator would be installed the following week outside Ernest Doe. **Action: Cllr Bott**
 - **Bus Shelter Library** Outstanding - the Chairman had measured for the shelves but they had not been made. **Action: Cllr Bott**
 - **Pond fence** Resolved.
 - **Lamp post and path subsidence** – the Parish Clerk had again chased Highways regarding the pavement subsidence. Highways was only able to advise that the work would be completed within this financial year. Regarding the streetlight reported by Lisa Rose, this had not been actioned as the necessary baffle filters were no longer manufactured. However, Highways advised that they have now found an alternative part and the work request has been re-raised – the work will be carried out within 20 working days. Parish Clerk to continue to follow up. **Action: J Haire**
 - **Tree cutting in Whempstead Lane and clearing debris** – resolved.
 - **Request for Centrebus to drop Mr and Mrs Shaw at the top of Stoopers Hill** – in view of Mr Shaw’s difficulty in walking up the hill to their home. Centrebus had confirmed that they had instructed drivers to comply with this request as long as it was safe for the bus to stop. The Parish Clerk had advised the Shaws of this response by telephone and was requested to also send a copy of this response to the Shaws. **Action: J Haire**

- **Street Light on Town Lane** This street light near the bus shelter had been reported by the Clerk, but on further follow-up the Clerk was advised that this had not been addressed because the streetlight was shown on their map in an incorrect position, and the streetlight could not be located. The Asset Management Team have been contacted to amend their records to reflect the correct position of the streetlight, and the work request re-raised; the work would be carried out within 20 working days. **Action: J Haire**
- **Damaged street light Old School Green** The Parish Council had obtained quotes in respect of the necessary repairs which had been emailed to Parish Councillors prior to this meeting. In view of the sums involved it was agreed that the quotes would be forwarded to the Parish Insurers with a view to claiming on the insurance. Cllr Bott to follow up with the Parish Insurers. **Action: Cllr Bott**
- **Lych gate bench** Installation of the replacement bench had been completed.
- **Affinity Water Project** Cllr Hughes reported that the remedial work had been completed.

05. Village Pond

- Cllr Daniel had contacted Tim Hill, Conservation Manager, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust who advised that if, as part of a winter drain down, the Parish Council intend removing silt at any stage, it will be necessary to check a sample of silt for contaminants before a contractor can decide where it could be taken to landfill. It was agreed that the Chairman would contact Veolia as soon as possible to arrange this. It was further agreed that a specification for the work was required. **Action: Cllr Bott**

06 Roads

- **Drainage issue** outside the Village Hall. Cllr Crofton offered to investigate when Highways would connect what BT have done to the drainage system, as no date had been given for when this work would be carried out.

07 Planning

- **Proposed Development of Green Belt in Aston - Gresley Park** Roy Falder, Aston Parish Clerk, spoke about the proposed development of 600 houses on Gresley Park, top quality Green Belt, East of Gresley Way Stevenage, and near the apex of the west side of the Beane Valley. This development would be visible from Walkern and parts of Benington. It would be on Aston Parish land area, and would set a precedent for more development East of Gresley Way and the Green Belt around Stevenage. With the aid of a large map, Mr Falder presented Aston's argument against Gresley Park. Aston has requested Benington Parish Council actively enlist Cllr Ken Crofton and Cllr Oliver Heald to the collective local village objections to GP. Aston first became aware of this in February, and learned that this proposal had come about because Herts County Council would not accept earlier development proposals around the A414, arguing that the A414 could not take this development. Aston had discussed this with District Councillor Tony Jackson, who was in a difficult position. The proposed development is key to getting the District Plan through, because otherwise the Government would take over. In this case it would be possible for 1600 houses to be proposed all

around Box Wood. The Government would not take local considerations into account. For this reason he is sorry that he cannot support the opposition because he sees greater danger in the District Plan going through. Persimmon Homes had a proposal for 3,000 homes west of the A1, but have not proceeded because the project would not be profitable enough.

Cllr Crofton advised that there are more suitable locations available such as the old Airfield at Panshanger. Mr Falder left relevant documentation with Benington Parish Council. Chairman Bott thanked Mr Falder and agreed to put this to all Benington Parish Councillors before advising Aston of Benington Parish Council's decision.

Action: Cllr Bott

- **Planning Notifications** – the following Notifications were read out by the Chairman. There were no objections by BPC to any of the applications or consultations.
 - Planning Decision 3/16/0742/HH - Long Acre, High Elms Lane – 2 storey side extension – granted.
 - Planning Application Decision 3/16/0701/HH - 72, Whempstead Road - Two storey front and side extension. Single storey rear extension. Alterations to fenestration. Associated drive and front garden landscaping – refused. The cumulative effect of the proposed development would disproportionately alter the size of the original dwelling and would intrude into the openness and rural qualities of the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt.
 - Planning Application Consultation 3/16/1232/FUL – Benington Old House - Construction of new dwelling with hardstanding off existing road access and erection of double garage and garden equipment store.
- **Garage 146 Walkern Road** – Cllr Crofton asked if the Parish Council had a view on the matter as the residents had again been invited to request planning permission. Cllr Crofton was intending to speak to the Planning Department. Cllr Bott agreed to put this to all Benington Parish Councillors the following week.
- **Action: Cllr Bott**
- **Future Planning Development for Benington** The Chairman stated that no one in the village was prepared to put themselves forward to put together a Neighbourhood Plan. Walkern regretted that they had not produced a Village Plan but it was too late now.

07 Recreational Facilities

- **Parish Council's offer re recommendations from the Last Playground Inspection Report** The Parish Council had offered to carry out the recommendations from the Inspection Report July 2015, when the BRGCT took over the insurance and running of the Playground in September 2015. No quotes for the work were put forward by the BRGCT until April 2016 following reminders. However, in view of the sums involved it was agreed that the Parish Council would seek alternative quotes. This was done, and the quote forwarded to the BRGCT who agreed to the Parish Council arranging for the work to be carried out. Chains had been replaced on the swings and all the swing seats replaced. Groundwork would commence shortly. The BRGCT would in the future be responsible for running the Playground.
- **Progress Report** – it was noted that some activity had taken place at the Recreation Ground, and prior to this meeting the Parish Clerk requested a

brief report of progress to date. Unfortunately, no report was forthcoming. However, the Parish Council were invited to visit and see for themselves.

08 Fair

- Cllr Hughes was on the Fair Committee and had requested support for the Fair from the Parish Council. Mr Hawes, Chairman of the Fair Committee, had provided a wish list of capital items for the Parish Council to consider purchasing, and the Parish Council had provided signage, a popcorn machine, a barbecue and a game, as well as insurance cover for the event. Parish Councillors helped on the day. Mr Hawes apologized that he was not able to attend the Parish Council Meeting, but wrote to thank the Parish Council for their contribution and provided the following summary: ‘Anecdotal feedback from the event suggests that the balance has been correctly struck and that the residents of Benington and the surrounding villages enjoyed the 2016 event. Whilst not yet submitted for approval to the BFC the estimated profit from the event is close to our best recorded year in 2010 on a small increase in total income with our expense margin reduced suggesting that the items above have significantly impacted the BFC potential to return profit to the associated community groups’.
- Mr Hawes was looking to step down as Chairman of the Fair Committee, and would be very pleased to hear from any new volunteers as soon as possible.

09 School

- **Bollards** Highways had advised the Parish Council that they cannot install bollards on this footway because the footway is not wide enough. A member of a public described how he had resolved a similar problem in the past, and Cllr Hughes requested photographs of the location to which he referred. The Chairman would make a request to see the relevant legislation. Suitable alternatives to bollards would be investigated. Action: **Cllr Bott**

10 Finance

12.1 Accounts Expenditure and Income 01.07.16 to 20.07.16

Date Paid	Name	Details	Total
05.07.16	Tina Piggott	Litter Picking	£ 130.00
05.07.16	Peter Kingsnorth	Website Maintenance 1 April – 30 June 16	£ 120.00
05.07.16	Clerk Salary	Clerk Salary & Telephone and Broadband Allowance June 2016	£ 320.00

Income 01.07.16 – 20.07.16

Nil

12.2 Accounts for the 1st Quarter

The Accounts for the 1st Quarter of 2016/7 were presented to the meeting.

11 Correspondence Received

- Email from Rosemary Chatindo at Highways advising the Parish Council that bollards cannot be installed on this footway because the footway is not wide enough.
- Cllr Morcom advised that it was possible to view the Draft of the Strategic Land Availability Assessment which was going to the Executive the following

week. The Parish Council has no objection to the infill designated for Benington.

12 Members' Points of Information

- The Chairman advised that there had been an inordinate amount of fly tipping in Cotton Lane where there is vehicular access down to the Pumping Station. Since January there had been 6 – 7 flytips. Cllr Crofton suggested that hidden cameras could be installed, and Automatic Number Plate Recognition was discussed. Cllr Crofton would support the Parish Council to install cameras, and Sgt Wallace would give contact details for suppliers. It was agreed the Chairman would contact Linda Last regarding this. **Action: Cllr Bott**
- Cllr Daniel reported brambles overhanging the footpath between the School and the Village Pond. It was agreed there were other areas in the village which also needed maintenance, and Councillors were requested to send details to the Parish Clerk to compile a list of the areas. **Action: J Haire**

13 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 21 September 2016 at 8.00 pm in the School. **Please note this has been rescheduled from 14 September** which was previously advertised.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30 pm.