

Minutes of a meeting of Bilsington Parish Council held at Bilsington Village Hall on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors; S Hudson (Chairman), S Carrington, R Corbett, B Delmage and G Russell.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield MILCM, Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

Also present: Kent County Councillor M Angell and 12 members of the public.

The Chairman agreed to change the order of the meeting in that Future Plans, minute 512, was brought forward to allow Revd Jones to leave before the end of the meeting.

#### **507. Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

Submitted by email:

Planning application 17/1022: I am pleased to report that after a lengthy and detailed site visit, planning officers are happy with the revisions to this application and support it in full. A discussion with my colleague Cllr Howard has resulted in the call in to planning committee being withdrawn. Given the challenges faced by areas such as Bilsington, with new policies in the emerging plan, seeking to permit uncontrolled development in the area, such planning applications are to be welcomed as a way of ensuring the area remains a vibrant alternative going forward for families, whilst at the same time, respecting the existing rural settlement. Two recent applications, this and that of Romney Cottage, are an excellent example of planning applications that are appropriate in the rural setting. I wish both applicants well with their extensions.

The Landscape Protection Policy: the policy aimed at mitigating against the effects of cumulative development in the rural setting, now has the support of more than 10 villages and the funding is in place to present a representation to the Inspectorate when the Ashford Local Plan is assessed. This will be done by Peter Brett infrastructure specialists. Simultaneously, I am conducting discussions at senior levels with key decision makers on our planning policy. The aim is to get a more detailed and specific individual policy in the ALP.

Speed Indicator Device: I was asked by this Council some months ago to contribute from my Ward Member Grant to this, I declined, as the PC had already raised the parish precept considerably in the previous budget to raise the funds needed for this. It would not be correct use of the public purse in my view to give additional funds. I believe colleagues may have funded some in the request that came for additional funds some months after the precept rise, I nevertheless remain convinced that my decision not to fund this was the right course. In addition, I question the effectiveness of speed indicator devices, as a deterrent to speeding. Smeeth has the "speedwatch" system in place that has been proven over the past 5 or 6 years to be effective in encouraging reductions in speeding and reductions in reoffending. I would be more in favour of using public funds to finance such a system, and again to create a community involvement in solving an issue that affects us all.

With regard to HGV traffic – once the Landscape Protection Policy is in place, there will be a policy to back up changes to the routing these vehicles take, which can then be used to approach Highways to make changes.

Noise: I have again received complaints about the level of noise generated from live music at the White Horse. This is something that I have discussed with the publican in the past. I am sure that the noise level is within the accepted permitted levels and that a pub has to be

able to conduct its business and I have past this view on to residents. I would ask however, as discussed before, that the publican informs residents by way of a note prior to the event, so that they are aware and can organise accordingly.

### **THE MEMBERS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL CHALLENGED THE ACCURACY OF ITEMS CONTAINED WITHIN THE REPORT.**

#### **508. Kent County Councillor's Report:**

Councillor Angell reported that money would be tight in the next financial year and the leader has already taken the matter up with the Government. The actual picture will not become clear until the Local Government Settlement is announced in December.

#### **509. Public Participation Session:**

Statement from a resident:

"This Parish Council had raised the precepts to £7460 in 2016/17. You made this decision on 14 November 2015 and ratified it on the 9 January 2016. You then sought public approval after this meeting, you had already made the decision to increase the funding for installing a speed device. This I believe was unlawful.

You have acted 'Ultra Vires' and as a concerned resident, I demand a full explanation and reimbursement as I and the majority of residents of this Parish were not informed and not given the opportunity to make comment.

Further to this, alternative traffic calming systems and funding were made available to you (prior to making your decision) which you chose not to convey to the residents of this parish. Why did you choose to only raise the precepts and ignore the alternative options residents were entitled to hear?

Finally, I will be raising this as a formal Code of Conduct Complaint with Ashford Borough Council regarding your actions and seeking your removal as Parish Councillor's as unfit to serve".

The Chairman responded that the rise in the precept was legal as Parish Council's are not bound by the same regulations as the Borough and County Council who have to seek a referendum for any increase above 2.99%. Speedwatch was considered in September 2015, however at that time it was rejected as it was believed that there would not be any sites in the Village that the Police would approve for the activity. The Chairman proceeded to read out the guidelines from the Community Speedwatch website which confirmed the fact that there are no sites in the village. No previous funding for traffic calming has been received by the Parish Council prior to the increase in precept or the grant from the Kent County Council Ward Member fund.

A resident raised the issue of parking on the crossroads as this is becoming dangerous.

The Chairman responded that the matter has been debated on more than one occasion and that at the last approach there was a meeting between KCC and ABC as the land is part owned by each but neither was prepared to finance. The subject will be taken up again with ABC as they have responsibility for parking.

A resident enquired as to the location of the Speed Indicator Device.

The Chairman responded that at the present time it was located on Ashford Road and it can be moved to two other locations in the village, one being Bonnington Road the other being Newchurch Road.

A resident enquired as to the availability of fibre broadband.

In response no date is yet available, however the County Councillor will raise the issue with the Officer at Kent County Council.

A resident raised the issue of drains in Ashford Road as they were already looking full of debris and would be ineffective when it rains.

The County Councillor will take this forward with the Officer concerned.

A resident raised the matter that some of the minutes were missing from the website.

The Clerk responded that this was in hand and had occurred due to the change of website and the need to replace the laptop computer which was having issues with connecting to the internet.

**510. Apologies for absence:**

Ashford Borough Councillors W Howard and J Martin.

**511. Declarations of interest from members:**

There were no declarations of interest.

**512. Future Plans:**

Rvd Jones was present at the meeting and agreed to provide a remembrance service on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November at 11 am in the Church, refreshments will be served in the Village Hall after.

It was agreed that the Carols round the Christmas tree would take place at 4pm on the 10<sup>th</sup> December to be followed by the Christmas party.

**513. Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meetings of 27<sup>th</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017 were submitted, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**514. Chairman's Report:**

Since our last meeting Peter has been working hard on ensuring we are fully compliant with rules and regulations and also our website. Thank you. I encourage you all to visit and remind yourself of our:

Policies and procedures – to include Finance, Community Engagement, Publicity Protocols, Social Media Policy, and more.

Also Standing Orders – which covers off Rules of Debate, Conduct in Meeting, Council meetings, Motions at meeting etc etc.

Please do read them! We are bound by them.

Peter has submitted our comments and concerns within the consultation on the 2030 Ashford Borough Plan along with our planning comments from the last meeting – thank you.

Bern and I have taken receipt of the Speed Indicator Device off KCC – more to come on that subject.

I have also attended the Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council meeting and spoken at length on several occasions to the Chairperson of Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council on a number of pressing local issues to include the ABC 2030, the role of local Parish Councils and the interaction between Borough and Parish Councillors.

I have also written to the monitoring officer several times regarding our code of conduct complaint against a member of ABC and also regarding my personal code of conduct complaint against a member of ABC. Gerry Clarkson has also called me on these matters.

The Monitoring Officer has acknowledged both complaints and I'm waiting to hear back of him. Clearly to give details of our or my complaint in a public forum would be inappropriate.

**515. Planning Matters:**

**Planning application 17/1032/AS – Bourne Farm, Bourne Road, Aldington –**  
Replacement of dilapidated detached garage.

**RESOLVED: To support the application.**

**516. Finance:**

Schedule of payments

Date	Cheque No	Payee	Amount
31/8/17	694 & 695	Clerks salary July	£381.54
31/8/17	696	Information Commissioner	£35.00
28/9/17	697 & 698	Clerks salary August	£316.45
28/9/17	699	PKF Littlejohn	£120.00
28/9/17	700	Came & Company	£291.25
28/9/17	701	Clerks expenses	£40.08

**RESOLVED: to approve the payments in the schedule of payments.**

**517. Notice of conclusion of audit for the year ended 31 March 2017:**

PKF Littlejohn LLP, the Council's External Auditor has completed its work on the Parish Council's audit and has forwarded the certified Annual Return with no comments.

**518. Village Hall:**

Councillor Delmage reported on forthcoming events for the Village hall and that the timber for the cladding is scheduled for delivery. Once delivered a workparty will be organised to treat it before installation.

**519. Resident Survey:**

The merits of undertaking a survey of the residents to compile a wish list were discussed.

**RESOLVED: To compile a survey questionnaire to despatch to every household in the Parish.**

**520. Speed Indicator Device:**

The speed indicator device has been in place for the last two weeks on Ashford Road, it is due to be moved to another site. The data captured will be analysed and logged for comparison over the coming months. Initial verbal feedback received indicates that speeds are reducing.

**521. General Data Protection Regulation:**

**REPORT BPC/17/06** The General Data Protection Regulation is scheduled to come into force in the UK on 25 May 2018, the provisions will be incorporated into a UK new data protection act, which will replace the Data Protection Act 1998. All Councils will need to understand their responsibilities under the new regulation.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To receive and note Report BPC/17/06.
2. To receive and adopt the Information Governance Framework Policy.
3. To receive and adopt the Information Security Incident Management Policy.
4. To receive and adopt the Information Risk Policy.
5. To receive and adopt the Privacy Impact Assessment Policy.
6. To receive and adopt the Subject Access Policy.
7. To receive and adopt the Data Sharing Policy.

**522. Correspondence:**

- a. Rural Vulnerability Service – Fuel Poverty
- b. Ashford Borough Council briefing
- c. Information Commissioners Office Newsletter
- d. Rural Network Services – weekly news digest 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017
- e. Rural Network Services – weekly news digest 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017
- f. Rural Network Services – weekly news digest 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017
- g. Kent County Council – Inside Track issue 248

**523. Any Other Business:**

The Parish Clerk advised that a consultation has been received from the Department for Local Communities and Government “Planning for the right homes in the right places” details will be circulated in due course.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Next meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017.