

BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 30 JANUARY 2023 STARTING AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Thorne (Chairman) and
Councillors Hawksfield, Moore, Shepherdson, and Mrs Vidler

In Attendance – Neil Harris (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Moore and Shepherdson disclosed that they were Members of the Cricket Club.

3. Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 16 January 2023

It was **Agreed** that the minutes of the meetings held on 16 January 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2023

There were no matters arising.

5. Report of the Borough and County Councillors

No Borough or County Councillors were present at the meeting. The Chairman indicated that Borough Councillor Allen had written to her about leaflets being issued about the woeful Broadband in the area. He had also stated that he was going to take up this matter with the local MP Greg Clark.

6. Public Participation

The public had an opportunity to raise questions with the Council and for Councillors to respond where appropriate: -

- There was a special meeting of the Council on the 13th of February to discuss the Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground and its management arrangements.

7. Quotations from Thompson Tree Care

The Clerk reported that 2 quotations had been received by the Council from Thompson Tree Care in respect of the pond clearance and tree work to a Yew tree and a Holly tree next to the Tennis Court.

It was **Agreed** that the quotations for the pond clearance in the sum of £270 (excl VAT) and for the tree work in the sum of £550 (excl VAT) be approved.

8. Payment List

It was **Agreed** that the Payment List as circulated at the meeting and as set out below be approved: -

Name	Reason Invoice No.	Net	VAT	Gross
Neil Harris	Payroll and mileage - Paid in accordance with agreed procedure	962.62	0.00	962.62
Ashdown Garden Services	December Invoice - Garden Maintenance and Hedge Cutting and Topsoil – Payment agreed at 16 January meeting	625.00	0.00	625.00
Bidborough Village Hall	Hire of Hall for Various meetings	56.00	0.00	56.00
MFW	Payroll Services for quarter ending December 22	60.00	12.00	72.00
NPower	December Invoice – Paid as payment date 26 January - Payment agreed at 16 January meeting	106.77	5.34	112.11
People Law Ltd	Invoice 198 Professional Services	625.00	125.00	750.00
PKF Littlejohn	Professional Services - AGAR	300.00	60.00	360.00
Neil Harris	Payroll and mileage for December/January - Paid in accordance with agreed procedure	909.25	0.00	909.25
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment Month 10	272.52	0.00	272.52

9. External Auditors Report

The Clerk reported that the External Auditor PKF Littlejohn had submitted its Final Report on the Council's AGAR. They had expressed themselves satisfied with the response from the Council.

It was **Agreed** to note the Final report of the External Auditor.

10. Church Wall Repairs

The Clerk reported that he had received only one price in respect of the quote for the repairs to the Church wall and that was significantly higher than the estimate from the Council's appointed Surveyors. He had therefore, taken the opportunity to approach Thornes an engineering company used by the Council previously and asked them to give the Council a price. They were not able to submit that to the meeting that night and therefore the Clerk had requested that the decision be deferred.

It was **Agreed** that

- (1) That the decision on the appointment of the contractor to undertake the repair work to the Church Wall be deferred to enable a further quote from Thornes to be received.
- (2) That, if the quote from Thornes is more than the quote from the original contractor DBR that their quote of £21040.63 be accepted but that if Thornes quote is less that they both be reported to the next meeting of the Council.
- (3) That the Clerk consider the options available to confirm that the work had been carried out correctly including getting a quote from the Council's Surveyors to check the work.

11. Coronation Seat

At the request of the Chairman Mr Ray Skinner addressed the Committee on the work that he had been undertaking on a new coronation seat at the existing location facing out from the ridge and to accompany the display a display board explaining the view from the seat. He indicated that he had had little success with the fundraising but would continue to look at that. He also stated that he would work with other locals to agree the wording for the Board and reminded everyone that the seat would need to be dedicated and that would have to be within 48 hours of the Coronation on 6 May 2023.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk would look into the possible prices for a metal seat and an appropriate display board and report back to the next scheduled meeting of the Council.

12. Salt Bins

The Chairman asked that if Members had any proposed locations for Salt Bins that they bring them to her attention or to the Clerks attention so that they could be brought up on the KCC reporting system.

13. Birch Wood – Funding for Work Party Works

The Clerk reported that he had received a notification from the Birch Wood Association that a working party was to be held at Birch Wood by the Kent High Weald Partnership at a cost of £550.

It was **Agreed** that the Working Party works at Birch Wood to be carried out by the Kent High Weald Partnership at a cost of £550 be approved.

14. Allotment Fencing Quotes

The Clerk reported that 3 quotes for the provision of fencing on the allotment boundary with Spring Lan had been received and these were as follows: -

Ashdown Garden Services - £1700.54

Mr Mower - £1015

Tate and Tonbridge Fencing - £1080

It was **Agreed** that the quote from Mr Mower in the sum of £1015 be accepted.

15. Churchyard and Grass Cutting Contracts

The Clerk reported that Ashdown Garden Services had submitted their price for the Churchyard and Grass Cutting Contracts which in the case of the Churchyard remained the same but for the grass cutting was increasing from £75 a week to £100 a week.

It was **Agreed** that Ashdown Garden Services be retained for the following contracts on the basis detailed below: -

- (1) That in respect of the Churchyard the quoted price of £274 per cut be agreed and that the cut be every fortnight for the period from 1 March to 30 November
- (2) That the grass cutting contract at the quoted price of £100 be accepted and commence on 1 March and run to 30 November.

16. Play Park Tender

Discussion ensued on the approach to be taken with the Play Park tender once the Management arrangements for the Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground had been determined and put in place. The Clerk indicated that one of the first steps would be to invite Play equipment companies to visit the site and to discuss with them and the relevant partners the type of equipment that could be located at the agreed site. There could also be an opportunity to involve the school children in the discussions. However, it was felt imperative that once the management arrangements had been settled that this project is moved on quickly.

17. Exclusion of the Press and Public – Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

It was **Agreed** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to enable the Council to consider confidential information in respect of an employment issue.

18. Confidential Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 16 January 2023

It was **Agreed** that the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed

19. Employment Matter

The Council considered this matter in private.

20. Duration of Meeting

7.00pm to 8.43pm