

BIDFORD ON AVON PARISH COUNCIL

In the County of Warwickshire



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 23rd January 2006 in the Parish Meeting Room, Bramley Way, Bidford-on-Avon

PRESENT

Vice Chairman Cllr. Hiscock
Cllrs. Ms. Deacon, Gerrard, Hendey, Langston, Sandle, Smith, Spiers and Ms. Varga
Chairman Cllrs. Mrs. Keeley arrived late

Also present: County Councillor Barnes, PC. Doug Johnson one member of the public and one member of the press

District Cllrs. James and Slaughter had sent in their apologies

Acting Chairman, Vice Chairman Hiscocks, welcomed those present. He noted that there were no young residents to participate in the Youth Public Forum and asked the member of the public whether he wished to make any comments.

- Had there been any reported requests for the seat at Glebe close to be replaced. The clerk replied that only one person had made any comment since the seat had been unlawfully removed.

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

- Some 10 years ago the Government decided to review local government. Both County and District Councils were not in favour of any change and so it was left as it is today. However, the present government has decided to review it once

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again. The current system in this area is a two tier with a County and District Council which is more expensive than a unitary authority i.e. One Council.

The following steps are to be taken:

- Discussion with public stakeholders and others over the next three months
- Release of a Government White Paper on the options in June 2006
- Consideration of responses until autumn 2006. then, if changes are to occur
- Local Government Bill late in 2006 or early 2007
- Elections to the new Shadow Authorities in Spring 2008

While nothing is being ruled out, last time this was voiced, the proposal was for a North and South Warwickshire with Stratford going with Warwick as South and the rest go the North, the two parts being very different in nature. Head Office could be Stratford or Warwick, but taking into consideration the £8 million recently spent in refurbishing Stratford on Avon DC offices which should not go to waste.

- Gritting in Marlcliff – following the request from the Parish Council, he had looked into this and been advised that it was being carried out by Worcestershire County Council. Cllr. Barnes had gone personally to inspect this and reported back that it was not being done – the gritters turned back after Cleaves Prior. He will continue to monitor this.
- Written confirmation has been received that the micro asphalt surfacing of Victoria Road will be carried out as part of the 2006/07 programme of works
- Mineral Road Show will be coming to Bidford on Friday 10th March
- A seminar will take place on 6th February when Cllr. Barnes will have the opportunity to request outstanding work to the village be carried out – some money has been put aside for this and it will be apportioned. Cllr. Barnes hopes to get the go ahead for some and the clerk was requested to send him a list.
- A planning application had been received at Wychavon DC for a development at the Honeybourne Airfield which could have heavy lorry traffic implications for Bidford. He thought the Parish Council should be made aware of this so that it could discuss the issue and decide what action it should take.

The Chairman thanked the County Cllr. Barnes and asked PC Doug Johnson whether he would like to speak.

PC Doug Johnson introduced himself and confirmed he had been appointed the Bidford-on-Avon Community Beat Officer with effect from 8th January 2006. He was new to the job having worked as a reaction officer for 6 years, but that he was getting to know the residents of the village, and was making special efforts with regards to the youngsters, specially those he believes are the local leaders of the disrupting gangs.

He was asked if he had any more news regarding the change from “beats” to “wards” to which Chief Ins. Burbeck had referred to at the consultation meeting held in Stratford in November last year, to which he replied no. At the present time much of the changes are rumours and he prefers to wait until such times as they become facts.

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The Chairman then opened the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from the Chairman Cllr. Mrs. Keeley who had been unavoidably delayed but hoped to be able to attend the meeting

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

All members of the Council are reminded that in order to comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 29th April 2002, if any matter arises during the meeting in which they have Declared an Interest which could be prejudicial, they should withdraw from the room and not seek to improperly influence a decision about that matter.

Cllrs. Hiscocks and Langston declared an interest in Item 9 – Crawford Hall. Cllr. Hiscocks advised that he was declaring an interest on behalf of Cllr. Mrs. Kelley should she arrive in time for the meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19TH DECEMBER 2005 AND OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10TH JANUARY 2006

Proposed by Cllr. Ms. Deacon as being accurate and signed by Vide Chairman. Cllr, Hiscocks as Acting Chairman.

The Chairman of the Finance Committee would also like to clarify that in the matter of the parking charges at the Big Meadow, he advocated that it should be more strictly controlled to ensure maximum revenue to the Council.

4. REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

a) Requests for quotations for flower box planting and maintenance and work to the boundary of Monie Meadow have been posted

b) Electricity contract for unmetered lighting – the Clerk can confirm that EDF Energy

has registered the council's account with effect from 1st January 2006. NPower has confirmed they have no objection.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

a) WCC – i) Letter regarding the new Waste Development Framework

ii) Letter regarding Draft Warwickshire School Organization Framework 2005-2010 – Document (57 pages) available. Response by 3rd March
Document given to Cllr. Smith for him to review and propose any comments

iii) Letter enclosing Warwickshire Supporting People Service User

iv) Newsletter – Outlook (copies available)

v) "Local Lines" Newsletter

vi) Quality of Life in Warwickshire 2005

vii) Village Speed Limit Review – arrangements in hand and it is expected works will commence on site during April 2006

The Chairman proposed that item i) be discussed now as this had been put forward by

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the member of the public present

- i) Glebe Close seat – further request from residents not to replace the “missing” seat
The Chairman advised that Cllrs. Mrs. Keeley, Langston and himself, together with the clerk had met with a couple residing on Victoria Rd, during Christmas. to discuss this matter at length. It had been made clear to the Council that, although it was accepted that the Council had installed the seat with the best of intentions, it had resulted in becoming a focus for the gathering of youths, which had markedly diminished since the removal of the seat. It was also pointed out that circumstances had changed since the installation of the seat, as the school had moved from Victoria Rd. to Bramley Way and Glebe Close is used as a shortcut. However, members of the Council did stress that the seat had been stolen; what should have been done is for a formal request to the Council to consider its removal. This had not been done and the seat had been stolen, and the Council cannot be seen to condone such behaviour.

A Cllr. proposed that the seat be replaced and the situation monitored.

An amendment to this proposal was then put forward, that the seat not be replaced as if after monitoring the situation, it was decided that the seat should be removed, the Council would be incurring more costs. Furthermore, letters had been received from residents requesting the seat **not** be replaced, whereas none had been received asking of it **to be** replaced. This amendment was put to the vote and carried by a majority of 6 to 4 (the Chairman Mrs. Keeley having arrived during these discussions).

It was also agreed that the Council should reiterate that it could not apply double standards when it came to considering the behaviour of the younger and older members of the community

Cllrs. Mrs. Keeley then took over the Chair

- b) SDC – i) Development of Social & Community Transport – circulated
The Council was advised that SDC were doing a presentation at the next SCAN meeting in the Church Hall. It was clear that this was not an item for the website and the clerk was instructed to put notices in the library, the parish magazine and the notice board.
The Council expressed its uncertainty as to the efficiency and benefits this would offer the community
- ii) Public Path Creation Order AL114 – The Bank (notice has been posted on site and on the notice boards)
- c) ODPM – Standards of Conduct in English Local Government – The Future (letter circulated) Document available
- d) WALC – i) Newsletter January 2006 – circulated
ii) The Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004 – circulated
Contents noted
iii) NALC survey – circulated
iv) Details of WALC organised workshops -circulated

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- e) RANE – Update following the Halcrow Ltd. review
From the letter received it appears that the costs involved - £8.3m are higher than hoped and the predictions for the resultant benefits to the economy of Alcester rather disappointing. Therefore, the RANE Committee foresee it will be difficult to raise the necessary funds for the project unless it became part of a more grand regional scheme. Nonetheless, they feel that the Arrow Valley is a valuable local resource for all and that as a community we should find more ways to enjoy it. Details of the report would be available from Alcester Library and Globe House. The clerk had checked and they were still not available. She would keep an eye on developments and advise mebers accordingly.
- f) Worcestershire County Council – Minerals and Waste Development Scheme
They send us these consultation papers as neighbours
- g) Coventry & Warwickshire Ambulance – NHS Trust letter enclosing Consultation Document. Consultation is due to end 22nd March
*The Council expressed concern about this merger which it felt would lower its standards and reduce its efficiency this being the normal result of mergers, the standards achieved are at the lowest not the highest. Concern was also expressed regarding the call centres, which would possibly be at Telford, and would result in poor local knowledge of the geography of such a large area and delay in attending sites and the patients would suffer.
The clerk was instructed to write and express the Council's opposition.*
- h) Warwick Police – response regarding PCSO
email from Stuart Wild regarding Community Policing
The clerk was instructed to contact Sgt. Wild and request a visit by members of the council as suggested
- k) SLCC Invitation to West Midlands Regional Conference 28th Feb. circulated
It was agreed the Clerk should attend.

6. AVAILABLE TO INTERESTED PARTIES

- a) Breakthrough Breast Cancer – Purple Magazine
b) WCC- The Essentials Winter 2005/06
c) West Midlands Regional Assembly – Speaking Out Issue 10 Winter 2005

7. 05/033267/FUL – DEVELOPMENT AT FRIDAY FURLONG

Amendments as follows

More beds for the nursing home, from 56 to 70

Revised internal estate road alignment and subsequent revision to house plots
(Highways request)

Submission of details of home zone, existing trees to be retained and revised street scenes

Submission of percolation test results

- The Council expressed concerns regarding the increase in the number of beds from 56 to 70 , which it considers to be quite substantial
- It also expressed concern in respect of the parking facilities for the nursing home which it finds inadequate

8. WARWICKSHIRE PROBATION SERVICES – INFORMATION PACK

Details had been circulated and members found them of interest. He clerk was instructed to contact them and ask invite them to attend a Parish Council Meeting

9. CRAWFORD MEMORIAL HALL

Cllrs. Mrs. Keeley, Hiscocks and Langston left the room. Cllr. Gerrard was invited to act as Chairman

The Crawford Memorial Hall has been successful in obtaining a grant from BIFFA. In order to maximise the funds, it was proposed that the Parish Council take over the project to enable the VAT to be refunded. This was unanimously agreed with the proviso that strict accounting of the expenditure take place to ensure that all the expenditure was covered by the grant funds and not by Council funds.

10. CEMETERY

It was proposed, and resolved that minor enhancements to the cemetery be funded by public subscription. Donations would be accepted but the Council will use its discretion as to the items required and can therefore not guarantee specific requests. I

11. LAND TO THE REAR OF DUGDALE AVENUE

Documents for the transfer of the land from County Council to the Parish Council had been received and were signed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman, as instructed by the Parish Council's solicitors.

It was also resolved to accept the higher charges from solicitors, approx. £750.00, as the case had taken more time than originally anticipated.

12. SPORTS ASSOCIATION

The current party mowing the sports pitches is retiring and requests for quotations have been sent out by the Sports Ass. The Parish Council has been contributing to this cost and the Sports Ass. is requesting this continues. Members took into consideration that Section 136, which reimbursed part of this cost, is being withdrawn with effect from 2006, so the Council would have to bear the full cost. However, it is also aware of the burden on the Sports Ass. and the Chairman of the Finance Committee advised that the withdrawal of Section 136 had been taken into account when preparing the budget. A further point to take into consideration was the fact that the area of a football pitch had been transferred from the Big Meadow (the mowing of which is paid by the Parish Council) to the Sports Ass. It was, therefore, proposed, and resolved, that the Parish Council offered to pay £882 for the year 2006/07 and requested the Sports Ass. to put in a request for a grant every year for the consideration of the Council.

13. 2006/2007 BUDGET AND PRECEPT

The Chairman of the Finance Committee proposed as follows:

There will have to be another substantial increase in the Parish Council precept this year. The Council has additional duties and responsibilities placed on it year by year as the village grows and, in addition to this incremental development, it has this year

to face costs arising from the withdrawal of agency service payments by SDC and the need to make local provision for elections, again previously met by SDC. These changes alone increase the expenditure the council has to pay from its precept by £13,000.

The Dugdale Avenue playing field becomes Bidford's responsibility from tonight: the cost of all street lights adopted in residential areas falls on the parish as street lighting authority, and it must make provision for new charges to be increased from new developments pending at Marleigh House and Friday Furlong, as well as the completed development on the former primary school site.

Beyond this, the Parish Council has to replenish its resources, depleted by payments which had to be made in 2005/06 in respect of the Crawford Memorial Hall redevelopment, which were anticipated, and budgeted, to be paid by grant from SDC. While the Council welcomes the £50,000 payment made by the District Council to Broom Village Hall, the shortfall in Bidford had to be met and paid for, by parish funds.

Taking these considerations into account, I recommend that the council sets a precept of £134,000 for the coming year 2006/07; that is a figure of £69.02 per Band D residence for the year.

I am pleased to commend this present to the Council and the public of this parish. The Council unanimously resolved to accept this recommendation

14. ACCOUNTS

Purchases:	£2,425.48
Wages	£1,692.50

Payments received	
Cemetery Sales	£605.00
S136 reimbursement (Part A)	£2,330.00

It was resolved that Cllrs. Ms. Deacon and Smith sign the cheques

The Meeting closed at 9.45 pm