

BOTESDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held Monday, 2 October 2023
Botesdale Village Hall

Present: Cllr Des Bavington-Lowe
Cllr Andrew Edwards (Chair)
Cllr William Sargeant

Cllr Simon Dickinson
Cllr Greg Russell
Cllr Jack Stracey

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

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Sally Jarvis, Richard Lock and Elizabeth Stanford
2. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 4 September 2023.** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed as a true record.
3. **Members Declarations of Interests and Dispensations:** None.
4. **Public Forum:** A resident complained about the size and number of lorries driving on Cherry Tree Lane, particularly turning up the Lane from Back Hills, and instances of damage to their property. It was noted that the Clerk had asked Suffolk Highways to visit and determine whether new signage would be appropriate to alleviate the problem. Another resident spoke about the street lighting at Bennett Homes being excessive as they were on all night. This was to be discussed at item 6.2.
5. **Planning:**
 - 5.1 **Planning Applications:** None.
 - 5.1.1 **Nurses Bungalow, Diss Road.** Ref. DC/23/04225. Householder Application - Erection of infill side extension and two single storey rear extensions, including alterations to fenestration with addition of cladding and render. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.
 - 5.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:**
 - 5.2.1 **St Botolphs Chapel of Ease.** Ref. DC/23/04241. Application for works to a tree in a Conservation Area - Reduce 1 No. Cherry (T1) by 1/3. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.
 - 5.2.2 **Brockwell House, The Street.** Ref. DC/23/04334. Application for works to trees within a Conservation Area - Top 1 No. Walnut (T1) by 1/3rd. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.
 - 5.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions by Mid Suffolk DC:** None.
 - 5.4 **Notification of other Planning Matters:** None.
6. **Correspondence:**
 - 6.1 **MSDC:** The PC noted the publication of the Inspectors' Report on the Examination of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan 2018-2037.
 - 6.2 **Resident:** The PC considered a complaint about the new street lighting at the Bennett Homes site being excessive. It was noted that lighting policy was dictated by Suffolk County Council (SCC) and the developer would not be able to adjust the lights on the development to part-night lighting unless they were not for adoption by SCC. If they were to be adopted, they were required to have standard all night photocell control until the adoption was completed, usually when the development was completed. SCC and Bennett Homes had both confirmed that there was nothing they could do at this stage.
 - 6.3 **PPG:** The PC noted the success of the Wellbeing Art Group funded by the PC.
 - 6.4 **MSDC:** The PC noted the following street names confirmed for the Bennett Homes site: Barley Birch Drive, which had been suggested by the PC, and Holly Place, Magnolia Close, Clover Close and Shamrock Close, as chosen by MSDC.
7. **Ongoing Items:**
 - 7.1 **Recreation Ground:** The usage of the facilities reflected the change of season, with footfall during school hours reduced. The Ground continued to be well used by smaller children and their carers, and it remained a popular venue for school age

children at the end of the school day. Weekend usage was largely weather dependent.

The additional BRGRP items and the operational changes were all progressing with much of the work scheduled for October 2023, including work to extend the Junior Swing to include two flat seats as originally specified; installation of the Circular Seat; installation of hard standing for the bin store; additional fencing on the south/west boundaries; removal of ivy from the roadside fence; and new signage displaying the changed hours of operation.

The Sub-Committee continued to develop its understanding with UF regarding the delivery of the maintenance requirements as set out in the Construction Contract. It was noted that to date maintaining the facilities to the required standard had required more work than Urban Forestry envisaged. There was no financial claim attached to this, but it was necessary to understand in more detail where the pinch points were in the maintenance scope of work. A meeting with UF and JBA would be arranged to discuss the maintenance.

A further claim to drawdown Lottery funds had been made, related to the maintenance works. The PC had been asked by the Lottery to provide an year-end summary of the Project and the previously issued "Journey" document was being updated to reflect the current status of the Project.

Finally, it was noted that the Recreation Ground was a winner in the Community and Schools Development category of the BALI National and International Awards 2023. It was agreed that this was a major plaudit for the Project and significant recognition of the success and standards of the design and construction of the new facilities. The RG Sub-Committee, James Blake Associates and Urban Forestry were to be congratulated.

7.2 **TRO for Back Hills, Chapel Lane and Mill Road North:** SCC had contacted County Cllr Jessica Fleming and confirmation of her support was pending.

7.3 **TRO for extension of 30mph on B1113:** SCC had contacted County Cllr Jessica Fleming and confirmation of her support was pending.

7.4 **Marl Pits:** There was no update.

7.5 **Sarah's Wood:** There was no update.

8. **Other Items:**

8.1 **Review and Update of Council Documents:** The PC reviewed the documents and it was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to accept the unamended Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment and Environmental and Sustainability Policy as well as the Reserves Policy, amended to increase General Reserves to £22,000 which was approximately 6 months' operating costs.

8.2 **Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan:** The PC carried out the annual review of the PIIP and agreed to remove references to the After School Club which had now closed. The number of places and children attending St Botolph's School would also be checked. It was agreed to write to organisations again to see if they were going forward with their projects, with a timescale of one year, and to advertise in the parish magazine for further local projects. It was agreed to ask Rickingham PC whether it would be worth reviving the PIIP Sub Committee to undertake a more thorough review.

8.3 **Botesdale Recreation Ground Charity:** The PC considered a report by the Clerk recommending a review of the Recreation Ground's charitable status and other options to safeguard community ownership and use. Birketts LLP had provided an estimated cost of £750-1000 to review the trusts of the charity and give advice on how the charity held the land and what restrictions there were on disposal. Following a review, their estimate to close down the charity and document that the land was held by the Parish Council was £2,500-£3,000. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to ask Birketts to undertake the initial review and pause the ongoing land registration if Birketts felt it necessary.

8.4 **Remembrance Day:** Cllr Dickinson had agreed to represent Botesdale PC and was given the wreath.

8.5 **Christmas 2023:** It was noted that Santiago's Art Café was happy to provide music for the Lights On event and stay open to sell refreshments. Cllr Bavington-Lowe would provide safety fencing around the War Memorial for the event. The art competition at St Botolph's would go ahead if agreed by the School and the Clerk would purchase the usual prizes.

8.6 **Village Gateways:** The PC considered the installation of gateways on Mill Road North as proposed at the September meeting. It was noted that there were two

options for installation: commission Suffolk Highways to design and install gates at around £5000 plus or apply for a street furniture licence through SCC and pay directly for their supply and installation at roughly half the cost. It was decided that neither would be good value for money given that there was no indication that a persistent speeding problem existed.

9. Village Status Reports:

9.1 **Chair's Report:** The Chair reported that he had again attended 'Councillor's Corner' at the Rickinghall Farmer's Market, Saturday 9th September alongside County Cllr Jessica Fleming, District Cllr Gilly Morgan and Rickinghall Chair Geoff Short. There had been some discussion about the development off Garden House Lane and a proposed Phase 2, up to the footpath and Botesdale boundary. He had responded to Adam Bell - Development Director at Bennett Homes – regarding the potential of a parking bay in Chapel Lane as part of their development and awaited Mr Bell's thoughts. Along with Cllr Sargeant, he had attended a SALC meeting (via Zoom) on 14th September. There would be a county-wide SALC conference on 29th November. Finally, he had attended the Civic Service of the incoming Mayor of Diss, Kieran Murphy, at St Mary's Church on 17th September.

9.2 **Clerk's Report:** The PC had been awarded £250 under Price in Your Place, a new grant available to work with communities in cleaning up neighbourhoods and building local pride. It was to be used for sign cleaning/refurbishment, and councillors agreed to provide the Clerk with a list of signs that needed work.

9.3 Local Organisations:

- Barwoods – Working parties continued, with the latest at Northfield Wood in Rickinghall.
- Streams and Footpaths – The design of the information board for the site at Fen Lane was almost completed and volunteers had met on 1 October for the first working party of the autumn season.
- Village Hall – A meeting had been held on 25 September and a new treasurer was in place. It was noted that a bookings secretary was needed. The VH was in a good financial position but the loss of After School Club income was expected to have an effect. A brochure was being developed for the Welcome Pack.

9.4 **Village Assets:** None.

9.5 **Public Rights of Way:** None.

9.6 **Highways Issues:** None.

9.7 **Welcome Packs:** The Clerk would circulate old councillor bios for amendment and new councillors were asked to send a bio to the Clerk. It was agreed to ask Bennett Homes to notify the PC as houses were occupied.

10. Finance (as of 30/09/23):

10.1	Account Balance:	£ 136,921.69	
	Bank Balance:	£ 136,921.69	
	Income:	£ 24,600.00	MSDC Parish Precept 23-24 (1/2)

10.2 Accounts for Payment:

Admin Payments	£ 1,422.15	Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc.	£ 409.30	St Clean etc October 23
Clear Councils (form. BHIB)	£ 1,129.30	Insurance Renewal 2023-24
Pear Technology	£ 90.00	PT Mapper Pro Support & Updates
Bench UK	£ 350.00	Rec Ground: Chatty Bench
SALC	£ 72.00	Councillor Training – SJ
SALC	£ 347.86	Membership Fees 23-24
S Green	£ 50.00	Village sign clean

Payments by Direct Debit:

Info Commissioner	£ 35.00	Data Protection Registration
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10.3 **Budget Report:** This was deferred to the November meeting.

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

12. **Next Meeting:** 6 November 2023

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:57pm.