

BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL ON 28 JULY 2025 STARTING AT 7.08PM

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

In Attendance –Neil Harris (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence received from County Councillor John Moreland.

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 16 June 2025

It was **Agreed** that the minutes, including the confidential minutes, of the meeting held on 16 June 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed subject to an amendment in Minute 11 AGAR 2024/25 in resolutions (1) and (2) 2023/24 being amended to 2024/25.

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 gave his apologies but submitted an update report which is attached to these minutes.

6. Public Participation

In response to a question from a Member of the public the Chairman indicated that the Council was considering its options in relation to the Small Claims action taken against the Council and was currently taking legal advice on this matter.

A member of the public raised concerns about parts of the Parish looking scruffy and the Chairman asked that he write with the details to her and the Clerk in order to investigate. She also indicated that she would look to getting some volunteers together to clear the litter away from the Play Park

7. 25/01457/FULL – 41 St Lawrence Avenue, Bidborough

It was **Agreed** to raise no objection to Planning Application 25/01260/FULL subject to the planning authority taking into consideration the comments made by owners of 39 St Lawrence Avenue.

8. 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
CJS Plants Ltd	To grow, supply and maintain 12 Hanging Baskets for period June 2024 to May 2025 (Last year) - Paid	1800.00	360.00	2160.00
CJS Plants Ltd	To grow, supply and maintain 12 Hanging Baskets for period June 2025 to May 2026 - Paid	1890.00	378.00	2268.00
CJS Plants Ltd	Plant Displays and maintenance of 2 planters at Play Park - Paid	180.00	36.00	216.00
SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for May - Paid	157.82	10.92	168.74
MDH Horticultural Contractors	ANRG works – June - Paid	360.00	72.00	432.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	Lengthsman Contract – June - Paid	1420.00	284.00	1704.00
Fox Managed Solutions Limited	Pond Danger Water Signs - Paid	180.40	36.08	216.48
Southern Scaffolding Limited	Erecting support scaffolding to the South Lychgate at the Church – Paid	1200.00	240.00	1440.00
Pallet Handling Penshurst Ltd	Repair of Paving Slab at the Peter Roberts Field – Paid	167.40	33.48	200.88
Pierson Agriculture	Gang Mowing ANRG and Peter Roberts Field – Paid	494.99	99.00	583.99
Thompson Tree Care Ltd	Felling Pine and Laurel and treating stumps with eco plugs on Church Wall – Paid	220.00	44.00	264.00
Buss Murton Law	Charges in respect of the work on the Money Claim made against the Council (9.6 hours) - Paid	2022.50	410.50	2463.00
Lloyds Bank	Bank Service Charge – Paid 17 June	4.25	0.00	4.25

Lloyds Bank	Bank Service Charge – Paid 21 July	4.25	0.00	4.25
Neil Harris	Payroll for June – Paid in accordance with agreed procedure	1088.40	0.00	1088.40
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment – Month 3	388.25	0.00	388.25
CTP Consulting Engineers	Inspection of Retaining Wall, Lychgates and Bank	1480.00	296.00	1776.00
MFW	Payroll Services – April to June 2025	60.00	12.00	72.00
Vision ICT	Website Hosting and support Sept 25 to Aug 26	175.00	35.00	210.00
ROSPA Play Safety	Annual Inspection of Peter Roberts Field and ANRG	204.00	40.80	244.80
SSE Energy Solutions	Streetlights Energy Costs for June	133.16	6.66	139.82
Neil Harris	Payroll for July	1067.25	0.00	1067.25
HMRC	National Insurance and Tax Payment – Month 4	388.25	0.00	388.25
MDH Horticultural Contractors	Lengthsman Contract – July	1360.00	272.00	1632.00
MDH Horticultural Contractors	ANRG works – July	360.00	72.00	432.00

Income Received since last meeting

Name	Reason for Income	Net	VAT	Gross
Bank	Interest – July	85.75	0.00	85.75

Transfers between Council Accounts

Account	Account to be Transferred to	Reason	Amount
Business Reserve	Community Account	Fund approved expenditure	2150
Business Reserve	Community Account	Fund approved expenditure	12100

9. Birch Wood Land

The Clerk reported that he had been informed by the Birchwood Association that during the summer the working parties had been suspended and would be restarted in mid-September.

Councillor Stevens reported that the Council had been offered 60 railway sleepers for use in Birchwood. It was **Agreed** that Councillors Eames and Stevens liaise with Martin Derham of the Birchwood Association to see if they could be used, including where they could be located in the short term, and that Councillor Stevens keep the local resident informed of what was happening.

10. Bidborough HIP

The Clerk reported that he and Councillor Stevens had had a very useful meeting with Ryan Shiel of KCC regarding the Council's HIP. The meeting had confirmed the position that the regulations governing these matters would not allow a Crossing in Bidborough Ridge at the location proposed by the Council. However, they would be able to support the Council's idea of a new VAS and the double yellow lines in Bidborough Ridge and at the top of the High Street. These discussions would therefore necessitate a change in the HIP for submission to KCC and it was **Agreed** that the Clerk be given delegated authority, subject to the Clerk seeking the majority agreement of the Council, to amend the HIP to reflect the changes needed arising from the discussions with KCC.

11. Church Wall and Gates – Lychgate Works at Churchyard

The Clerk reported that the Council had received the report from CTP relating to the Lychgates at the Church and the level of work required to be undertaken and which had been circulated to Council. He also reported that the Council had received the detailed drawings on which a quote would be based, and these and the CTP report would be submitted to the companies invited to quote.

The next stage was to go out and seek quotes from the three firms recommended by CTP who were the following: -

Mark Groombridge, Master Oak Framer
Anthony Hicks, The Oak Frame Specialist
The Mighty Oak Timber Framing Co.

The process of seeking quotes could be started if approved by Council with the intention that quotes could be submitted by the end of August/early September. An appointment could then be made, and the approved contractor could then meet on site with CTP and hopefully TWBC's Conservation Officer to finalise what was required, and to get on with the work as quickly as possible.

However, the Council's next meeting was not until 29 September and to wait to make a decision on the contractor would delay this project. Therefore, he recommended that the appointment of the contractor be delegated to the Clerk subject to the Clerk seeking the majority agreement of the Council to the appointment before making the appointment.

It was **Agreed** that

(1) quotes for the lychgate works be obtained in accordance with the approach outlined above from the companies listed above

(2) the Clerk be given delegated authority to appoint the Contractor subject to the Clerk seeking the majority agreement of the Council to the appointment before making the appointment

12. Church Bank

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

13. 16-30 Bidborough Ridge – Social Housing

The Clerk reported that the Head of Planning had replied indicating that there was nothing that he could do as no application had been made and there had also been no pre application discussions either. In respect of the FoI request re the sale agreement for the Council's housing stock a reply had been received indicating that there was too much work involved taking it over the £450 threshold. The Clerk indicating that he had replied indicating surprise and also revising the request making it easier for them to reply. As yet no reply had been made to this further request and the Clerk indicated that he would follow up on this in due course.

14. Statement of Internal Control

The Council considered the draft Statement of Internal Control, and it was **Agreed** that the Statement of Internal Control for the year ending 31 March 2025.

15. Appointment of Internal Auditor 2025/26

The Clerk reported that the Council needed to appoint the Internal Auditor for the current year, and he had sought and obtained draft terms of engagement for the Council's current Internal Auditor April Skies Accounting.

It was **Agreed** that April Skies Accounting be appointed as the Council's Internal Auditor for 2025/26 on the basis of the Terms of Engagement submitted by them and at a price of £580 plus travel.

16. Churchyard

The Clerk reported that Councillor Stevens as the Lead Councillor on the Churchyard had raised a few issues at the Churchyard that he believed required consideration by the Council.

Large Tomb at Fence Line

Overlooking the recreation ground there was a large tomb which was behind the fence line. It was believed that when the chestnut fencing was first erected the fence company decided to

carry the fence line straight along as the tomb was on the edge of the bank and it was not possible to put the fence around the tomb.

Unfortunately, the fence was broken, and some undesirables had been using the tomb as a meeting place to create a mess. In the past Councillor Stevens had cleared around 30 cans and litter from the void behind the tomb. Also, a section of the tomb parapet had broken off and was lying in the void.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk seek a quote from Pallet Handling for new fencing and ask if they can find a way to put a fence around the tomb so that it becomes within the church yard.

Removal of Sycamore Tree on Grave

The Rector has asked if the grave as highlighted in photo Grave J circulated to the Council could have the sycamore tree removed and treated. It has become quite large and there could be more than one tree.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk seek a quote Thompsons Tree Care Ltd to remove the sycamore tree(s) and plug with slow-release root killer.

Garden Waste at the Churchyard

In the past there used to be a garden waste wheelie bin for the church which had been located at the north Lych Gate and emptied every two weeks. Unfortunately, other residents used it, and it became a bit of a free for all.

A few years ago, the church agreed to cancel the wheelie bin and a compost area at the top of the church yard in the far left hand corner overlooking the recreation ground was installed. It is out of the way and doesn't cause any issues.

However, the new Rector has asked if it was possible to have a screen to make it less visible, and a fixed fence on 2 or 3 sides would help.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk seek a quote from Pallet Handling for the provision of a fence as detailed above.

17. Streetlight outside 13 The Glebe

The Clerk reported that the light outside No 13 The Glebe was faulty, and a new lantern was required. He indicated that the cost for a replacement Warm White SL8 LED lantern was £365 plus VAT and for a replacement Heritage Lantern was £1395 plus VAT.

It was **Agreed** that, in accordance with the Council policy, the lantern be replaced with a Heritage Lantern at a cost of £1395 plus VAT.

18. School Clubs use of Peter Roberts Field during works at School

The Chairman reported that the Council had received a request from the FADC Girls Football Club, a body that had an after school club at the School, on whether it could use the Peter Roberts Field for its after school use on Monday between 3.15pm and 4.15pm for the September term whilst the School was not available as works were taking place during this period restricting use of School facilities.

It was **Agreed** that

(1) the request from the FADC Girls Football to use the Peter Roberts Field on a Monday night between 3.15pm and 4.15pm in the September term be approved subject to them being aware that they did not have exclusive use of the site and receipt of their Risk Assessment.

(2) the Chairman inform them of (1) above and, as they are club that charges for its services that a donation to the Council similar to the fee paid to the school would be gratefully received.

(3) a terms of use for the Peter Roberts Field be prepared and reported to the next meeting of the Council.

19. Cricket Pavilion

The Chairman updated the Council on the current position relating to the pavilion development including the last consultation/fundraising event and the various concerns raised which were being responded to.

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

20. Coronation Seat

The Clerk reported that the Coronation Seat had been damaged, and it was **Agreed** that Pallet Handling be asked to quote for the repair work.

21. Peter Roberts Field – Ash Tree Removal

The Clerk reported that an Ash tree next to the Peter Roberts Field was leaning on the fence and was a possible safety issue. It was **Agreed** that the Clerk seek a quote from Thompson Tree Care Ltd for remedial work to the tree including removal if deemed necessary.

22. Neighbourhood Watch

Councillor Cole reported that Sam Broom from Kent Police would be attending our next Council meeting on 29 September to discuss Neighbourhood Watch. He felt it was

appropriate that the Council make a big splash of this event as it was important to encourage people to join.

23. 30 Woodland Way

Councillor Cole reported that TWBC planning had indicated that there was nothing they could do as the position was not bad enough. It was his intention to take the matter up with Councillor Mark Ellis.

24. 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.

25. Duration of Meeting

7.08pm to 10.07pm