

## **BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 27 JANUARY 2025 STARTING AT 7.05PM**

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

**In Attendance** –Neil Harris (Clerk), County Councillor McInroy and Borough Councillor Ellis

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cole and Hinds

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Mrs Vidler stated that she knew the applicant in respect of the 43 Bidborough Ridge planning application but that this would not preclude her from participating on this item, but she did not intend to vote.

#### **3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 25 November 2024**

It was **Agreed** that the minutes, including the confidential minutes, of the meeting held on 25 November 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

#### **4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2024**

There were no matters arising

#### **5. Report of the Borough and County Councillors**

County Councillor McInroy reported that the County Council would balance their budget but to do so would need to make £25m from sales of property. There would be a 5% increase in the Council Tax. The Council had also received an additional £11-12m from the Government for potholes. He also reported that the Government had introduced the proposal of the introduction of unitary authorities across the country and was seeking applications from local authorities to come forward to make this change in 2027 with further changes taking place in 2028. KCC, Medway and the other principal Councils had applied for this first tranche in 2027. However more detail on this will come forward in early February. He also indicated that there could be a significant impact on Parish Councils going forward.

Borough Councillor Ellis also referred to the new devolution scheme proposed by the Government and if it goes ahead Tunbridge Wells could apply to become a Town Council. He also indicated that there could be funds available for highways improvements particularly if schemes are jointly funded.

## **6. Public Participation**

A member of the public indicated that nationally there was the Shed Movement and could this be given some support. The Chairman indicated that she would see if an article could be placed in the Newsletter.

### **7. 24/02665/FULL – The Glen House, High Street, Bidborough**

The decision below was taken between meetings as to delay would mean that the Council's comments would not be received by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

It was **Agreed** to confirm the following decision: -

The Council objects to this application on the same basis as the last application but accepts that the footprint was smaller but the concerns over height still remained. Previous objection below: -

1. This development due to its size and height will lead to a significant overlooking of adjoining properties leading to a loss of light, loss of privacy and the creation of overshadowing for these adjoining properties
2. There is a significant increase in the size and height of this property which is out of keeping with the adjoining properties (though the Council now accepts that the footprint of the new development is smaller)
3. The increase in size of this development could exacerbate the existing problems with drainage at this location where there is already some flooding to adjoining properties, and could cause subsidence issues which could cause problems for adjoining local residents
4. This proposed development through its size and expected increase in traffic movements will cause significant access issues for all local residents using this shared location
5. This site is within the Conservation Area and the proposal does not seem to have taken this into account with the proposed development having a much larger footprint and significant increase in height
6. There is concern about a very closely located tree to the development in the garden of the property next door and the impact that this development would have on this neighbour's tree and also the impact this tree could have on the development.

### **8. 24/02903/FULL – Reservoir House, Hayesden Lane, Bidborough**

The decision below was taken between meetings as to delay would mean that the Council's comments would not be received by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

It was **Agreed** to confirm the decision to raise no objection to application 24/02903/FULL.

### **9. 24/02982/FULL – Cedar Barn, Hayesden Lane, Bidborough**

The decision below was taken between meetings as to delay would mean that the Council's comments would not be received by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

It was **Agreed** to confirm the decision to raise no objection to application 24/02982/FULL.

**10. 24/03075/FULL – Lammermuir, Penshurst Road, Bidborough**

The decision below was taken between meetings as to delay would mean that the Council's comments would not be received by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

It was **Agreed** to confirm the decision to raise no objection to application 24/03075/FULL.

**11. 24/03076/FULL – Lammermuir, Penshurst Road, Bidborough**

The decision below was taken between meetings as to delay would mean that the Council's comments would not be received by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

It was **Agreed** to confirm the decision to raise no objection to application 24/03076/FULL.

**12. 24/03077/FULL – Lammermuir, Penshurst Road, Bidborough**

The decision below was taken between meetings as to delay would mean that the Council's comments would not be received by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

It was **Agreed** to confirm the decision to raise no objection to application 24/03077/FULL.

**13. 24/03069/FULL – 27 Bidborough Ridge, Bidborough**

The decision below was taken between meetings as to delay would mean that the Council's comments would not be received by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

It was **Agreed** to confirm the decision to raise no objection to application 24/03069/FULL.

**14. 24/03116/FULL – 54 Woodland Way, Bidborough**

The decision below was taken between meetings as to delay would mean that the Council's comments would not be received by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

It was **Agreed** to confirm the decision to raise no objection to application 24/03116/FULL.

**15. 24/03179/FULL – 43 Bidborough Ridge, Bidborough**

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to application 24/03179/FULL.

**16. 24/3266/FULL – Conifers, Rectory Drive, Bidborough**

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to application 24/3266/FULL.

## 17. 25/00039/FULL – 27 Bidborough Ridge, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to application 25/00039/FULL.

## 18. Payment List

The Clerk reported that he had received a request for the renewal of the Council's membership of the Council for the Protection of Rural England at a cost of £36

It was **Agreed** that the Payment List as set out below be approved and that the income received and transfers between accounts be noted: -

### Expenditure For Approval

Name	Reason for Invoice	Net	VAT	Gross
SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for October - Paid	152.75	10.58	168.74
MDH Horticultural Contractors	ANRG hedge works - Paid	240.00	48.00	288.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	Lengthsman Contract Hedge Works - Paid	980.00	196.00	1176.00
Pallet Handling Penshurst Ltd	Fence Works at the Churchyard and the Pond Fence - Paid	1670.00	334.00	2004.00
Neil Harris	Payroll for December – Paid in accordance with agreed procedure.	932.85	0.00	932.85
SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for September - Paid	152.75	10.58	163.33
Streetlights	Lighting Repairs – Replacement of photocell to Column 8, The Glebe – Paid	97.75	19.55	117.30
MFW	Payroll Service – October to December 24 – Paid	60.00	12.00	72.00
Pierson Agriculture	Gang Mowing – ANRG and Peter Roberts Field, various hedgecutting – Paid	1479.95	295.99	1775.94
Councillor Stevens	Amazon bill for 1 ink cartridge to print Double Yellow Lines Consultation letter - Paid	29.35	5.87	35.22
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment – Month 9 - Paid	273.96	0.00	273.96

Neil Harris	Payroll for January – Paid in accordance with agreed procedure.	921.15	0.00	921.15
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment – Month 10	273.96	0.00	273.96
Bidborough Village Hall	Rent for use of Village Hall from 1 August to 31 December 2024	62.00	0.00	62.00
Forvis Mazars	External Auditors Fee	420.00	84.00	504.00
SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for December	152.75	10.58	168.74
CPRE	Annual Subscription	36.00	0.00	36.00

#### **Income Received since last meeting**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Reason for Income</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Gross</b>
Allotments	Rental Payments (12)	244.20	0.00	244.20
Bank	Interest – December	97.09	0.00	97.09
Bank	Interest – January	103.32	0.00	103.32

#### **Transfers between Council Accounts**

<b>Account</b>	<b>Account to be Transferred to</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Business Reserve	Treasurers	Fund approved expenditure	6000
Business Reserve	Treasurers	Fund approved expenditure	4400
Business Reserve	Treasurers	Fund approved expenditure	2100
Business Reserve	Treasurers	Fund approved expenditure	1200

### **!9. 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.

### **20. Birch Wood Land – Ash Dieback Survey and Quote**

The Clerk reported that following some of the work from the Visual Tree Assessment being undertaken by the Birchwood Association he had sought a revised quote for tree works in Birchwood from Treework (Tunbridge Wells) Ltd. A revised quote in the sum of £8500, a reduction of £1220, had been received.

It was **Agreed** that the quote of £8500 for tree works in Birchwood from Treework (Tunbridge Wells) Ltd be accepted.

## **21. Bidborough Speedwatch**

The Clerk reported that Bidborough Speedwatch had informed him that at their December session on 16 December and that there were 13 vehicles speeding, including 3 over 40mph, out of a total number of 166 vehicles.

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

## **22. Bidborough HIP – Update Report**

Councillor Stevens reported that the double yellow line consultation would conclude at the end of the month and that the results would be reported to the next meeting of the Council. He also indicated that the recent ATC's had been completed and the results were awaited. He also stated that there could be funds available from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

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

## **23. Spring Lane**

The Council considered the report of the Clerk setting out the position re Spring Lane including the position regarding the adoption or not of the road.

It was **Agreed** that

(1) the report be noted

(2) the Clerk be instructed to ascertain the costs of repairing the road and also of improving it so that it met the adoption standards for a public road and that it would be adopted.

## **24. Church Bank**

The Council were informed that children had been observed playing on the bank and sliding down it using fence panels. This action was causing damage to the bank. It was also reported that the Head had written to parents warning of the danger of this action and asking them to get their children to stop.

It was **Agreed** that

(1) the Clerk write to the Diocese to discuss with them what could be done to protect the bank from further damage and erosion

(2) it be noted that Mr Ray Skinner would also write to the Diocese regarding this matter.

## **25. Churchyard Weed Control**

The Clerk reported that a quote had been received from Complete Weed Control for 2 applications of herbicide for the control of weeds in the Churchyard in the sum of £810.

It was **Agreed** that the quote from Complete Weed Control for 2 applications of herbicide for the control of weeds in the Churchyard in the sum of £810 be accepted.

## **26. Recreation Ground Pond**

The Clerk reported that he had sought a quote from Thompson Tree Care Ltd for the pond clearance at the recreation ground and following discussion with Councillors had accepted the quote of £350

It was **Agreed** that the action of the Clerk to seek a quote from Thompson Tree Care Ltd for the pond clearance at the recreation ground and that following discussion with Councillors had accepted the quote of £350 be confirmed.

## **27. Tunbridge Wells Counselling Centre – Donation Request**

The Clerk reported that the Council had received a letter from the Tunbridge Wells Counselling Centre seeking a donation for the work they do in providing a Counselling Service.

It was **Agreed** that consideration of the request be deferred to enable Councillor Marriott to investigate.

## **28. Council Reserves**

The Council considered the report of the Clerk setting out the details of the funds currently available to the Council for its reserves this year and what could be available next year. It was noted that the current reserves stood at £103k of which £50k was the general fund and that £53k needed to be allocated to specific budget heads.

It was **Agreed** that the reserves of £103k be allocated as follows: -

1. Birchwood Ash Dieback Survey Work- £8.5k
2. Church Wall – £10k

3. Church Bank – £5k
4. Churchyard – £4K
5. Highways schemes - £15.5k
6. Streetlight refurbishment - £1k
7. New Community/Cricket pavilion – £9k
8. General Fund - £50k

### **29. Cricket Pavilion**

The Chairman of the Council updated the Council on progress on this project and that as the Architect was not VAT registered that the first payment would be made by the BSA and not the Council though the position on future payments could change..

It was **Agreed** to note the report

### **30. Planning – Householder Damage to Pavements/verges and Making Good**

The Chairman raised the issue of damage being caused to road verges and kerbs as a result of development where access is required across this land. She had spoken to planners at TWBC who had indicated that this could not be controlled by conditions on the planning application but could be covered by an informative on the application.

It was **Agreed** that the Council take this information into account when considering planning applications.

### **31. Neighbourhood Watch**

The Chairman stated that Councillor Cole had agreed to take on responsibility for Neighbourhood watch on behalf of the Council.

It was **Agreed** to note the report

### **32. Hedge Trimming Issue at the Recreation Ground**

The Chairman indicated that she would liaise with the people concerned to bring about a resolution to this matter.

It was **Agreed** to note the report

### **33. Duration of Meeting**

7.05pm to 9.13pm