

BENINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Benington Parish Council Meeting
11 January 2017 8.00 pm
Benington School

Minutes

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

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

- 01. Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllr Crofton
- 02. Co-opt to vacancy for Parish Councillor -** The Chairman advised that this item would be moved to the end of the meeting
- 03. Declaration of Interests :** None
- 04. Minutes of the Last Meeting**
 - a) **Acceptance**
 - **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 09 November 2016.** The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.
 - b) **Review of Actions**
 - **Defibrillator Training** The previously advertised Training Course on 26 November had been cancelled. Cllr Morcom advised that the manufacturer would lend training equipment and E Herts Ambulance Service would do the training, dates to be arranged **Action: B Morcom**
 - **Lamp post and path subsidence** Circle Housing and Highways both deny responsibility for the footpath. It was felt that it was the responsibility of Highways and this was to be pursued. Despite Highways allegedly attending the lamp post the week before Christmas, it was not working. Parish Clerk to follow up **Action: J Haire**
 - **Repair to street light on Town Lane near the Bus Shelter** - completed
 - **Damaged street light Old School Green** The replacement column was due to be installed this week, and the transfer of power shortly after. Parish Clerk to follow up **Action: J Haire**
 - **Gresley Park - Development of Green Belt in Aston** The Parish Council had written 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 was therefore important that neither of these be infringed. Lack of procedure and failure to follow guidelines were also raised. Closed
 - **Ditch behind bus stop on Stoopers Hill choked with vegetation** - this had been cleared by John Birnie. Closed
 - **Drain on Walkern Road** James Vine at Ringway had confirmed that the work would be carried out 13 - 15 February to coincide with half term at the School.

- **Stoopers Hill Bus Shelter Roof** - Chairman Bott and Cllr Morcom had repaired this with assistance from Bernard Hitchcock.
- **Restore bank outside the new house on Whempstead Road** - Cllr Hughes had established that this would be done after the landscaping was completed.

Action: M Hughes

05. Village Pond

The Chairman advised that when the pond was drained it was noted that the bank on Duck Lane was in a poor state. Steel plate piling or a concrete bund to strengthen the bank would be very expensive, and as the bank was not collapsing into the pond, it was decided not to pursue either of these options. Wildlife organisations were keen to leave sloping banks to allow amphibians access to and from the water. Only a small area of bank would be left if the bank was strengthened. With reference to protecting the water quality, Gary Shanahan had recommended a filter be fitted to the gulley where the water from the road discharged into the pond. He had experience of this filter in his own yard, and would provide a quote.

Cllr Daniel had met with Andy Gardner of A G Tree Care and Landscaping who had provided a quote for replacing the fence on Duck Lane and across the entrance to the pond, as well as landscaping using coir coils, and treating the existing tree stumps to stop them from sprouting. It was agreed that the fence quote was not sufficiently detailed, and Cllrs Daniel and Hughes would follow this up further. The Chairman had received a quote from GMTec for fencing.

Action: K Daniel & M Hughes

06 Roads

- Cllr Daniel advised that a drain cover near to Village Hall was missing. It was agreed that Cllr Hughes would investigate.

Action: M Hughes

07 Planning

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

- Planning Application Decision 3/16/1552/FUL - 4 Town Lane, Benington - Summer hut for residential use (retrospective) - granted
- Planning Application Consultation 3/16/2462/VAR - Garage Site To The North of 9 Three Stiles - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans). The Parish Council had objected to the original application for the garage site, following representations from local residents who wished to object, one of whom was having his garden encroached by this variation. Local residents had had to accept the redevelopment of all the other garages in the vicinity, and as a result, increasing difficulties with parking and access in Three Styles. Concern had been expressed by local residents of an emergency where responding vehicles were unable to get through. This application was for a variation of the planning condition requiring the developer to fit sprinkler systems in the houses. The developer had argued that there was room for a fire engine and therefore they did not need to fit sprinklers. The Parish Council had also had representation from Carole and Andy Pomfret who own the northern boundary. The original application followed the boundary as shown on Land Registry document. However this application appeared to show the boundary of the site encroaching at least one meter on to the Pomfret's land. The Parish Council was concerned that the drawings are not accurate. A

number of local residents had also expressed concern regarding the ability of the current pipework to handle the sewage and water from these four additional properties.

- Planning Application Consultation 3/16/2725/OUT - Land Adj 4 Benington Park Farm Cottages Benington - new dwelling house - no objection
- Update E/16/0049/ENF Old Mead Barn, 64 Walkern Road, Benington - retrospective planning application for the garage refused. An Enforcement Notice served on the property 16 December requesting the removal of the garage in an attempt to preserve the character of the area, being considered proportionate action and within the public interest. It was open to the owner to also appeal this should they so wish, which would need to be submitted by 20 January 2017 when the Notice comes into effect.
- Planning Application Consultation - Lingfields Whempstead Road Benington Single storey rear extension: Depth 8.0 metres, Maximum height 4.0 metres, Eaves height 4.0 metres - no objection.

08 Recreational Facilities

- **Update from BRGCT** The Chairman of BRGCT, Peter Warren, advised that the AGM had taken place, but that the Accounts were late, and would be put on the notice boards by the end of the month. Ray Holman was now Secretary and all future paperwork was to be addressed to him. The Meat Raffle had gone well and raised £500.00 and Peter Warren thanked all who had supported this. There had been a problem with the Inland Revenue re the Gift Aid part of this, which would take a couple of months to resolve. Peter Warren commented that it was a pity that the meeting was not a month later because the Trust was about to make an important announcement. The Chairman thanked Peter Warren for this update.

09 Fair

- The date of the Fair would be Saturday 8 July 2017. 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 anyone interested in taking over as Chairman, and from new volunteers as soon as possible. Cllr Daniel was in communication with Morris Dancers from Baldock.

10 School

- Cllr Jaques reported that before Christmas, the Head Teacher, Mrs Jenny Stevens, announced she would retire after 14 years; consequently the School was recruiting for a new Head Teacher. Justine Youngman was the new Chair. There were currently 103 pupils, and the maximum the School could take was 110.

11 Finance

11.1 Precept – The official precept form for 2017/2018 was approved and signed at the meeting. The completed precept form to be returned to East Herts Council

Action: J Haire

11.2 Accounts Expenditure and Income 01.01.17 to 10.01.17

Date Paid	Name	Details	Total
04.01.17	Tina Piggott	Litter Picking	£ 135.00
04.01.17	Clerk Salary	Clerk Salary & Telephone and	£ 320.00

		Broadband Allowance Dec 2016	
04.01.17	St Peter's Church	£3,000 annual grant and £500 donation towards cost of Lych Gate	£ 3,500.00
04.01.17	Peter Kingsnorth	Website Maintenance Q3	£ 120.00

Income 01.01.17 to 11.01.17

Nil

11.3 Accounts for the 3rd Quarter were presented to the meeting

11.4 Budget for 2017/18 - the Budget was approved

12 Correspondence Received

- Email from Caron Jackson re Leak outside 27 Three Stiles - resolved
- Email from Steve James expressing interest in Councillor Vacancy
- Email from Rob Hewlett expressing interest in Councillor Vacancy
- Email from Carole Pomfret enclosing letter of objection re Planning Application Three stiles garages - see under Planning
- Request from Rt Hon Sir Oliver Heald QC MP to see any representations from the PC re East Herts Pre-Submission District Plan Consultation - these had been forwarded by the Clerk
- PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) part funding initiative from Jane Allsop, Parish Clerk Watton at Stone. The Watton-at-Stone Parish Council was very keen to pursue a dedicated PCSO for the villages across East Herts, and enquired whether Benington Parish Council would be interested in sharing the cost with 11 surrounding parishes. The cost shared between interested parishes would be £14,250 per year; (the constabulary would pay the other half of the actual cost). This would necessitate raising the Precept. The Chairman advised that the PCSO's had limited powers, and Councillors agreed that the principle was wrong that the Precept be used to supplement the Policing Budget. Parish Clerk to advise Parish Clerk Watton at Stone.

Action: J Haire

- Notification from E Herts of damaged dog bin Town Lane, apparently hit by a tractor's flail. A replacement bin (of a different design as the original style was unavailable) had been sourced, and the Chairman would install this shortly. **Action: R Bott**
- Request from John Dickinson to apply for a Road Safety Grant to install a Speed Indication Device (SID) in Town Lane - following discussion, it was agreed that the Chairman would request the latest accident statistics and Police Casualty figures before a decision was made. **Action: R Bott**
- Transparency grant - the Clerk had been advised that an application for a grant in respect of the cost of staffing to maintain the village website and the provision of a scanner had been successful

13 Members' Points of Information

- Appointment Trustee to the Eleemosynary Trust - the Chairman advised that Harry Bott was retiring as a Trustee, and there was a requirement for the Parish Council to appoint one Trustee. Cllr Hughes nominated Richard Bott and Cllr Daniel seconded that nomination. Richard Bott was duly elected Trustee to the Eleemosynary Trust.

- Damaged streetlight 146 Town Lane - the Clerk reported that Ringway had advised that this streetlight was damaged and required urgent replacement. It was agreed that the Parish Council would claim on the Parish insurance. Two quotes of identical specification in respect of replacement would be requested.

Action: J Haire

14 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 08 March 2017 at 8 pm in the School.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.56 pm.

15 Exclusion of Press and Public

Co-opt to vacancy for Parish Councillor Two applications had been received for the vacancy and Parish Councillors agreed to vote for one of the applicants (see above - 12 Correspondence Received). Steve James received the highest number of votes and was duly co-opted as a Parish Councillor. The applicants were invited back into the room and the Chairman announced the result. Steve James then signed the Declaration of Office.