

BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 5 JUNE 2023 STARTING AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Vidler (Chairman) and Councillors Mrs Collins, Hinds, Marriott, and Stevens.

In Attendance – Neil Harris (Clerk) and Borough Councillor Allen

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Eames and Mrs Summers, County Councillor McInroy, Borough Councillors Curry and Sankey

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosures.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2023

It was **Agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2023

(1) Gate Farm Road Flytipping – The Chairman indicated that she had taken this up with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and had chased them again on Friday.

(2) Allotments Water Pipe – The Chairman reported that the work had now been completed and she wished that the vote of thanks from the Council go to Peter Pierson and Andrew Dunn for the work that they had done in repairing the water pipe.

5. Report of the Borough and County Councillors

Borough Councillor Allen indicated that he had nothing to report.

6. Public Participation

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

- Concern was expressed about the condition of the growth of hedges across the path along Bidborough Ridge. The Council would look at this and get the contractor to do the work at the earliest opportunity.

- A parishioner flagged that the bricks along the steps at Alf's corner were loose and needed repair. The clerk advised he would assess and sort out any work that required doing.
- In response to a question as to whether she would have signed the 2020/21 AGAR form the Chairman indicated that she would have taken advice before deciding whether to sign or not. However, she believes that the new Council would do what it believes is right.
- A member of the public stated that at the last meeting the Council/Trust agreed that the Play Park should remain in its current location but there appeared to be no consideration of a Risk Assessment or Environmental Audit. The Chairman and Councillor Marriott in responding to this question indicated that back in 2020 the Cricket Club had undertaken a Risk Assessment, but this would now need to be updated and this would happen as part of the process going forward in the preparation of the scheme going out to tender.
- A member of the public stated that a Councillor had allowed a member of the public to see the Council's archives when not under supervision. The Chairman asked the member of the public to supply the evidence of this event and the matter would be looked at.

7. Payment List

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

Name	Reason for Invoice	Net	VAT	Gross
Ashdown Garden Services	Grass Cutting – May	548.00	0.00	548.00
Ashdown Garden Services	Garden Maintenance - May	500.00	0.00	500.00
Brachers	Legal Advice in respect of the Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground Trust	1872.00	374.40	2246.40
Neil Harris	Payroll and mileage for May – Paid in accordance with agreed procedure	948.70	0.00	948.70
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment Month 2	273.96	0.00	273.96
Vision ICT	Annual Email Hosting	90.00	18.00	108.00

8. Planning Application - 23/01035/LBC - 2 Clockhouse Mews, Swaylands, Penshurst Road, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to planning application 23/01035/LBC - 2 Clockhouse Mews, Swaylands, Penshurst Road, Bidborough.

9. Planning Application - 23/01185/FULL - Swaylands, Penshurst Road, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to planning application 23/01185/FULL - Swaylands, Penshurst Road, Bidborough.

10. Council Reserves

The Council considered the report of the Clerk on Council Reserves and that the projected reserves of £116403, when setting the precept, had increased to £127713.

It was **Agreed** that the increase of £11310 in reserves be apportioned by its allocation of £10000 to Special Reserve which would cover unexpected expenditure to which a sum had not been allocated such as Election costs) and £1310 to Playground Maintenance.

11. Church Wall

The Clerk reported that the Council had appointed Thorne Civil Engineers as its contractor for the works on the Church Wall who had priced their work in accordance with the specification drawn up by CTP Consulting Engineers, on behalf of the Council. The Council had contracted CTP to continue to work with the Council on this scheme and they had met with Thornes on site and the following proposal for changes had come forward: -

- Supply & fix additional replacement stone as an alternative to filling the bee holes: £1,170.00 + VAT.
- Supply and install replacement handrail in Kee Klamp or equivalent: £540.00 + VAT.

The first was being proposed as the wall had got worse and whilst these works could wait it made sense to do them whilst the contractor was in situ. The second was being proposed as an alternative to the original proposal.

It was **Agreed** that the contract be amended to include the following but that the handrail proposal be not pursued: -

- Supply & fix additional replacement stone as an alternative to filling the bee holes: £1,170.00 + VAT.

12. Birchwood Summers Steps

The issue of set of steps in Birchwood that had been reported to the Council as potentially not being safe, but which were the subject of some confusion as to the ownership of the area was

being considered by the Council. The Clerk indicated that he was looking into the matter with the Birchwood Association and was intending to meet with them and Councillors Eames and Stevens to determine the way forward.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk would report back to the Council at its July meeting indicating the way forward and that in the meantime any necessary action needed to alleviate any problems including signage be implemented.

13. Chairmans and Councillor Announcements

The Chairman reported that

- The play park tender would be reported to the June meeting
- The newsletter would now be a summer newsletter and be issued in about 6 weeks
- The Council was looking to set up a document depositary for Council Members using the Councils website provider. If this was felt to be the best way forward it was **Agreed** that it be funded at a cost of £75 plus VAT
- The Council was looking at setting up its own contractor for the emptying of Dog poo bins
- The shop was in need of support from its community and that an article on this would be in the next newsletter

Councillors Hinds and Stevens raised the issue of the hedging for the allotment, and it was **Agreed** that all allotment holders be asked to be less aggressive in respect of cutting back the hedge and a height of 3 metres be maintained

14. Duration of Meeting

7.00pm to 8.01pm