

BOTESDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held Monday, 1 July 2019
Botesdale Village Hall

Present: Cllr Ernie Baxter
Cllr Greg Russell
Cllr Caroline Stratford

Cllr Victoria Curry
Cllr William Sargeant (Chairman)

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve
2 Members of the Public

7.30pm The Chairman welcomed those present and opened the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Des Bavington-Lowe
2. **Casual Vacancies:** To consider applications for parish councillor posts (3 vacancies).
3. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 3 June 2019.** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed and signed.
4. **Members Declarations of Interests and Dispensations:** Cllr Curry declared an interest in item 5.1.3 as the adjoining neighbour.
5. **Public Forum:** The Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator, Peter Beck, reported that there would be an article on home safety in the next issue of the parish magazine. He expressed concern about visibility due to overgrown vegetation at the junction of Back Hills and the B1113. The Clerk would write to the landowner.

A member of the public spoke in support of the play area and objected to the suggestion in the recent questionnaire that even part of the area would be used for parking.

6. **Planning:**
 - 6.1 **Planning Applications:**
 - 6.1.1 **Chilvers, 1 and 2 Market Place, The Street. Ref. DC/19/02668.** Application for Listed Building Consent. Re-decorate externally, replace awning fabric with new signwriting to fascia panels. Removal of internal partitions at ground floor level and construction of new, to form kitchen area. Construct WC within basement. Repairs to brickwork and roof covering. New doors to basement entrance on west side. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to support the application.
 - 6.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:** None.
 - 6.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions/Appeals by Mid Suffolk DC:**
 - 6.3.1 **Barn, Lodge Farm, The Common.** DC/19/01936. Notification for Prior Approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q (a) and (b) of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 - Conversion of agricultural building to form 1no. dwelling. Prior Approval GIVEN.
 - 6.3.2 **Bankside, Back Hills.** Ref. DC/19/02308. Notification of works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce crown of T1 (Cherry) by 3m. NO OBJECTION.
 - 6.3.3 **Bell Hill Cottage and the Newsagent, The Street.** Appeal Reference: APP/W3520/W/19/3229585. Planning Application. Change of Use of ground floor to A5 Hot Food Takeaway. Installation of extract equipment internally and flue through roof. Internal alterations to provide sound and fireproofing to party walls and floors. It was noted that the PC's previous comments would be taken into consideration and agreed that they were comprehensive. It was felt that no further representation was needed.
 - 6.4 **Neighbourhood Plan Update:** The Neighbourhood Plan was still with the Examiner, who had asked for further clarification on matters within the plan.

7. Progress Reports:

7.1 **Chairman:** The Chairman reported that the Brownies had borrowed pickers for a local litter pick.

7.2 Clerk:

- A former councillor had requested that the PC consider purchase of the phone box at the corner of Fen Lane for community use such as a defibrillator or book swap. It was noted that the phone box was in Rickinghall. The Clerk would put the request on Rickinghall PC's next agenda and communicate Botesdale PC's support for the idea.
- It had been reported previously that a new Highways Self Help Scheme aimed to enable parish councils to do some of the work Suffolk County Council could no longer fund. Unfortunately, the scheme had highlighted that parish councils could not legally work on the highway, including the verges (about 1.5 metres in), without specific training and supervision. The Clerk had attended the training and learned that works such as street sweeping, verge cutting and changing the vehicle activated sign were classed as working on the highway. A meeting had been scheduled between SCC and parish representatives to give feedback on the scheme and training and to investigate how parishes might continue doing village upkeep.

8. Correspondence:

8.1 **MSDC:** The PC noted the information sent to Neighbourhood Plan Groups about the Draft Joint Local Plan and upcoming consultation. The Plan made a fresh assessment of housing needs and the figures for housing requirements in Botesdale and Rickinghall were higher than anticipated within the Neighbourhood Plan. The settlement boundary for the community included an extra site behind the former White Horse PH with a suggestion of up to 100 houses. The public consultation was due to begin later in the summer.

8.2 **Resident:** The PC noted that the resident of Back Hills, below the school, felt their driveway was being damaged by use as a passing place and was proposing that Back Hills be made one-way. Although the PC did not necessarily support the proposal, it was agreed to get some advice from SCC. In the meantime, the resident would be advised to reinstate a barrier to protect their property.

8.3 **Resident:** The PC considered the request for "pedestrians crossing" signs on the A143 near footpath crossings and it was agreed to ask SCC Highways.

8.4 **Royal British Legion:** The PC agreed to advertise for a local Poppy Appeal organiser in the parish magazine and on Facebook.

8.5 **RBR Parochial Church Council (PCC):** The temporary church warden was noted.

9. General Items:

9.1 **Reserves Policy:** It was noted that Botesdale Parish Council's expenditure fell within the commonly used bracket of £25,000 to £200,000 (anything under £200,000 was considered to be a "smaller authority" for audit purposes and smaller authorities with expenditure under £25,000 were exempt from external audit). The Council was at the lower end of that scale and applying national guidelines, it was recommended that the Council should build and maintain General Reserve levels of 6-9 months of expenditure. In the current financial year, the proposed financial reserves policy would require the general reserve to be between £15,000 and £22,500. The current level of General Reserves was £10,600. The Council therefore RESOLVED, with all agreed, to adopt the guidelines for reserves in the new Reserves Policy, to be reviewed annually. Furthermore, it was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to commit unused general funds (not reserved for a specific project) at the end of the next two budget cycles to achieve a general reserve of £15,000, increasing the precept if that was not enough.

9.2 **Play Area Consultation:** The draft designs following village-wide consultation were not yet suitable for further consultation and it was hoped to have something ready by the end of the month. It was possible that some door to door delivery would be necessary later in the summer.

10. **Finance**

10.1 **Account Balance:** £44,813.56
Income: £ 1,821.53 Reclaimed VAT for 2018-19

10.2 **Accounts for Payment:**

Admin Payments	£ 875.45	Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc.	£ 338.97	St Clean/Play Area/VAS Jul 19
Community Workshop	£ 184.80	Botesdale Bugle Printing
Redgrave Parish Magazine	£ 25.00	Botesdale Bugle Distribution

RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the accounts above.

11. **Councillors Reports:**

- **Public Rights of Way:** It was agreed to write to the landowner about erecting signs for the permissive path behind Rose Lane.
- **Website:** Cllr Curry volunteered to check the updates and links on the website for accuracy.

12. **Highways Issues:** None.

13. **Welcome Pack:** 1 to Cllr Stratford.

14. **Matters for the next meeting of the Council:** None.

15. **Next Meeting:** 5 August 2019 (Only if planning requires a meeting)
2 September 2019

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.13 pm.