

BOTESDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held Monday, 7 December 2020
Online Zoom Meeting

Present: Cllr Des Bavington-Lowe (Vice-Chair) Cllr Simon Dickinson
Cllr Greg Russell Cllr William Sargeant (Chair)

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve
County/District Cllr Jessica Fleming

7.00pm The Chair welcomed those present and opened the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Ernie Baxter
2. **Casual Vacancies:** There were no applications.
3. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 2 November 2020.** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed as a true record.
4. **Members Declarations of Interests and Dispensations:** None.
5. **Public Forum:** Cllr Fleming reported that the NHS was expanding the 111 Helpline to reduce the strain on hospitals. The Helpline could now book patients into a timed slot at an emergency department, GP, or arrange other out of hospital services.

Care Home Visits - The suitability of visits to care settings within Suffolk was informed by Government guidance which was updated on 01 December on the Gov.uk website. Rapid (lateral flow) tests were being distributed to Care Quality Commission registered care homes across the country for visitors. The tests were aimed to assess up to two visitors per resident, twice a week by Christmas.

Recycling Centres were experiencing increased levels of contamination of collected recycled materials, particularly by glass, nappies, tetra-packs and food. The PC agreed to publicise the guidelines for recycling on Facebook.

Biodiversity Action Plan – Mid Suffolk Cabinet had approved plans to reduce biodiversity loss and improve management of open spaces. Actions included ecological mapping, improving management of wildlife sites and corridors, and strengthening protections through Supplementary Planning Document(s). Other measures included hedge and tree planting initiatives. A number of supplementary planning documents were in the works addressing issues to do with biodiversity, green infrastructure, open spaces and historic landscape with the aim of strengthening protections at an earlier stage. The District Council would seek assistance from communities and parish councils for mapping, etc.

6. **Planning:**

6.1 **Planning Applications:**

6.1.1 **Land on the South Side of Back Hills.** Ref. DC/20/05289. Application under Section 73 of The Town and Country Planning Act relating to Outline Planning Permission 0460/17 / Reserved Matters DC/19/05152 for variation of Condition 1 (Approved plans and documents) of the Reserved Matters in order to change house types for plots 23 and 28. It was noted that the developer sought to change two three bed houses to smaller four bed houses with the same footprint, in response to demand. Councillors felt that the general principle was acceptable but regretted the loss of distinctive design characteristics for the two new house types and felt that they were less in keeping with the rest of the development. However, it was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

6.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:** None.

6.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions/Appeals by Mid Suffolk DC:**

6.3.1 **Building Plot Adjacent to Magnolia, Fen Lane.** Ref. DC/20/03338. Full Planning Application - Erection of 1No single storey dwelling. Re-consultation. Planning Permission REFUSED.

6.4 **Notification of other Planning Matters:**

6.4.1 **Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Pre-Submission Joint Local Plan:**

The PC considered the invitation to submit a representation on the legal compliance and soundness of the Pre-Submission Joint Local Plan (Regulation 19) document by 12 noon on Thursday 24th December 2020. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection to the Local Plan where it related to Botesdale and Rickinghall (Core Village), noting that it had been amended to be consistent with the adopted Botesdale and Rickinghall Neighbourhood Plan.

7. **Progress Reports:**

7.1 **Chairman:** The Chairman reported that he had met Simon Burgess and the site manager for the development at Back Hills in his role as community liaison. He reported that the development would take places in five phases with the heavy machinery work completed within the next six months and the full site completed within two years. The footpath was being maintained and measures had been taken to protect users. There had been a couple of complaints. Initial traffic had been directly to the wrong postcode and that had now been corrected. The access had also been widened to prevent lorries having to park on the B1113. It was noted that the 30mph sign would be moved to the north side of the new access, but councillors considered that there would be greater benefit from moving it down to the boundary with Redgrave parish and this might be accomplished as part of the legal proceedings the developer would undertake. The Clerk would investigate. It was noted that the woodland at Back Hills would be transferred to the PC at the end of the project and prior to that the PC would need to have discussions with the school and the pre-school to define their involvement.

7.2 **Clerk:** None.

8. **Correspondence:**

8.1 **MSDC:** The PC noted the information about the Council Tax Base for 2021-22, which recommended that councils should not set their precept until January when more information about the Tax Base would be available.

8.2 **MSDC:** The PC noted the small increase of around £1 per bin in the cost of emptying dog and litter bins in the upcoming year.

8.3 **Office of National Statistics: Office of National Statistics:** The PC noted the information about upcoming 2021 Census and that the PC would be asked to play a part in promoting it. The requested information about meeting facilities in the village would be forwarded to the ONS.

8.4 **County Broadband:** The PC noted the information about the proposed full-fibre scheme in the village and reported that individual households had already been contacted. It was suggested that the issue of full-fibre might be appropriate for the Infrastructure Investment Plan.

9. **General Items:**

9.1 **Quiet Lanes Programme:** The PC noted the information about the programme. Councillors felt that it made little difference to the behaviour of drivers where it had already been implemented. Furthermore, it was a significant time (and potentially funding) investment. On further consideration, it was decided not to pursue it.

9.2 **Infrastructure Steering Group:** It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the terms of reference as proposed by the Group. It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday, 18 January at 7pm, Zoom.

9.3 **Village Assets:** Councillors considered a condition report with recommendations for improvement or replacement where necessary. It was noted that the cost estimate was around £3,500 for items rated "poor" and £900 for items rated "good". There were additional items where regular cleaning/maintenance was suggested and this would have an impact on running costs. It was agreed that the Clerk would review the report and group items by type to make it easier to obtain quotes. Councillors would consider how to add value to the Marl Pit, perhaps enhancing its qualities as a wildlife corridor.

9.4 **Phone Box / Defibrillator:** The phone box had been fully refurbished and looked good. The Clerk would now complete the order for the defibrillator and its installation.

9.5 **Christmas 2020:** The tree was up and decorated and the PC extended its thanks to the team at the Greyhound for all their help.

9.6 **Recreation Ground Project:** James Black Associates (JBL) had carried out three surveys for the site – an ecology assessment, a topographical survey and a tree survey. JBL and the RG Sub-Committee had met twice to go over the design proposals and had progressed to a plan which identified zones for different uses, along with ideas for linking them together and appropriate equipment for each zone. JBL had received feedback on the design and equipment, and another meeting would be held on 18 December to discuss the developed design and cost estimates. It was noted that the tree survey had identified a handful of dead and dying trees which needed to be removed as soon as possible and a quote had been received from CC & Tree Services for £650. The quote also included work to clear undergrowth and improve road visibility at the triangle opposite the school. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to accept the quote.

10. Finance

10.1	Account Balance:	£63,808.95	
	Income:	£ 340.08	MSDC Street Cln Grant 2 nd qtr
		£ 50.00	Redgrave PC War Mem Insurance
		£ 50.00	Rickinghall PC War Mem Insurance

10.2 Accounts for Payment:

Admin Payments	£ 779.60	Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc.	£ 505.60	St Clean/Play Area/VAS Oct 20
PKF Littlejohn LLP	£ 240.00	External Audit Fees
James Blake Associates	£ 8,064.11	Recreation Ground Project Design/Survey Fees

It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the accounts above.

10.3 **Draft Budget 2021-22:** The draft budget would be completed at the January meeting as requested by MSDC (item 8.1). It was noted that a request from the After School Club for a significant amount of funding was likely to be received.

10.4 **External Audit Report:** The Clerk reported that the External Audit had been completed with no qualifying matters and was now available on the website along with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit.

11. Councillors Reports:

- **Public Rights of Way:** The steps at Hilltop, Bridewell Lane were still an issue and it was agreed to have another go at SCC to get them repaired.
- **Recreation Ground:** Cllr Dickinson reported that the soft pour surface under the metal climbing frame needed cleaning and this would be brought forward from January if possible. There was some wear on the ropes of the wooden climbing frame, and it was agreed to try binding them in duct tape so that they would hold out until the RG project was underway. There was also a screw loose on the goal post and Cllr Dickinson would sort that out. The Clerk reported that "Don't be a Tosser" posters had been put up at the youth shelter to try to combat littering. One had already been torn down. A homemade tree swing had been cut down by Tim Gaddis as it was on an insubstantial branch. MSDC had not added BPC's play inspection request to their list and so it had not been carried out this year. If MSDC could not arrange a last-minute inspection, the Clerk would have one carried out by a private company. It was noted that this could cost up to £150.
- **Village Hall:** Yoga and individual ballroom dancing had started back up, along with the pre-school at five days a week and the after-school club three days a week.

12. **Highways Issues:** The pothole on Mill Road North was getting worse and the Clerk would follow up on this. The light outside the dental surgery on The Drift was out and had been reported. There had been more complaints about the hedge on Mill Road North and this would now be escalated in a report to SCC.

13. **Welcome Pack:** One to Cllr Bavington-Lowe.

14. **Matters for the next meeting of the Council:** None.

15. **Next Meeting:** 4 January 2021

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9:10 pm.