

BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 31 JULY 2023 STARTING AT 7.18PM

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

In Attendance – Neil Harris (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hinds, County Councillor McInroy, Borough Councillor Curry

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosures, but all Councillors stated that they knew the applicant in respect of Planning Application 23/00926/FULL

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 26 June 2023

It was **Agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2023

There were no matters arising

5. Report of the Borough and County Councillors

There were no Borough or County Councillors present at the meeting.

6. Public Participation

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

- A member of the public asked about highways and in particular the Highway Improvement Plan. The Chairman indicated that this matter had not been forgotten and a review would take place in September.
- Concern was expressed about growth covering the 30mph signs and it was indicated that the Council would look at what could be done.

7. Payment List

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

Payment List

Name	Reason for Invoice	Net	VAT	Gross
N Power	Street Lighting Electricity costs – June	113.29	5.66	118.95
St John Ambulance (Supplies)	Battery for Village Hall Defibrillator	350.00	70.00	420.00
CJS Plants Ltd	8 Hanging Baskets	1200.00	240.00	1440.00
VisionICT Ltd	Website Hosting for September 2023 to August 2024	175.00	35.00	210.00
Neil Harris	Payroll and mileage for July – Paid in accordance with agreed procedure	934.65	0.00	934.65
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment Month 4	273.96	0.00	273.96
Bidborough Village Hall	Hire of Hall April to July	83.00	0.00	83.00
Ashdown Garden Services	Grass Cutting – Cemetery 3 cuts	822.00	0.00	822.00

Income Received

Name	Reason for Income	Net	VAT	Gross
Jackson Stops	Newsletter	80.00	0.00	80.00
HMRC VAT	2022/23 VAT Payment	7689.63	0.00	7689.63
Peter King	Newsletter	50.00	0.00	50.00
TWBC	Precept – First Payment	35985.00	0.00	35985.00
J Buckland	Memorial Ashes Plot	100.00	0.00	100.00

8. Budget Report

The Council considered the Financial Budget Comparison report detailing expenditure and income received by the Council as submitted by the Clerk.

It was **Agreed** that the report be noted.

9. Planning Application - 23/00926/FULL – Ridgelands Lodge, Penshurst Road, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to planning application 23/00926/FULL – Ridgelands Lodge, Penshurst Road, Bidborough.

10. Planning Application - 23/01750/Full – 20 Woodland Way, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to planning application 23/01750/Full – 20 Woodland Way, Bidborough.

11. Planning Application - 23/01845/Full – 53 Bidborough Ridge, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to planning application 23/01845/Full – 53 Bidborough Ridge, Bidborough.

12. Health and Safety Policy

The Chairman provided a copy of a sample risk assessment matrix for the various business/geographical areas in the parish and advised she would circulate it to the Council and requested that each Councillor complete the section relating to their responsibilities and feedback to Councillor Marriott and the Clerk. The deadline for this was mid September to enable discussion at the September meeting.

It was **Agreed** that the Health and Safety Policy as circulated at the meeting and attached to these minutes be approved

13. GDPR Policy

It was **Agreed** that the GDPR Policy as circulated at the meeting and attached to these minutes be approved

14. Retention and Disposal of Records Policy

It was **Agreed** that the Retention and Disposal of Records Policy as circulated at the meeting and attached to these minutes be approved

15. Lengthsman Contract

The Council was informed that a number of potential contractors had been approached to take on the Lengthsman contract on the basis of the Schedule attached to the agenda. Following this exercise only one quote from MDH Horticultural Contractors was received and a copy of their quote had been circulated to Members. The Clerk reported that the cost of the contract on an annual basis would be approximately £25000 including the Cemetery and Churchyard but that the cost up to the end of this financial year would be in the region of £10000 for which there was just sufficient funding in the budget, but this could be topped up from Reserves if required. If the Council decided to retain the contractor beyond this current year it would need to consider its budget allocation at the time of budget setting.

It was **Agreed** that MDH Horticultural Contractors be appointed as the Council's Lengthsman Contractor on the basis of the quote submitted to the Council and at the prices set out below for the period from 17 August 2023 to the end of the calendar year: -

Every 2 Weeks

1. Alfs Corner and Bus stop areas - £40.00
2. Top of St Lawrence Avenue mow/Strim - £40.00 Hedge - £60.00
3. Allotments £60.00
4. Spring Lane - £60.00 (First cut and clear £140.00)
5. Around Village Sign - £30.00
6. Cemetery and Churchyard – £280.00

Monthly

7. Lower Rec
8. Footpaths
9. Brookhurst field - £280.00 for all 3 sections

General

10. Lower Rec Hedges - £280.00
11. Brookhurst Field Hedge - £560.00
12. The Mount Hedge - £280.00
13. Bidborough Ridge Hedge - £60.00
14. Village Green Hedge - £280.00
15. Village Road Signs – £140.00
16. Churchyard Hedge - £140.00.

16. Update on Action Points

(1) Birchwood – Summer Steps

The Clerk reported that the Council was seeking to identify the owners of the land in question and sought authority to undertake land registry searches, if required

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk be authorised to undertake Land Registry searches, as required, and take the necessary steps to resolve this matter and report back on progress to the next meeting of the Council

(2) Hedge along Ridge

It was reported that the work had been done.

(3) Fly Tipping

The Chairman reported that the fly tipping had been cleared.

(4) Waste Bins

Councillor Eames reported that he had been in discussion with TWBC waste control team, and they had said that they will look at the suggested 3 new bins and whether they could take on the emptying of these bins. He indicated that he would report back to the Council once they had come back to him.

(5) Bidborough Ridge – Damage caused by Badgers

The Clerk reported that KCC had informed him that their badger expert had looked at this and that the measures taken had resolved the problem. The Council expressed the view that the issues were still continuing, and the Clerk indicated that he would take this matter back up with KCC.

17. Play Park Tender

The Clerk reported that the Trust had considered the revised Play Park tender document that had been submitted to them and had Agreed to Recommend to the Bidborough Parish Council that

(1) the Play Park tender document be approved, and that Councillor Vidler be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the document arising from the latest consultation

(2) the approved Play Park tender document be used for the tender process and that process commence in accord with the timetable set out within that document

(3) it should consider the use of weldmesh panelling for the new fencing of the Play Area and that ROSPA be asked to inspect the current fencing and to advise on the best and most appropriate fencing to be used to protect the new Play Area.

The Council considered these recommendations, and it was **Agreed** that

(1) the Play Park tender document be approved, and that Councillor Vidler be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the document arising from the latest consultation

(2) the approved Play Park tender document be used for the tender process and that process commence in accord with the timetable set out within that document

(3) it should consider the use of weldmesh panelling for the new fencing of the Play Area and that ROSPA be asked to inspect the current fencing and to advise on the best and most appropriate fencing to be used to protect the new Play Area.

18. Church Wall

The Clerk reported that the Council's contractors in respect of the work to the Church Wall, namely Thorne Civil Engineers, had updated the Council as follows: -

“The scope and scale of the work has been agreed subject to the inevitable minor variations that are sure to occur as the work proceeds and an order has been placed for the random stone work and for the very specific copings. The stone order will weigh in the region of 2 tonnes and with the need to carry much of that order up the ramp from the lych gate in Spring Lane off High Street, we request permission to close off that access to the church while the work is being carried out. We must also point out that a toilet facility will be required and that too will be positioned within that gate boundary.

Subject to final confirmation of the delivery dates for the stone, we are anticipating taking delivery of the materials, plant and equipment during the two week period ending 5th September, with the scaffolding arriving specifically on Friday the 1st of September, to take full advantage of the school holidays. This arrangement will also allow for the variable availability of the stone masons, necessary for this calibre of work.

We trust this meets with your approval and is in compliance with the requirements to minimise disruption of the bees.”

The Council considered their request, and it was **Agreed** that the work progress as indicated by the contractor and as detailed above be approved.

19. Electricity Charges

The Clerk reported that the Council had been informed that N Power had notified the Council that they intended from 1 September 2023 to increase the Council charges for the electricity used for the streetlighting from 33.80p/kWh to 50.188p/kWh an increase of approximately 50%.

It was **Agreed** that the increase be noted and that the Clerk be authorised to see if he could identify any new supplier at a lower rate of charge.

20. Lower Recreation Ground – Tree Fallen Over

Councillor Mrs Collins indicated that she had been informed that a tree had come over in the Lower Rec. She stated that she would investigate and report back.

21. 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.

22. Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 June 2023

It was **Agreed** that the Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 June 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

23. Duration of Meeting

7.18pm to 9.08pm