

BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 23 OCTOBER 2023 STARTING AT 7.08PM

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

In Attendance – Neil Harris (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence was received from County Councillor McInroy

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosures.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 25 September 2023

It was **Agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2023

There were no matters arising

5. Report of the Borough and County Councillors

Borough Councillor Curry reported that the Gatwick Northern Runway consultation was coming to a conclusion on 29 October. He also brought to the attention of the Council a recent case where a Borough Councillors call in was not able to be applied because the Parish Council had not objected to an application at the outline stage, but changed their mind when consulted on the detailed application but were then informed that the call in could only take place at the outline application stage.

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 raised their concerns about the fact that the Council had not resolved the issue of the expenses claim by the former Chairman relating to legal advice. The Chairman stated that the Council had not refused to pay the expenses but

had asked for more information to enable the Council to decide. He also indicated that he was pleased to see that the Play Park project was proceeding but asked why the provision of a new pavilion was also not being progressed. The Chairman indicated that the Council did not have the resources to run these 2 very significant projects at the same time. She stated that once the play park was completed that the Council would move onto the Pavilion.

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: -

Expenditure For Approval

Name	Reason for Invoice	Net	VAT	Gross
N Power	Street Lighting Electricity costs - September	168.13	8.41	176.54
N Power	Street Lighting Electricity costs – 1 October to 7 October	42.91	2.15	45.06
Bidborough C. of E. Primary School	Hall Hire – 17 May	50.00	0.00	50.00
St John Ambulance (Supplies)	School Defibrillator Infant/Child Pad	127.95	25.59	153.54
Streetlights	Street Lighting Maintenance Contract 2023/24 – Payment 2	384.72	76.94	461.66
Kent County Playing Fields Association	Annual Subscription	20.00	0.00	20.00
Kalli Kwik Tunbridge Wells	Parish Magazine Printing Costs	624.00	0.00	624.00
Neil Harris	Payroll for October – Paid in accordance with agreed procedure	1442.55	0.00	1442.55
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment – Month 7	476.76	0.00	476.76

Income Received since 1 August

Name	Reason for Income	Net	VAT	Gross
The Bottle House	Newsletter	30.00	0.00	30.00
TWBC	Precept	35985	0.00	35985
C Morgan	Newsletter	30.00	0.00	30.00
Tanners Ltd (The Kentish Hare)	Newsletter	80.00	0.00	80.00

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 Members raise any questions they had with the Clerk.

9. Highways and Road Safety – Highway Improvement Plan

Councillor Stevens stated that the Council had had discussions with the School and with KCC re the provision of a zebra crossing on the ridge probably in the area of the Kentish Hare. They had also discussed with KCC other options for slowing traffic through the village including chicanes, which would be very unlikely to happen, and extending the 30mph speed limits. KCC stated that they were going to put down an ATC traffic count for a week in the very near future. Following that discussions could take place with them about what could be done for the village in the future.

It was **Agreed** to thank Councillor Stevens for the work that he was doing, to note the report and to await the outcome of the ATC traffic count.

10. Streetlights Electricity Charges

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting the Council had agreed to use Cardinal Energy for their energy for streetlights going forward on a 24-month contract valued at £1636.07 but accepting that the price could vary the next day when the contract would be signed. The price did vary the next day rising to £1853.78. However, this was still a significant saving of £1545.72 and the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, used the delegation given to him by the Council to accept the quote.

It was **Agreed** to note the report.

11. Birchwood – Summer Steps

The Clerk reported that the land on which the steps cross is not part of the Mortlock lease but owned by a member of the family living in Australia. He indicated that he had written via the residential home to her but had not received any reply to the matter of the steps and the Mortlock lease.

The Summer Steps are technically the responsibility of the owner of the land, they are partly the responsibility of the Council as their purpose is to enable access to Council land. The Clerk indicated, that in his opinion, the only way they will get repaired is for the Council to commission this work and pay for it. There was no indication as to any likely cost and therefore it was suggested that the Council obtain some quotes for the work and then make a decision on whether to proceed or to look at whether the entrance should be closed.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk should obtain some quotes on works to the Summer Steps and be presented to the November meeting, if possible.

12. Fireworks Display – Use of Peter Roberts Field

The Chairman reported that a request had been received from the Bidborough Primary School PTA on whether they could use the Peter Roberts field for setting off the fireworks whilst people watched from the school grounds. Additionally only authorised persons and would have any access to the field.

It was **Agreed** that permission be agreed for the use of the Peter Roberts field for the setting off of fireworks only, subject to the following being received by Friday 27 October:

- 1/ Confirmation that the tennis court surface will be protected with tarpaulins or similar
- 2/ The Council receiving a copy of the risk assessment for the event and being satisfied with its content
- 3/ Confirmation that you have the necessary insurance in place to hold this event with a launch site in a remote location outside the school
- 4/ Confirmation that the PTA will make good any damage made to the Peter Roberts field, recreation ground including the areas leased to the BSA. The making good of any damage must be to the standard set by the Council - and if this is not met it reserves the right to make good the damage itself and charge the PTA for the works to put right the damage.
- 5/ A copy of the clean up plan for the Peter Roberts field and adjoining areas – including the Recreation Ground and tennis court.

13. Play Park Tender

The Chairman indicated that the following 5 companies had tendered for the provision of new play equipment in the existing play area –

Eibe
Kompan
Playcubed
Sawscapes
Wicksteed

The Chairman stated that the Council had taken the opportunity to consult the public and had held a public meeting solely for that purpose. Following a detailed consideration of all of the proposals from the above companies, it was **Agreed** that Kompan be selected as the Council's preferred supplier.

14. Waste Bins

Councillor Eames reported that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council had confirmed that they would put in the three bins at Spring Lane, Darnley Drive and St Lawrence Avenue. They also indicated that collection should not cost the Council as it would be added to the existing collection in Bidborough.

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

15. Poppy Appeal

It was **Agreed** that a Poppy Appeal wreath be purchased for Remembrance Sunday at a cost of £50.

16. 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.

17. Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 September 2023

It was **Agreed** that the Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 September 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

18. Duration of Meeting

7.08pm to 8.30pm