

BOTESDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ANNUAL Meeting held Tuesday, 4 May 2021
Online Zoom Meeting

Present: Cllr Des Bavington-Lowe (Vice-Chair) Cllr Simon Dickinson
Cllr Greg Russell Cllr William Sargeant (Chair)
Cllr Jack Stracey

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve
County/District Cllr Jessica Fleming
No members of the public

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

1. **To Elect a Chairman for the Year 2021/22.** Cllr Sargeant, proposed by Cllr Dickinson, seconded by Cllr Russell and agreed unanimously, was elected as Chairman.
2. **To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** The Council received Cllr Sargeant's verbal Declaration of Acceptance of Office and noted that he would give the Clerk a signed hard copy.
3. **Apologies for absence:** None.
4. **To elect a Vice Chairman.** Cllr Bavington-Lowe, proposed by Cllr Dickinson, seconded by Cllr Sargeant and agreed unanimously, was elected as Vice Chairman.
5. **Casual Vacancies:** There were still four vacancies for parish councillor.
6. **To elect Council Officers and Representatives to outside bodies:**
 - Assets Register: Cllr Bavington-Lowe
 - BARWOODS: Cllr Sargeant
 - Public Rights of Way: Cllr Dickinson
 - SALC/Parish Liaison: Cllr Sargeant
 - Tree Warden: No longer required
 - Village Hall: Cllr Sargeant
 - War Memorial: No longer required
 - Facebook/Website: Clerk
7. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 12 April 2021.** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were approved for signing.
8. **Members Declarations of Interests and Dispensations:** None.
9. **Public Forum:** County/District Cllr Fleming reported that the extensive changes made to move the councils to virtual working had been remarkably effective. However, legislation did not allow formal meetings to be held remotely after 6 May and the process would now have to be reversed. Some less formal meetings would continue to be virtual. It was reported that The Hold (Suffolk Archive) was now complete and would be opening to the public soon. Recycling Centres had experienced a few interruptions over the past year but were almost back to normal. However, there had been an astonishing rise in fly-tipping and the Council would be looking at the reasons for this. They would also be considering the future of the booking system for sites, including using a number plate recognition system to speed things up. A councillor queried why the booking system was necessary post pandemic and Cllr Fleming confirmed that she would feed this back to the Council for answers. Finally, she commented on the remarkable support provided by community groups during the pandemic and assured councillors that SCC and MSDC would be leading efforts to get the economy back to good health in the area. A councillor requested information on the District Council's CIFCO Capital investments and Cllr Fleming said that their value had held up well over the past year. She would email through a report with further information.
10. **Planning:**
 - 10.1 **Planning Applications:** None.
 - 10.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:** None.

10.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions by Mid Suffolk DC:** None.

10.4 **Notification of other Planning Matters:** A meeting was held with the Clerk, Cllr Russell, and John Pateman-Gee and Mahsa Kavyani from MSDC Planning to follow up on efforts to clarify the position of the Neighbourhood Plan in determining planning applications. This meeting focussed on the Reserved Matters application from Bennett Homes for Land South of Diss Road, going through the PC's objections and identifying where further information should be obtained from Bennett Homes. MSDC would request the information and come back to the PC with a report. In the meantime, it was agreed to arrange a meeting to discuss the overall issue with Rickingham PC.

11. **Correspondence:**

11.1 **Open Gardens:** It was noted that the proposals for this year's event (considered at the March 2021 mtg) would not go ahead due to lack of interest.

11.2 **Resident:** The PC considered the comments about the future use of Sarah's Wood, which were in support of retaining the informal BMX trail. It was noted that Sarah's Wood was a designated wildlife wood and as such was unlikely to be suitable for a BMX track going forward. In addition, there would be improved provision for young people at the Recreation Ground as part of the refurbishment scheme. However, it was agreed to confirm that no decisions had been taken and it would be some time before the PC would receive transfer of the property.

12. **Ongoing Items:**

12.1 **Recreation Ground Refurbishment:** The PC received the draft cost plan from James Blake Associates for the Refurbishment Project, which aligned with the design plans approved at the March meeting. A funding plan had been drawn up to support the basic plan as well as optional items which could be put aside until enough funding was available. Some funding could not be applied for until after the tender exercise had taken place and this would create a tight timescale for completing the fundraising. It was noted that the PC could consider applying to the Public Works Loan Board if funding was not available in time to meet deadlines for starting work. The PC RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the draft cost plan.

12.2 **Sarah's Wood:** It was acknowledged that the wood's informal use as a BMX track and meeting place was well-loved by many residents. However, it was considered that there were significant accessibility issues with entrance only via a private road within the Burgess development or an unsafe access off Back Hills. Furthermore, use as a BMX track was incompatible with its status as a wildlife wood. It was agreed to consider the options further in order to identify the most effective proposal for the site and to get the School's view on whether they could make use of the whole of the area not currently used by the Pre-School.

12.3 **Village Assets Refurbishment:** This was ongoing with several benches and bins already repaired/repainted. Two new litter bins had been ordered, as well as a new grit bin for the Chapel Lane triangle. Michael Bryant would quote for the additional work to install the grit bin.

12.4 **Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan:** A report had been drafted for the June parish magazine and a list of options for the PIIP would go out in some form in the July magazine as part of public consultation. The next Steering Group meeting was on 24 May.

12.5 **County Broadband:** CB was currently undertaking some door knocking but had otherwise gone quiet. There was no update on numbers of sign-ups.

13. **New Items:**

13.1 **Annual Parish Meeting on 12 April 2021:** The DRAFT minutes of the meeting were noted by the Council and acknowledged by those councillors present as a true record. There were no matters arising from the meeting.

13.2 **Meeting Arrangements:** It was noted that the legislation allowing remoted meetings would expire after 6 May and in response to the possibility that Covid restrictions may not allow in-person meetings in June, the PC RESOLVED, with all agreed to approve the following delegations to the Clerk, in email consultation with all Parish Council members, with decisions to be reported at the next meeting:

- to respond to planning matters;
- to respond to any correspondence that requires the input of the full Council;
- to make any payments due before the next meeting of the Council.

- 13.3 **Marl Pits:** Councillors felt that the site would be best suited as nature/wildlife area with limited public interaction. However, it was agreed that some signage with information on the history, wildlife and on-site safety would be an improvement to the area, particularly as it was right next to a popular footpath. It was also agreed to ask Suffolk Wildlife Trust for advice on how the site might be improved for wildlife and get some quotes on a tree condition survey.
- 13.4 **Litter Pick:** It was noted that litter wasn't too bad near housing but some of the outlying areas needed attention. It was agreed to hold an event in October.
- 13.5 **Traffic Regulation Orders:** The PC agreed to investigate an extension of two 30mph hour zones. The 30mph zone could be extended to the parish boundary on the B1113 in response to the new development at Back Hills and could be moved back to Millers Orchard on Mill Road North with the aim of making the road safer for frequent pedestrians who exited the Bridewell Lane footpath and walked down the Road to the village. It was noted that pedestrian safety on Mill Road North had come up a lot in consultation about the Recreation Ground. It was also noted Redgrave PC was keen to have a joint TRO to save on the legal costs.
- 13.6 **Appointment of Trustees for Fairstead Charity:** The PC RESOLVED, with all agreed, to appoint the following persons as Trustees to the Fairstead Charity for a further four-year term – Peter Beck, Lottie Clements, Philip Miles and Simon Gowen.

14. Village Status Reports:

- 14.1 **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman had followed up on an action from the previous meeting to investigate whether the s106 agreement relating to the Bennett Homes development would allow the developer to contribute to the Recreation Ground rather than provide separate recreation facilities on site. It was noted that there was not much flexibility with s106 agreements, and the proposal was therefore unlikely.
- 14.2 **Clerk's Report:** The Clerk had received some information on the VAS units at Palgrave and would have some quotes at the next meeting.
- 14.3 **Local Organisations:**
- **BARWOODS:** The group would be carrying out a safety inspection of trees at Millers Orchard.
 - **Streams and Footpaths:** The piles of tree debris had been cleared.
 - **Village Hall:** The Management Committee's AGM had been held on 19 April. A new bank account had been set up which would allow online payment and hall hire would be returning to relative normality on 17 May, with Covid-safe arrangements. It would act as a polling station on 6 May.
- 14.4 **Village Assets:**
- **Recreation Ground:** Cllr Dickinson would carry out the weekly inspection.
- 14.5 **Public Rights of Way:** The Clerk would follow up with SCC on the work proposed to stop flooding on Bridewell Lane and repair the surface.
- 14.6 **Highways Issues:** None.
- 14.7 **Welcome Packs:** None.

15. Finance:

15.1	Account Balance:	£75,339.01	
	Income:	£17,900.00	MSDC Parish Precept 21-22 (1/2)
		£12,841.12	MSDC CIL Payment April 21
		£ 343.00	MSDC Parish Grant (rebate from recalculated tax base for 20-21)
		£ 2,938.53	HMRC Reclaimed VAT for 20-21

15.2 Accounts for Payment:

Admin Payments	£ 836.73	Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc.	£ 384.76	St Clean/Play Area/VAS May 21
Redgrave Parish Magazine	£ 130.00	Page Fees 20-21
SALC	£ 8.00	Audit Training Webinar
S Green	£ 40.00	Quarterly Assets Cleaning
James Blake Associates	£ 480.00	Rec Ground Design Fees
SALC	£ 244.00	Internal Audit Fees
Peter Kerry (CC&TS)	£ 250.00	Debris clearance at Streams

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

- 15.3 **To approve payment of Grant Funding 2021-22:** (agreed under Minute Ref: 9.2, 12 April 2021). Noted that Remembrance Day funds will be paid in Oct/Nov.
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| RBR PCC | £ 800 | Churchyard Maint |
| Botesdale After School Club | £ 500 | General Grant |
| Rickinghall Day Centre | £ 330 | General Grant |
| Barwoods | £ 50 | Millers Orchard Insurance |
- RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the grants above.

- 15.4 **To approve payment of Annual Rent of £1.00 for Botesdale Village Hall – period 17th December 2020 – 16th December 2021.** It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the ANNUAL RENT to the Parochial Church Council for the Botesdale Village Hall.

- 15.5 **To consider the 2020-21 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and related accounts information for Year Ending 31st March 2021:**

- i) To receive the Internal Audit as prepared by the appointed internal auditor: The Council RESOLVED, with all agreed, to receive the updated report from the SALC auditor which was presented at the meeting.
- ii) To consider and approve the Council's Annual Return and related documents: The Clerk presented the Financial Statement and supporting documents. The Council RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the accounts submitted.
- iii) To consider and approve the completion of the Statement of Assurance as per the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the AGAR): The Council RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the signing of the Annual Governance Statement.
- iv) To consider and approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the AGAR) and supporting documents: The Council RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the signing of the Accounting Statements.

The Council noted that the period during which the accounts would be open to public inspection was 14 June – 23 July. A notice to this effect would be posted on the parish notice board.

- 15.6 **To consider and approve the Community Infrastructure Levy Report to MSDC for 2020-21.** The Council RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the submission of the CIL Report to MSDC which indicated that the CIL funds held in 2020-21, in the amount of £4,051.36, were allocated to the Botesdale Recreation Ground Refurbishment.

16. **Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council:** None.

17. **Next Meeting:** 7 June 2021

18. **To exclude the public from the following item of business, on the grounds that it is likely to disclose exempt information, as defined in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:** Discussion of confidential tender information (see item 13.1). Not required.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.09 pm.