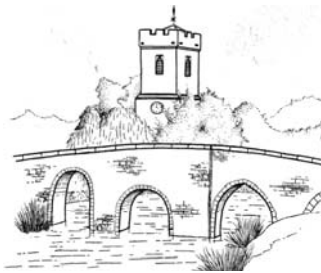


# **BIDFORD ON AVON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **In the County of Warwickshire**



### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2007 in the Parish Meeting Room, Bramley Way, Bidford-on-Avon**

#### **PRESENT**

Chairman                                      Cllr. Mrs. Keeley  
Cllrs.    Ms. Deacon, Gerrard, Hendey, Hiscocks, Langston, Sandle  
    Spiers and Ms. Varga

Also present.                                      District Cllrs. James, Pemberton and Slaughter,  
    1 member of the press and  
    5 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed those present and invited the members of the public to address the council

- A resident of King's Lane, Broom requested an update on the play equipment in Broom.  
She was advised the equipment had been chosen from a selection picked by local residents and children.
- A couple also residents of King's Lane, Broom expressed concern that the play equipment, once installed, would attract more cars on to the site.  
They were advised the area would be fenced off, which should prevent cars going

onto to area. Regarding the access road from Kings Lane, this was a matter for District Council as landowners.

- A resident who has put his name down for an allotment asked what the Parish Council was going to do about tenants who did not keep their allotments tidy. He was advised that the Allotment and Burial Working Group had met earlier in the month and would be making a report during the meeting where this issue was addressed. He was also advised that, by statute, the Parish Council must give 12 months notice.

### **REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Cllr. Barnes sent his apologies.

### **REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

- A written report had been sent and is attached to these Minutes
- Ward members thanked the Parish Council for hosting the Drop In meeting on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> August for victims of the flood, and for their attendance. There was a good attendance by residents, the majority as expected from Broom and a number of new issues for the future had been suggested. A more detailed report regarding this Drop In session would follow. The Chairman stated that the Parish Council had on many occasions pointed out the problems new developments could cause. But it is not the planning authority and no-one appears to want to listen to the local opinion.

The Chairman thanked the District Councillors and opened the Meeting.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none

#### **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 29<sup>th</sup> 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.

*None declared*

#### **3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 25<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2007 AND 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2007**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June were proposed by Cllr. Langston as being accurate and signed by the Chairman.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> July were proposed by Cllr., Hiscocks as being accurate and signed by the Chairman

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PUBLIC FORUM AND REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

- As discussed during the District Councillors Report, the Parish Council agreed to look into the possibility of a joint project between Bidford-on-Avon PC, Salford Priors PC and Wixfod PC to employ a lengthman – it was considered this would be very beneficial to the area.
- Housing – again this was discussed during the District Councillors Report. The lack of affordable housing for young people is considered to be one of the main reason why there is so much unrest amongst them. A change of approach is needed. It was proposed that Bidford-on-Avon PC, together with Salford Priors and Wixford should meet and put together a series of proposals they could present to SDC as the housing authority of the area. This was unanimously agreed.

#### **5. CLERKS REPORT**

This was read out and a copy is attached to these Minutes.

#### **6. CORRESPONDENCE**

##### a) WALC – Newsletter (circulated)

The clerk was instructed to:

- 1) *Obtain copy of the Draft Protocol for the Greater Involvement of Parish Councils as members would like to act on this*
- 2) *WCC and Parish and Town Council Focus Group – advise WALC it would like to participate and attend the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October*
- 3) *Regional Briefing from Quality and Aspiring Quality Parishes – would like to attend meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November*
- 4) *Purchase Community Matters new toolkit “Engaging Young People”*

##### b) Riverside Shooting – dates (circulated)

*It was agreed to attend on 1<sup>st</sup> September and to visit Marlcliff as well to ascertain the level of noise*

##### c) Letter from Alcester resident re Big Meadow car park fees

*The Council reiterated the policy that only residents of the parish are eligible for free passes. The clerk to reply accordingly*

##### d) Thank you letter from Vitalise - *Noted*

#### **7. ADOPTION OF THE NEW CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Model Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils had been given to all councillors, and all have attended a training presentation arranged by the monitoring Officer at SDC and been given the handouts of this meeting.

In view of the above, it was proposed the Parish Council adopt the Model Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils, including Paragraph 12(2) which is optional. The proposal was carried unanimously.

## **8. REPORT FROM THE ALLOTMENTS AND BURIAL WORKING GROUP**

The report is attached hereto.

The Chairman of the Working Group proposed a letter be sent out to all allotment tenants together with the payment request in September, advising them that it has been brought to the attention of the Parish Council that many tenants are not fulfilling their obligations as per the tenancy agreement and giving them 12 months notice – as it is obliged by statute. If the allotments continue to be in breach of the agreement in September 2008, the agreement will not be renewed. The Chairman explained that there is a long list of residents waiting for an allotment and the Working Group feels something must be done to ensure they have an opportunity, especially as a number of allotments are looking untidy and unkempt. The proposal was carried and the clerk instructed to write the letters.

## **9. PARISH COUNCIL SURGERY**

The venue of Broom Village Hall was confirmed, and the date set for Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October, between 10.00 – 11.30 am

## **10. REPLACEMENT OF CLLR. SMITH ON WORKING GROUPS**

The Chairman had received a letter from Cllr. Smith advising that due to new and more onerous commitments at work he was unable to fulfill his duty as a Parish Councillor in the way he would like, and was therefore tendering his resignation. In view of the above, it was resolved that Cllr. Ms. Deacon and Langston would replace him on the Marsh Farm Liaison Committee. The other working group of which he formed part was Amenities, Play Areas, Youth Shelters and Environment and it was felt this group had enough members to fulfill its duty and no replacement was, therefore required

## **11. ACCOUNTS**

Purchases :	£12,876.98
Wages:	1,988.47

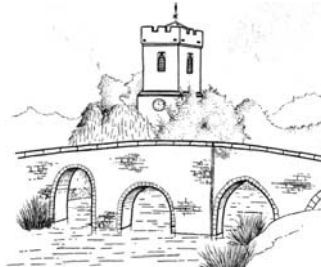
Payments received:	
Car Parking	£657.00

It was agreed Cllrs. Mrs. Keeley and Hiscocks sign the cheques

The meeting closed at 09.00 pm

# **BIDFORD ON AVON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **In the County of Warwickshire**



### **CLERKS REPORT AUGUST 2007**

- Purchase order has been placed for 2 x Pathway finders for Broom railway bridge
- I am still waiting to hear from SDC regarding financial assistance for the installation of extra street lights on the High Street to improve the CCTV images
- As instructed, I have written to various parties at WCC regarding the land to the rear of the Fire Station, which has been identified as the optimum site for something for the youngsters. Copies of all correspondence sent to Cllr. Barnes  
I have received two replies: from Steve Smith, Head of Property which I would consider to be on the positive side and from Marion Davies, Strategic Director of the Children, Young People and Families Directorate advising that she will make enquiries within her own Directorate and from her colleagues at the Adult, Health and Community Directorate before giving us a fuller response.
- I have received a reply from WCC's Human Resources to the Parish Council's enquiry about recruiting retained fire fighters.
- John Maples MP contacted me after the floods and, together with the Parish Council's Chairman Cllr. Mrs. Keeley he toured the areas affected by the floods. He was particularly concerned by the flooding in Millers Bank, Broom which affected all residents of the development.
- A Drop in Meeting for residents who suffered damages during the recent floods was arranged for Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> August between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon at the Parish Council Meeting Room in Bramley Way.

Residents of Bidford-on-Avon, Salford Priors and Wixford Parish Councils were invited and representatives from County, District and Parish Council were present.

Some 20/25 residents attended. The Ward members, who talked to them at length, will be compiling a report. I was asked to enquire from the Environment Agency when the Arrow sluice was opened at Alcester as well as details of the sequence of events regarding sluices on the Arrow and Alne from Thursday to Sunday. This has been done. Details of meetings with the Environment Agency were passed on to residents.

- ICT Award – this is being presented at Hampton Lucy on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October – representatives to attend.
- Annual Accounts have been sent to the External Auditor
- Planning application 07/01888/FUL – following a site visit, the following reply was sent:
  - The Parish Council object due to:
    - There is concern that the access to the new parking area is nearly opposite the sole entrance into Midsummer Gardens via St. Laurence – and directly opposite a “keep left” sign.
    - In the event permission is granted, particular care and attention should be given to environmental issues such as:
      - The material used for the parking area – which should be porous to prevent the run off of water into Waterloo Road.
      - The additional drain system – there is already a considerable load on the system as it is, resulting in low water pressure at various times of the day.

**August 2007**

The report gives an overview of current issues / information and matters of interest.

**Flood Recovery.** On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> August the council received confirmation of an interim award of £600,000 under the Government's Flood Recovery Grant Scheme.

This is designed to help "those in greatest and immediate need" to get back on their feet as quickly as possible.

The Council is able to spend the money as it sees fit and in line with local priorities - this will be discussed at a special meeting of the Executive to be held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2007. The award is split 50:50 between revenue support and capital works.

It is additional to any costs incurred by the Council that can otherwise be recovered under the 'Bellwin' Scheme (the scheme that in the normal course of events would be the means by which the council are reimbursed for additional expenditure incurred in recovering from an emergency event).

The Housing Advice Team is continuing to provide much needed support to those made homeless as a result of the flooding.

Currently there are 15 households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The team has already dealt with another 37 households who had to be accommodated in B&B at some point between 21 July and 15 August.

These households have now moved on either into SWHA temporary accommodation, other accommodation arranged by themselves, or back into their own properties.

The team also logged enquiries from another 40 households who were given advice but did not need assistance with accommodation.

**Council Tax.** Another item making the news this week was the £2.1m of council tax due for collection in 2006/07 that remained uncollected at year end.

The press saw this as a failure, and it is an issue of concern - but as is often the case the reality behind the headlines tells a rather different story.

In a statement to the press it was confirmed that the Council is actively pursuing the recovery of the unpaid tax. In any typical year approximately 93-94% of council tax is paid without the necessity for the council to issue reminders.

The remaining 6-7% is subject to a variety of forms of recovery action. Last year, because of the introduction of the new revenues computer system, staff were able to invest less time than is normal in pursuing the arrears.

As a result the council are now in a period of catch up, and have recovered over £600,000 of arrears in the first quarter of 2007/08. Recovery work is continuing in respect of a further 4,600 cases where money is owing to the Council.

This programme involves phased action through to the end of 2007, but initial discussions with all those who have payments outstanding for 2006/07 have already commenced. Any arrears for 2007/08 are being pursued at the same time.

The Council generally performs well in collecting this local tax. In 2005/06 the collection rate was over 98%, and the fall in 2006/07 to 96.5% is attributable specifically to the reduced recovery work in that year.

The target collection rate for 2007/08 is 98.6% and as at the end of July we are ahead of schedule to achieve that target."

**Pathlow Traveller Site.** The Council's bid for funding to improve the Pathlow gypsy caravan site has been successful. SDC has been awarded £1.2million towards the total scheme costs of £1.6million. Pathlow is one of only 12 sites across England that will be supported via the Government's Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant this year.

### **Council Executive - August**

The Council's Executive has agreed amongst other things to:-

- adopt a Play Strategy for the District and apply for £200k from the Big Lottery Fund to help implement it adopt the Well-being Strategy, which reviews Quality of Life data for the District and sets the target of Stratford-on-Avon being in the top 10 districts for well-being within 3 years (the State of Britain report 2005/06 places the district 15th in that year)
- introduce a 'Moving Pictures' rural cinema scheme, funded by external grants, for a trial period of 12 months
- consult on the introduction of dog control orders (under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act) in four children's play areas, with a view to extending the approach if this pilot proves successful
- increase the funding available this year for Disabled Facilities Grants and establish a new Green Loan Scheme, enabling residents on low incomes to access loans to help them install energy efficiency measures in their homes

### **Housing Waiting List**

The Housing Advice Team (HAT) maintains the Housing Register, carries out the District Council's legal obligations in respect of Homelessness, and provides advice and assistance to households experiencing housing difficulties.

More and more frequently the council offer a range of options to those at risk of losing their accommodation including the Rent Express Scheme, which helps households through providing deposits and rent in advance for privately rented accommodation.

Table 1 below gives details of the number of households on the Housing Register on 31 July 2007.

It is worth noting that this is a snapshot figure and is likely to range up and down as applicants join or are removed from the Waiting List.

**Table 1**

Application Type	Number of applications of this type
Active	2371
Deferred	64
Offer Pending	5
Offer Accepted	2
Total*	2442



Table 2 provides a short definition of the application types indicated in Table 1.

**Table 2**

Application Type	Definition
Active	An application where the household is currently being considered for vacant properties in their areas of choice.
Deferred	An active application where the applicant has requested that they remain on the Waiting List but are not considered for vacant properties as they arise. For example, where a household in tied accommodation wishes to be registered on the Waiting List, they are in secure accommodation subject to their continued employment however, should this arrangement end then they are likely to lose their accommodation (farm worker or sheltered scheme/nursing home warden).
Offer Pending	An active application where an offer of accommodation has been made or nomination forwarded to a Housing Association but a response has yet to be received confirming whether the property is to be accepted by the applicant.
Offer Accepted	An active application that has been at Offer Pending but where the applicant has responded to the Housing Association making the offer to confirm that they wish to accept it.
Total	The total of all of the above.

Table 3 below displays the number of applications falling between different points levels.

**Table 3**

Points Total	Numbers
0 - 4	438
5 - 30	1453
31 - 60	473
61 - 100	74
101 - 149	4
Total	2442
150**	79

\*\* - Applications in receipt of 150 points also have another application receiving between 0 and 149 points (this duplication is unfortunately unavoidable) and for the purposes of the total these have been disregarded.

Chart 1 below shows the numbers of applications on the Housing Register for the current financial year.

The chart is based on information that has been gathered over the past seven months.

Chart 1

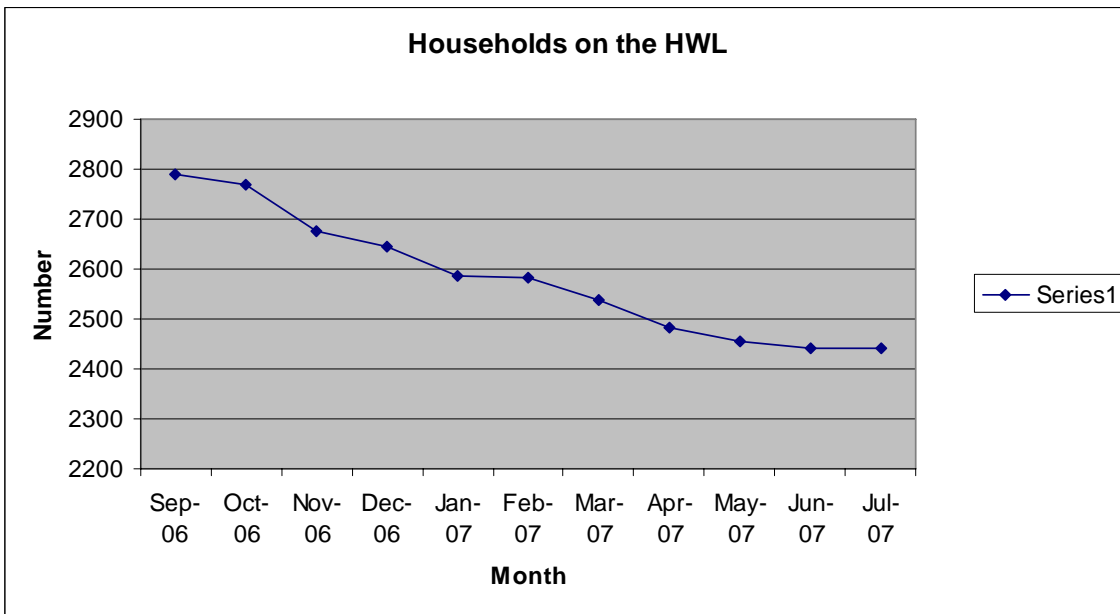
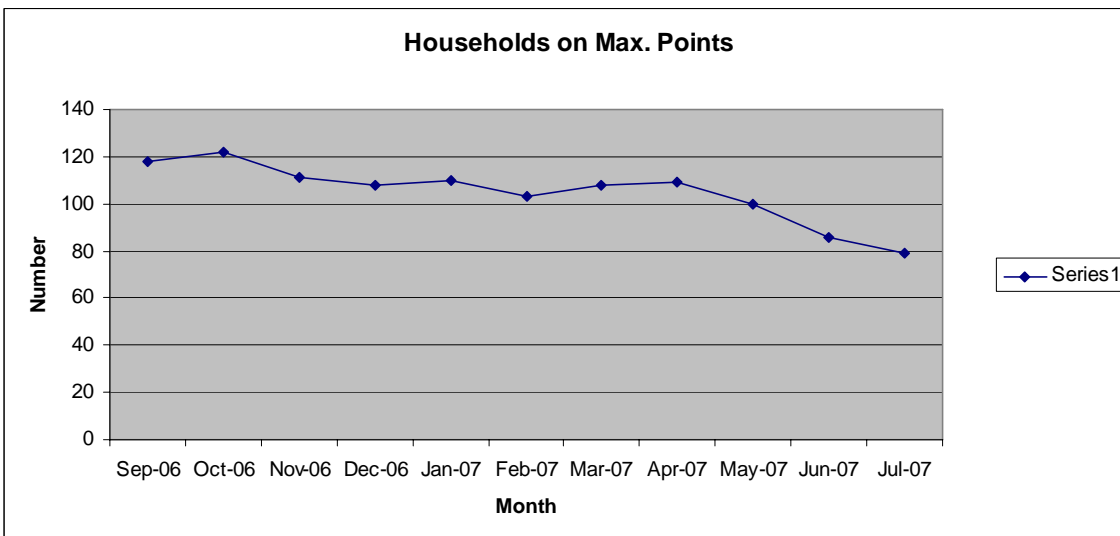


Chart 2 below shows the numbers of applicants whose application is in receipt of 150 points.

Chart2



**Dog Fouling.** The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 provides for Parish Councils to issue their own Fixed Penalty Notices or warning letters for dog fouling offences.

In order to help Parish Councils understand this opportunity and to encourage them to take advantage, representatives are to be invited to a meeting where they will be given advice from the Council's Legal Team and staff from the Environment Service including the Dog Warden.

**6.00 pm on Tuesday 25 September 2007 in the Council Chamber at Elizabeth House**

## **New Street Litter Provisions to Coincide with Smoke-Free**

Stratford-on-Avon District Council is encouraging all commercial premises to keep the District clear of smoking-related litter by the introduction of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) or Street Litter Control Notices.

With this most recent amendment to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, that amended the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to include smoking-related litter under the general definition of Litter, Local Governments have the authority to issue "Street Litter Control Notices".

The Notices can be served on premises where smoking-related litter is produced as a result of their activities if they cause the defacement of the street or open land adjacent to the vicinity of the premise.

FPNs are also an option available to tackle all littering on the street by enforcing fines. The level of the FPN is set locally at £75, with an option for a reduced rate for early payment.

In addition, subject to certain conditions, officers of a Parish Council and those not in the direct employment of the Local Authority, such as a cleansing contractor, are authorised to issue FPNs for this offence.

Premises to be affected include:

Clubs

Pubs

Cafes

Restaurants

or where local authorities might expect greater amount of littering due to smoking.

"After all, keeping our District clean and free of litter places a collective responsibility on us all."

The new powers are in line with the Council's Corporate Aim of developing healthier communities.

## **CONSULTATION DATES ON POST OFFICE CLOSURE PROGRAMME**

Post Office Limited intend to specifically consult parish and town councils within each local consultation

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Post Office Region</b>
Stratford-on-Avon	Midlands 5	May-08	Birmingham Coventry Warwickshire
Worcester	Midlands 6	July-08	Herefordshire Worcestershire West Midlands
Redditch	Midlands 6	July-08	Herefordshire Worcestershire West Midlands

## **Flood Victim Drop In Meeting Saturday 18th August 2007.**

A successful drop in meeting was held in the Parish Meeting Room – a joint venture between the Parish Councils and Ward Members, a report on the issues and outcomes raised will be issued separately.

**Councillor Kim James**  
**Councillor Daren Pemberton**  
**Councillor Brian Slaughter**