

## **BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 16 JUNE 2025 STARTING AT 7.00PM**

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

**In Attendance** –Neil Harris (Clerk), County Councillors Mark Ellis and John Moreland

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

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Cole

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

Councillors Stevens and Mrs Vidler stated that they had been appointed as Trustees of the Friends of Bidborough Charity but that there was no interest to be disclosed in any of the items on the agenda.

#### **3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 19 May 2025**

It was **Agreed** that the minutes, including the confidential minutes, of the meeting held on 19 May 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed subject to the following amendments: -

- (a) Councillor Cole being added to list of those present
- (b) In Minute 9(1) Councillor Mrs Summers being added as the Deputy to Councillor Mrs Vidler
- (c) In Minute 12 Denah being spelt Deenah

#### **4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2025**

There were no matters arising

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

County Councillor John Moreland introduced himself as one of the 2 new County Councillors for the Parish and also indicated that he would be giving his help and assistance to the Council particularly in respect of its HIP.

County Councillor and Borough Councillor Mark Ellis indicated that there was some funding from the Borough Council in respect of highways and also took the opportunity to talk about Local Government Reorganisation.

## 6. Public Participation

No member of the public had a question for the Council.

## 7. 25/01260/FULL – Abrahams, Franks Hollow Road, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to Planning Application 25/01260/FULL but that the Planning Authority be informed that the hedge should remain.

## 8. 25/01314/FULL – 41 St Lawrence Avenue, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to Planning Application 25/01314/FULL.

## 9. 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 be noted: -

### Expenditure For Approval

Name	Reason for Invoice	Net	VAT	Gross
Lloyds Bank	Bank Service Charge - Paid	4.25	0.00	4.25
Citizens Advice Bureau North and West Kent	Donation approved at 19 May meeting - Paid	50.00	0.00	50.00
Architectural Office Michael Dillon Ltd	Pre Application Planning Fees for Pavilion - Paid	220.00	0.00	220.00
Architectural Office Michael Dillon Ltd	Printing costs for consultation - Paid	119.34	00.00	119.34
Thompson Tree Care Ltd	Removal of hung-up dead branch on Oak tree next to the pond - Paid	125.00	25.00	150.00
CPS Office Supplies	Stationary for Clerk - Paid	42.93	8.59	51.52
SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for April - Paid	152.75	10.58	163.33
MDH Horticultural Contractors	ANRG works – May - Paid	360.00	72.00	432.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	Lengthsman Contract – May - Paid	1360.00	272.00	1632.00

April Skies Accounting Ltd	Final Audit 2024/25 Internal Audit Charge	275.00	0.00	275.00
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#### **Income Received since last meeting**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Reason for Income</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Gross</b>
Bank	Interest – June	102.01	0.00	102.01

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

<b>Account</b>	<b>Account to be Transferred to</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Business Reserve	Community Account	Fund approved expenditure	3400
Business Reserve	Community Account	Fund approved expenditure	2800

### **10. Final Internal Audit Report 2024/25**

The Council considered the Final Internal Audit Report for 2024/25, and it was **Agreed** that the report be welcomed and accepted by the Council.

### **11. AGAR 2024/25**

The Council were informed that the AGAR for 2024/25 needed to be submitted by the end of the month. The Council were pleased with the very positive Internal Audit Final Audit Report 2024/25 and that he was now satisfied with how the Council was dealing with the Trust and that it could now respond Yes to the assertion relating to Trusts. However, it was noted that the Council had to respond No to Assertion 4 as it had given the public 1 extra day to respond on the accounts

It was **Agreed**

(1) that the Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24 be noted and submitted to the External Auditor

(2) that the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 responding Yes to Assertion 1 – 3, and 5 - 9 and No to Assertion 4 be approved and submitted to the External Auditor.

(3) that the Accounting Statements as submitted by the Clerk to the Council be approved and submitted to the External Auditor.

(4) that the Explanation of Significant Variances to the Accounting Statement document as reported to the Council be approved and submitted to the External Auditor.

## **12. Birch Wood Land**

Martin Derham of the Birchwood Association that they had been working in the wood and had pulled a tree out of the lake though a branch had to be left. He indicated that this should not cause a problem going forward.

It was **Agreed** to give a vote of thanks to the Birchwood Association for the excellent work that they do.

## **13. Bidborough HIP**

Councillor Stevens reported that Ryan Shiel from KCC had contacted him, and an online meeting had been arranged.

## **14. Church Wall and Gates including Treework**

The Clerk reported that the survey of the Church Wall and Gates had been undertaken and though the detailed report on the Church Wall was still awaited, an indication had been given that there was nothing serious for the Council to worry about other than the South Lychgate. However, there was significant issues with the South Lychgate which was in danger of collapse. It was indicated that action should be taken immediately to shore up the gate and followed up with the necessary repairs.

The Clerk indicated that scaffolders, namely Southern Scaffolding, had been approached and a quote of £1200 together with the legally required weekly inspection fee of £120 had been received. The Clerk also reported that he had asked CTP for a quote for the design work for the permanent repair work and their quote was £2750.

The Clerk further reported that at the back of the properties in High Street and next to the Church fence at the top of the Bank there was a Pine Tree and Laurel that required removal as they were a hazard and a danger. A quote from Thompsons had been received in the sum of £220 for this work.

It was **Agreed** that

(1) the condition of the South Lychgate and the need to take urgent action due to the urgency in this matter be noted and any action approved.

(2) the quote from Southern Scaffolding Ltd to provide support scaffolding at a cost of £1200 and a weekly inspection fee of £120 be approved.

(3) the quote from CTP to undertake the design work including CAD drawings, submission for Listed Building Consent and a single site visit to inspect the opening up works at a cost of £2750 be approved.

(4) the quote from Thompsom Tree Care Ltd for the removal of the Pine tree and Laurel at the back of the properties in High Street and next to the Church fence at the top of the Bank, at a cost of £200 be accepted.

## **15. Church Bank**

The Clerk reported that the Council was still awaiting the report on the condition of the Bank from CTP.

## **16. 16-30 Bidborough Ridge – Social Housing**

Councillor Stevens reported the current position relating to what was happening in respect of 16-30 Bidborough Ridge and whether TCH were disposing of the flats and whether there was planning policy that would help retain this affordable housing in Bidborough. He had spoken to a local resident who was a Surveyor, and they had visited the flats at the invite of a resident and felt that the property was not in a bad condition. The Surveyor had suggested an approach that explored the affordable housing commitment with TWBC planners and also explored with TWBC whether there was anything in the transfer agreement between TWBC and TCH which could help the residents in their exchanges with TCH. He had prepared a couple of letters for this purpose for consideration by the Council and had given these to Councillor Stevens.

It was **Agreed** that the draft letters for sending to the Head of Planning and the Chief Executive at TWBC referred to above be circulated to all Councillors and if approved be sent on behalf of the Council.

## **17. Hanging Baskets**

The Clerk reported that he has sought prices from the Council's existing contractor, CJS Plants Ltd for the provision of hanging baskets and in these discussions, it became clear that they had not invoiced the Council for last year.

It was **Agreed** that

(1) the Council would only seek 1 quote as they were very satisfied with the work of the current contractor

(2) the quote from CJS Plants Ltd in the sum of £1890 for 12 baskets and £180 for 2 planters be approved

(3) the Council would pay the invoice for last years work at the approved price.

## 18. Consultation on Town Council for Tonbridge

The Clerk reported that the Council was being consulted by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council on the possible creation of a new Tonbridge Town Council.

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

## 19. Cricket Pavilion

The Chairman updated the Council on the current position relating to the pavilion development, and what had happened since the last council meeting with the public consultation on 20 May and the pre-planning appointment with TWBC last week.

Firstly, on the consultation side:

- About 50 people attended the meeting at the village hall and feedback forms or emails had been received from around 25 people. The results of this feedback will be uploaded to the council website in due course.
- There was lots of feedback given and most of it very positive both in terms of design and the direction the redevelopment was heading. However, there were 3 emails received from residents in Woodland Way who were concerned about the build, centring primarily on social activities and the resulting noise disturbance and parking issues etc.
- There were also questions raised regarding the balcony, size of the changing rooms and ECB requirements, size of the internal space and so forth.

Before looking at the specific feedback she wanted to say that some of the negative feedback was rather vitriolic about the cricket club and wanted to remind people that the one of the Vice Presidents, the Chair and the Vice Chair who were involved in the last application were no longer associated with the club in any management capacity. They were no longer on the cricket club committee and no longer had any influence on any matters relating to the club. A completely new committee was now guiding their decisions. The cricket club have 2 representatives on the Pavilion Development Group out of a group of 10.

The Group have considered the feedback, and the general points raised were as follows:

- Priority for use would be the sports clubs because that was a requirement of the original deed of gift. This season there were cricket matches being held every Saturday afternoon until the second week of September. These often do not finish until after 7pm and then with the post-match clear up the pavilion was in use until approximately 9pm. This had been the pattern of use for many years therefore the opportunity for social use is quite limited.
- Having said that the concerns raised regarding the Bluetooth system are acknowledged and 2 solutions would be embraced going forward (1) no Bluetooth access to be provided (2) for those bringing their own music there would be no music being played after 7pm, except in exceptional circumstances (such as the village fete) where the express permission of the Council would need to be sought. These would

be incorporated into the Terms of Use which would be drawn up for those wanting to use the pavilion.

- The vision was for the pavilion to be used much as it was at the moment with some additional activities to support ongoing costs – this would likely be controlled by the village hall bookings secretary so any overtly social functions could be carved out.
- The main activities asked for by the community were a café once a week, yoga classes etc.
- A question was raised regarding the changing rooms – first point to note was that the ECB printed guidance was 16 years old and now out of date so much of the design came from conversations with the ECB. Plans had been sent to the ECB so their comments could be incorporated into the ongoing design.
- The enlarged size of the internal space was commented on, but this was something that the sports clubs have asked for as they would like to hold their meetings at the pavilion.
- It was recognised that height, glazing and the open roof was part of the aesthetics but acknowledge concerns that perhaps space could be better used. The Architect was going to do some more work on storage - the area above the changing rooms would be available and he was going to look at storage that would be accessible from the balcony.
- In respect of the roof, a couple of people asked whether the windows opened (which they do) and things like cleaning. Again, they were matters that would be carried forward and needed further consideration.
- The balcony would be inset approximately 3 feet from the end to ensure privacy to Spring Lane residents.

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

## 20. **New Rector**

It was reported that the new Rector was being on 24 June and that there was a general invitation to attend.

## 21. **Kent Police – Online Meeting**

Councillor Stevens reported that he had made arrangements for an online meeting for 25 July but it was **Agreed** that Councillor Stevens be thanked for setting up the meeting but that an alternative date be sought.

## 22. **Jane Seldon**

Councillor Stevens reported that Jane Seldon had passed away and it was **Agreed** that the Chairman should send a commiseration card to the family.

### **23. 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.

### **24. Duration of Meeting**

7.00pm to 9.00pm