



BOUGHTON-UNDER-BLEAN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at St Barnabas Parish Centre on Tuesday 12th November 2024 from 7:31pm to 9:57pm (at 9:30pm it was resolved to suspend standing order 3.X and extend the meeting)

Present:

Cllr T. Covell (Chairman), Cllr J. Muteham, Cllr S. Moakes, Cllr S. Harper, Cllr I. Linfield, Cllr D. Clayson

Also present:

Mrs S. Muteham (Clerk), Cllr A. Gould (SBC) and 1 member of the public

261. Apologies

- A. Apologies received from Cllr P. Ray, Cllr R. Lehmann (SBC/KCC).
- B. Reasons for absence approved. **Resolved:** to accept apologies for absence from Cllr P. Ray.

262. Declaration of Interests

None

263. Minutes

The minutes of the following meeting, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and confirmed by the chairman of the meeting.

- A. Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 8th October 2024 (minutes 247-254)

Resolved: the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8th October were approved.

A report containing minutes of the following meeting was circulated to all Members.

- B. Draft minutes as a report of the Personnel Committee meeting held on Tuesday 22nd October 2024
- C. Draft minutes as a report of the Village Hall Management Committee meeting held on Tuesday 29th October 2024

Resolved: to accept the reports of the committee meetings held on Tuesday 22nd and Tuesday 29th October 2024.

264. Public Participation

An attending member of the public gave a brief introduction for their request to be co-opted to join the Parish Council.

265. Finance and Administration

- A. Bank reconciliation - The bank reconciliation dated 31st October 2024 was circulated at the meeting and approved by those present. **Resolved:** the bank account balances and reconciliation were approved.
- B. Items for payment - All payments as detailed on the bank reconciliation dated 31st October 2024 were approved by those present at the meeting. **Resolved:** the payments as detailed in [Appendix A](#) were approved for payment.
- C. Matters resolved under the scheme of delegation - Members present reviewed the reported details of payments made under the Scheme of Delegation. **Resolved:** to accept the report.

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- D. Councillor Vacancy - Members present considered the co-option of a new member to join the council. After discussion and noting concerns including the conflict of interests from the applicant's multiple involvement with a neighbouring parish council and the Boughton & Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan, councillors took a vote. **Resolved:** Not to co-opt a councillor at this time.
- E. Policies - The Clerk circulated the Document Retention & Disposal Policy, Website Accessibility Statement for review. **Resolved:** to accept the reviewed policies.
- F. Convex Mirror - The Clerk provided further information from Kent County Council (KCC) in regard to the recent request for installing a convex mirror to aid visibility for pedestrians at the junction of Colonels Lane and The Street. It was noted that KCC had provided a response stating that "As there is no crash history relating to lack of visibility at this site, KCC will not be installing a mirror". After further consideration by members present, it was agreed to pursue the matter further. **Noted:** that KCC would not support the request as they do not allow mirrors on the highway.
- G. Speed Cameras - Those present briefly considered anti-speed devices and agreed to move the item for further consideration at a later date. An alternative option of supporting a joint Speedwatch initiative with neighbouring parishes was considered an possible option and it was agreed to advertise for volunteer members of the public in the first instance. Further consideration of speed cameras and other anti speed mechanisms was moved to be addressed as part of the Highways Improvement Plan. **Resolved:** to advertise a Speedwatch initiative.
- H. Gordon Ottaway Award - those present reviewed the nominations and selected a winner, to be presented with the award and a donation (*LGA 1972 s.137*) of £100 to a charity or worthy cause of the winners' choice. Councillors present took a vote and the winners were selected for engaging positively with local residents through providing an informal allotment facility and giving access to their many animals. **Resolved:** the winners were selected as Ian and Nikki Willmott.
- I. Warm Hubs - Members present considered how to support the local community in the winter. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to give the Boughton & Dunkirk Village Group the remainder of KCC Winter Support Scheme grant and a donation (*LGA 1972 s.137*) of £250 from the Parish Council, to facilitate a Christmas meal for the elderly. **Resolved:** to provide funding towards a Christmas meal for the elderly.
- J. Christmas - After noting that the small Christmas tree at the junction of Staplestreet/The Street was surrounded by a significant number of brambles, the Clerk presented quotes to remove the brambles. Members considered the quotes and approved removing the brambles. **Resolved:** to instruct Hughes & Son to undertake the work at a cost of £150.
- K. Christmas - Members present considered hosting a publicity stand at the village Christmas Fayre on 30th November. It was agreed to include positive material promoting the Parish Council along with useful information for members of the public. It was also agreed to pay the £15 fee to host the stand. **Resolved:** to host a stand at the Christmas Fayre.
- L. Remote Meetings - Having circulated an email detailing the government's consultation on holding remote meetings, members present agreed that the council should respond in support of the proposal. **Resolved:** the Clerk to respond positively to the consultation.
- M. Highways Improvement Plan - Members were asked to nominate a representative to join a collaborative team with both Dunkirk and Hernhill Parish Councils in addressing the Highways Improvement Plan (facilitated by KCC). **Resolved:** Cllr I. Linfield to be the nominated representative.
- N. Neighbourhood Plan - The Clerk requested that all neighbourhood plan correspondence be shared with Dunkirk Parish Council as part of a collaborative approach. After consideration, those present agreed it would be an appropriate course of action. **Resolved:** the Clerk to share any neighbourhood plan correspondence with Dunkirk Parish Council.

- O. Duchy Land - Members present considered a request received from Duchy of Cornwall (Planning) to meet with Parish Councillors and provide an update on progress. **Resolved:** to decline the request.

It was resolved that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Cllr J. Muteham declared an interest in agenda item 5.P relating to the Clerk's remuneration and took no part in the discussion or resolution.

- P. Personnel - Cllr T. Covell put forward the recommendations of the Personnel Committee in relation to the Clerk's hours and remuneration. Those present considered the recommendations and approved the proposals. It was also noted that the NALC pay scales for 2024/25 had been released and backdated pay was now due. **Resolved:** to make payment of backdated pay, increase the Clerk's hours and remuneration as detailed in confidential report 121124.

The meeting was opened to the public.

266. Public Amenities Matters

A. Bull Lane Recreation Ground

- 1) Football - A request had been received for the installation of a soil bin for football pitch repairs. Those present considered the request and agreed to the idea in principle. **Noted:** the Clerk to investigate the matter before further consideration.
- 2) Football - The Clerk reported that the mole hills were causing damage to the football pitch. Having researched options for vermin control, the Clerk suggested the humane use of ferret excrement could be an option. After consideration, those approved the suggestion in the first instance. **Resolved:** to use ferret excrement to eradicate moles in the first instance.
- 3) Car Park Wall - Noting that the Clerk had received any quotes, the item was moved to the December agenda.

B. Allotments

- 1) Plots - Members present considered approving the use of one plot as a shared plot/mini plots. After discussion, it was agreed to allocate one plot to be divided into two smaller plots and publicise the use of a half plot at a cost of £15 per annum. **Resolved:** to divide up one plot into two smaller plots.

C. Cemetery

- 1) Memorials - The Clerk reported that following the recent memorial stability testing, she had received a request to lay flat a memorial headstone in the burial ground. Councillors present considered the request and agreed. **Resolved:** to allow a memorial headstone to be laid flat in the burial ground..

- D. Public Toilets - The Clerk provided quotes for renewing the electricity supply. After consideration, it was agreed to choose a supplier who could offer a low cost standing charge as a priority. At the time of receiving the quotes, E-on was the preferred supplier. **Resolved:** to renew the electricity supply.

267. Planning

Those present considered planning applications with the following comments agreed to be submitted to Swale Borough Council:

- A. 24/503858/FULL - Single storey rear extension with changes to fenestration and addition of 6 rooflights and bifold door (part retrospective). *Oak Tree Cottage, South Street*

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Councillors recorded an objection to the application noting:

- The application represents overdevelopment in a rural area. According to the SPG 'Designing an Extension', 'The Council will not normally approve an Extension to a dwelling in a rural area if it results in an increase of more than 60% of the property's original floorspace.' The Inspector found that 'two storey extension permitted in 1987 increased the floorspace of the original building by about 55%.' The new addition represents a further increase of 25% at least – well over the 60% mark. The original historic structure will be completely consumed if the application is approved.
- The application does not preserve or enhance the visual amenity of the hamlet in a rural area.
- The extension does not reflect the character and appearance of the existing building.
- Plans do not represent good design and are contrary to Local Plan Policy CP4 and NPPF Paragraph 139
- It is also noted that the existing fenestration differs from that shown on the drawings (currently there are 6 over 6 sashes to front, 12 pane casements to rear) so the claim that new windows will match the existing is unclear as to what exactly is being proposed.
- This latest application is considered more detrimental than the previous application which was turned down at appeal. The flat roofed design incorporating multiple sets of bi-fold doors is not in keeping with the style of the property or the local area.
- If Swale Borough Council is mindful to approve the application, Boughton under Blean Parish Council request that the application be taken to SBC Planning Committee.

B. 24/504106/FULL - Change of use of land and erection of new dwelling with associated works. *Land at rear of Acorn Rise, Fox Lane*

Councillors recorded an objection to the application noting:

- The application represents overdevelopment in a rural area. The proposal represents an intrusive and harmful form of development which, following on from the loss of orchard to equestrian use, would result in the further erosion of the area's rural character.
- It contravenes the Council's settlement strategy. Local Plan Policy ST3 states that 'At locations in the open countryside, outside the built-up area boundaries shown on the Proposals Map, development will not be permitted, unless supported by national planning policy and able to demonstrate that it would contribute to protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing the intrinsic value, landscape setting, tranquillity and beauty of the countryside, its buildings and the vitality of rural communities.'
- Being situated in a relatively isolated rural location, it will also promote car dependency and is therefore in conflict with Local Plan Policy CP2 Promoting Sustainable Transport.
- Paragraph 4.12 of the Planning Statement suggests the 'essential need for a rural worker' (NPPF Paragraph 84). This may require further investigation, as the applicant already resides in walking distance of the application site. This also contradicts the Design & Access Report which quotes "It is the intention of the property owners to provide a modest dwelling which they would utilise by decanting their existing property to allow for their daughter and family to reside. As noted within the accompanying supporting letter, the clients and their grandson have various health issues whereby it is proposed the family can remain close to help and assist each other as and when required. This would then prevent the need for the family to live apart and the potential difficulties this may create."
- The proposed development does not add to the overall quality of the area nor is it sympathetic to the prevailing rural character. It is contrary to Local Plan Policy CP4 Requiring Good Design.
- In accordance with NPPF Paragraph 139, given that it is not well designed, the Parish Council considers that the application should be refused.

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- There are inaccuracies in the supporting documentation, including the claim that the dwelling will be constructed as a self-build dwelling by the applicant whilst on the Application Form it is categorised as 'market housing', suggesting the intention is to sell it on rather than live in it. The Design & Access Report also has the incorrect development site highlighted.
- KCC Highways have at this stage declined to make a comment on the blind bend at the access to the site. With local knowledge of the site, the Parish Council urges the access to be further considered by both Kent County Council and Swale Borough Council.
- If Swale Borough Council is mindful to approve the application, Boughton under Blean Parish Council request a site meeting (to which KCC Highways should also be invited) and that the application be taken to SBC Planning Committee.

C. 24/504528/FULL - Erection of part single storey/part two storey extension to rear of property. Removal of existing rear single storey extension and conservatory. *Winfield, The Crescent* Members recorded no objection to the application, making a presumption that the application supersedes the approved application 22/501312/FULL (paragraph 5).

268. Councillors Reports

Cllr I. Linfield expressed concerns over the number of cars adjacent to the war memorial at the time of the Remembrance Sunday service.
 Cllr S. Harper reported that she wished to resign from the parish council.
 Cllr J. Muteham noted that the Village Hall Management Committee needed more attending councillors at meetings.

269. Chairman/Clerk’s Reports

The Clerk’s report was received by those present and is detailed in [Appendix B](#).

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council was scheduled for Tuesday 10th December 2024 at 7:30pm. There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

Signed by the CHAIRMAN of the meeting

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APPENDIX A

Castle Water (Public toilets) - (D/D estimate for information only)	£39.59
Castle Water (Cemetery) - (D/D estimate for information only)	£13.00
Lloyds Bank (Chargecard) - (D/D for information only)	£17.91
EDF Energy (Streetlighting) - (D/D estimate for information only)	£1,310.48
British Gas (Public toilets) - (D/D estimate for information only)	£21.88
Staff costs – (D/D estimate for information only)	£1,547.90
Bk Tfr - Bourne to Garden - Mowing (Cemetery/Pop View), Bull Lane pitch maintenance	£1,820.40
Bk Tfr - Countrywide Grounds Maintenance - Mowing (Bull Lane/The Street), Tree Maintenance	£2,805.90
Bk Tfr - M. Wellington - Litter picker (Oct)	£180.00
Bk Tfr - Boughton under Blean Village Hall - Hall hire/Grant	£825.00
Bk Tfr - P. Reynolds - Phone box cleaning	£5.00
Bk Tfr - S. Morrow - Toilets - Cleaning (Oct)	£356.40
Bk Tfr - PHS - Hygiene disposal services	£99.42
Bk Tfr - McCabe Ford Williams - Payroll services	£150.00
Bk Tfr - Aubergine 262 Ltd - Website set-up	£598.80
Bk Tfr - Ashford Tarmac - Tarmac repairs (Bull Lane)	£7,531.20
Bk Tfr - Holly Jolly Heroes - Donation	£250.00
Bk Tfr - Royal British Legion - Donation	£75.00
Bk Tfr - Richard Buxton Solicitors - Professional fees	£6,000.00
Bk Tfr - Mayarc Ltd - Ground repairs @ Bull Lane	£210.00
Bk Tfr - SLCC - Conference	£626.00
Bk Tfr - Play Inspection Company - Annual inspections (Bull Lane)	£216.60
Bk Tfr - Boughton & Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan - Donation	£500.00

APPENDIX B

(Summary of tasks completed)

Public Amenities

1. Routine inspection of public toilets, cemetery, allotments and recreation grounds
2. Instructed/inspected contractor work to verti-drain football pitch
3. Instructed seasonal weed control on football pitch
4. Requested mowing quotes for Poplar View, Bull Lane and cemetery. Termination notice given for existing mowing contracts.
5. Attended site meeting with tarmac contractor (Bull Lane)
6. Instructed football pitch repairs (Bull Lane)
7. Reviewed contractor work to install Miyawaki interpretation board (Poplar View)
8. Reviewed contractor work for tarmac repairs (Bull Lane)
9. Reviewed contractor work on trees (Poplar View/Bull Lane)
10. Attended site meeting at cemetery with member of the public
11. Repaired damaged weed membranes at allotments
12. Requested quotes for vermin control at recreation ground (Bull Lane)
13. Laid turf over soil spoil pile at cemetery
14. Attended site meeting with contractor for mowing quotes at all amenity sites
15. Completed bi-annual football pitch inspection and submitted report to Football Foundation
16. Requested quotes for wall repairs at Bull Lane car park
17. Weeded and washed war memorial

Chairman's Initial.....

General

18. Kept website up to date with meeting agendas and minutes, road closures, news items
19. Kept facebook page up to date with meetings, road closures and news items
20. Carried out monthly defibrillator check
21. Requested mowing quotes for The Street
22. Requested KCC confirmation on highway placement of convex mirrors
23. Received quarterly VAT reclaim
24. Tested and updated new website. New website now live
25. Chased outstanding allotment contract renewals
26. Liaised with SBC regarding unscheduled removal of street bins
27. Contacted KCC requesting cutting of verges around xmas trees
28. Drafted annual budget
29. Liaised with SBC regarding validation of The Vicarage planning application
30. Requested quotes for vegetation clearance around xmas trees

(Summary of tasks in progress)

1. Obtaining quotes for cemetery bench repairs
2. Photo catalogue Garden of Remembrance (cemetery) plots
3. Reviewing cemetery headstone stability testing plots
4. Obtaining necessary permissions for replacement bench at Arthur Kennedy Close

(Summary of tasks to be done)

1. Review all outstanding EROB renewals on cemetery plots
2. Update HIP