

BENINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Benington Parish Council Meeting
9 November 2016 8.00 pm
Benington School

Minutes

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

In attendance: J Haire (Clerk), Cllr Crofton and 12 members of the public

01. **Apologies:** No apologies were received
02. **Declaration of Interests :** None
03. **Minutes of the Last Meeting**
 - a) **Acceptance**
 - **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 20 July 2016.**
The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.
 - b) **Review of Actions**
 - **Defibrillator** The Chairman advised that Fiona Morcom had kindly agreed to facilitate the Training Course on 26 November at 9.30 am in the Village Hall. This had been advertised in the Parish Magazine.
 - **Lamp post and path subsidence** Cllr Crofton had been advised that the footpath was not the responsibility of Highways. He would establish if both the footpath and the lamp post and path are the responsibility of Circle Housing. Parish Clerk to follow up **Action: J Haire**
 - **Damaged street light Old School Green** The Parish Insurers had agreed to the claim and work would commence week beginning 28 November. This would be an LED lantern, and Cllr Crofton advised that the upgrade of all Benington streetlights to LED was imminent. Parish Clerk to follow up **Action: J Haire**
 - **Gresley Park - Development of Green Belt in Aston** It was agreed that the Chairman would write in support of Aston Parish's objection to this development. The Green Belt was specifically placed there as a boundary to Stevenage, and to denote the catchment area of the River Beane, and it is therefore important that neither of these be infringed. Chairman Bott and Cllr Morcom had read the District Plan which was now in the Consultation Phase. **Action: R Bott**
 - **Parking on the Village Green** The Chairman advised that the caravan had gone. There was further discussion regarding this privately owned common land, and it was pointed out that there is space available for parking along the adjacent fence. Closed.
 - **Return of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment** - Chairman Bott confirmed that this had been returned. Closed.
 - **Drains at the bottom of Stoopers Hill** – the Chairman advised that six blocked gulleys had been cleared by Shanahan and the willows cut back. It

became clear that the ditch behind the brick bus stop was choked with vegetation. Cllrs agreed to a quote from John Birnie of £300 to clear this.

Action: R Bott

- **Quote for Replacement Pond Fence** - John Birnie had given a quote to replace the fence on the Duck Lane side of the pond. However, it was agreed that due to poor condition of the existing fence, the complete fence be replaced. The Chairman advised that it was apparent that the bank on the Duck Lane side of the pond was collapsing into the pond. John Birnie had given a quote for a retaining wall. The Chairman would meet with Gary Shanahan and Tony Nolan to discuss the situation the following day, as it may be that more substantial reinforcement is required. A third quote would also be sought for this work, which would also include pulling out the tree stumps. Cllr Hughes had secured an alternative quote of £750 for replacing the whole perimeter fence to match the current one. **Action: R Bott**
- **Drain on Walkern Road** Cllr Crofton advised that the road would be closed for 21 days from 14th November for BT works to their inspection box. He had spoken to James Vine at Ringway to request that the new drain be done at the same time as the road closed for the BT works. Parking during the road closure was discussed and it was agreed that Chairman Bott would ask Jaz Heaps if residents of Walkern Road could use her larger carpark adjacent to the Village Hall carpark during this time. The Chairman thanked Cllr Crofton.
- **Bus Shelter Library** The Chairman advised that Harry Bott had now installed bookshelves in the Bus Shelter at Burns Green, and appealed for books to be placed on the shelves for residents to share. Second hand books were also donated to the Village Hall. Cllr Daniels to enquire whether there were any spare books which could be placed in the Bus Shelter.

04. **Village Pond**

The Chairman advised that the pond had been drained, the sludge removed, and foliage cleared from the Duck Lane bank. Cllr Hughes thanked the Chairman for getting this done. Cllr Daniel had met Carl Walker (who likes to be called Murray) and who is a Landscape Gardener, and had offered to advise free of charge on the floating island and planting. Peter Kingsnorth had offered to make a sign about feeding the ducks for when the fence was installed, the cost of which would be about £20.

05 **Roads**

- **BT Box and new drainage Walkern Road** (outside the Village Hall). Cllr Crofton had advised that Network Management would undertake this work in the school holidays as Benington Primary School would be affected by the road closure. The next available date was 13th February 2017.
- **Stoopers Hill Brick Bus Shelter Roof Leaking** Cllr Bott offered to repair the roof felt, and Cllr Morcom offered to assist. **Action: Cllrs Bott & Morcom**

06 **Planning**

Planning Notifications – the following Notifications were read out by the Chairman.

- Planning Application Consultation 3/16/0701/HH Planning Appeal - 72 Whempstead Road, Benington

- Planning Application Consultation 3/16/2289/VAR - erection of 4 no. two storey semi-detached houses to N of 9 Three Stiles. The Chairman had received representation from one of the residents of Three Stiles who was to have his garden reduced in order to provide the new development with room to deploy a fire engine. He had asked the Parish Council to object on his behalf. Cllr Hughes advised that the Housing Association could request that double yellow lines be installed as an alternative, which would significantly worsen the problem of parking in the area. Cllr Crofton advised that he would be meeting with the Carole Pomfret and the Planners regarding a dispute over the boundary of the Housing Association site with the Pomfret's paddock, and stated that the Planning Application would fail if the submitted drawings were inaccurate. Local residents had also expressed concern regarding the ability of the current pipework to handle the sewage and water from 4 additional properties. It was agreed that the Parish Council would object to this Planning Application on the basis of inaccurate drawings, and that it was not clear that the current sewage system would handle the increased requirements of four additional properties. The point would also be made that if cars were parked in Three Stiles, the Fire engine would not be able to gain access.

Action: R Bott

- Planning Application Consultation 3/16/2090/LBC - Pound Cottage 1 Town Lane Benington - Alteration to kitchen window within modern rear extension. Approved.
- Planning Application Consultation 3/16/1620/HH - 64, Walkern Road, Benington - Detached garage (retrospective) - Planning permission was refused on 15/9/16 and with 12 weeks to appeal, this should be submitted by 8/12/16 if the owner so wishes. However, it is the intention of E Herts Council to serve an Enforcement Notice requesting the removal of the garage before the appeal time is up, in an attempt to preserve the character of this area, being considered proportionate action and within the public interest. The report is currently with the Development Manager to be signed off. Once served it is open to the owner to appeal both the planning Decision and the Enforcement Notice.
- Planning Application Decision 3/16/1900/HH - 68 Whempstead Road, Benington - Single storey side / rear extension - Planning Permission Granted
- **Planning Proposal Gosmore Paddock, Benington** - Parish Councillors had been invited to meet on 7th November with Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, who were working on behalf of the client to assess the development potential of the site, which is 0.9 hectares. NLP have put forward a proposed development which would complement the surrounding pattern and form of development, and deliver an appropriate housing scheme for the site. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the rationale behind the proposals, and to offer the Parish Council the opportunity to feedback any comments ahead of a forthcoming planning application submission. NLP presented an illustrative layout showing the proposed 13 dwellings which would be a mix of three and four bedroom homes, of which 25% would be social housing. NLP would investigate the drainage and water pressure points that were raised by Councillors at the meeting. The Chairman declared an interest in this

development as his family sold the land in the 70's and it is subject to a Covenant.

- **E Herts Council District Plan** The Chairman and Cllr Morcom had read The District Plan. The State was determined to build more houses between now and 2031 in the region of 180,000 houses would be built in different locations in Hertfordshire. Benington was a Category 2 village and would have to accept some infill which would fit the existing structure and services. It was likely that Benington would have no more than 14 houses.

07 Recreational Facilities

- **Appointment of Treasurer of BRGCT** The Parish Council appoint the Treasurer of BRGCT. The Chairman proposed that Natalie Clennell be re-elected and all Councillors were in agreement.
- **Update from BRGCT** The Chairman of BRGCT, Peter Warren, thanked the Parish Council for the donation of £300.00 towards the Firework Event, which he said did well given the competition from Stevenage. He then gave an update on progress of the Pavilion which would be ready by 11 November 2018 as the BRGCT had been asked to light the WW1 celebratory Beacon at 7 pm. The BRGCT had started to raise funds around the village - 'buy a block' and a raffle in both pubs. They were in talks with the FA and Sport England regarding funding. An anonymous donation of £10,000 of building materials had been received. The pipework for the heating had been completed and the area affected would be planted in the spring. A Flag pole had been erected. Peter Warren said that he hoped this project would bring the Village together, and thanked Councillors. The Chairman thanked Peter Warren for this update.

08 Fair

- The date of the Fair next year would be Saturday 8 July. The Chairman reminded everyone that 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

- There were no items in relation to the School

10 Finance

10.1 Accounts Expenditure and Income 01.10.16 to 09.11.16

Date Paid	Name	Details	Total
06.10.16	Tina Piggott	Litter Picking	£ 130.00
06.10.16	Frank Cooper	Grass cutting	£ 181.20
06.10.16	Clerk Salary	Clerk Salary & Telephone and Broadband Allowance July 2016	£ 320.00
06.10.16	Frank Cooper	Grass cutting	£ 247.20
06.10.16	BDO	Review Annual Return y/e 16	£ 156.00
18.10.16	Peter Kingsnorth	Website Maintenance	£ 120.00
24.10.16	Came & Co	Insurance	£ 607.12
03.11.16	Tony Kemp	Install two defibrillators	£ 234.00
03.11.16	Shanahan	Jet and clean 6 gulleys bottom	£ 132.00

		Stoopers Hill	
03.11.16	R Bott	Pump hire to drain pond	£ 39.00
03.11.16	Tina Piggott	Litter Picking	£ 130.00
03.11.16	Frank Cooper	Grass cutting	£ 123.60
03.11.16	BRGCT	Donation Firework Event	£ 300.00
03.11.16	Clerk Salary	Clerk Salary & Telephone and Broadband Allowance September 2016	£ 320.00
09.11.16	J Birnie	Clear brush around pond and remove dead wood willow	£ 640.00

Income 01.10.16 to 09.11.16

Nil

10.2 Accounts for the 2nd Quarter were presented to the meeting.

11 Correspondence Received

- East Herts Council's District Plan The six-week consultation into the final version of E Herts Council's District Plan runs for six weeks until 15th December. The Chairman encouraged people to read and comment on the District Plan.
- Letter from BDO advising that they had completed the BPC audit for Y/E March 2016
- Request from Philip Newton to present and discuss Plans regarding a proposal to develop Gosmore Paddock land in Hebing End for residential purposes, with members of the Parish Council at an informal meeting
- Request annual grant for St Peter's churchyard from Paul Phillips. BPC agreed to make a grant to St Peter's Churchyard of £3,000 as in previous years.
- Lych gate seat in memory of Lloyd Jones. R H Bott and Sons had provided oak for the Lych Gate. The final cost had been £1000, and BPC agreed to donate £500 towards this cost.

12 Members' Points of Information

- Cllr Morcom has reported potholes at the junction of Church Hill and the right turn into Town Lane, but been advised that the holes were not deep enough, and the same response had been received in respect of pot holes on Whempstead Road beyond the Dane End Crossroads. Cllr Crofton advised that he had allocated £24,000 for this work in this Budget for the coming financial year.
- It was reported that outside the new house on Whempstead Road pot holes had been repaired by the Developer, but that the bank had been pushed back. Cllr Hughes to inspect and invite the owner to restore the bank. **Action M Hughes**
- Karen Broad of Hertfordshire Constabulary, who was present at the meeting, advised that BPC had not received the crime reports due to an administrative problem. It was agreed that she would arrange this in the future. She reported very little crime this month, only the theft of bicycles from a shed in Hebing End so far, but to be careful. She had been discussing Fly Tipping with Cllr Morcom, and had spoken to Marie Stephens, District Councillor, who had funding for CCTV cameras, re the possibility of cameras in Cotton Lane. They had looked at cost, legality and data protection. She was working with E

Herts to get cameras installed. Karen Broad asked that the PC contact her should there be any concerns.

- The Chairman had received the resignation of Cllr Taylor. A Notice of Vacancy would be published on the three Village Noticeboards and the Village Website. The Notice of Vacancy would allow 14 working days for an election to be requested by 10 local government electors from the parish. The Notice of Vacancy would detail how a request could be made. If a valid request for an election is not received by the deadline stated on the Notice of Vacancy the Parish Council will co-opt to the vacancy.

13 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 January 2017 at 8.00 pm in the School.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.16 pm.