

BENTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 3 December 2007, at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall

Present Cllrs Adams, Barrington, Barnes, Burton, Faichney, Heigh, Hurtley, Marshall, Stannard, Taylor & Wills (Chairman). Also the Clerk, Mrs Burton, & 3 parishioners.

1. Apologies DCllr Camacho

Cllr Barnes had rung to inform the clerk that he was travelling back from Birmingham and would be late, he actually arrived during item 8, Highways.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Heigh declared an interest in items 7.1.1 & 7.1.4, planning applications 08/2007/8049 and 08/2007/8072. Cllr Barrington declared an interest in item 7.1.4, planning application 08/2007/8072, & item 10, Town Hall Matters. Cllr Hurtley declared an interest in item 7.1.2, planning application 08/2007/8050. Cllr Marshall declared an interest in items 7.1.1 & 7.1.6, planning applications 08/2007/8049 and 08/2007/8099. Cllr Wills declared an interest in item 7.1.5, planning application 08/2007/8099. These were noted in the book.

3. Public Participation

Cllr Wills clarified the method of public participation, stating that any member of the public could contribute but was limited to 3 minutes and that these statements would be heard at the start of the meeting. None of the public wished to comment.

4. Confirmation of minutes

Cllr Barrington asked that the minutes at item 15.1 show that she not only declared an interest but also left the room. The amended minutes of the meeting on 5 November were proposed by Cllr Hurtley, seconded by Cllr Adams and agreed.

5. Police Report – none present

6. CCllr & DCllrs Reports

DCllr Barrington reported that Craven's budget for 2008/9 would be set at a meeting on 20 February. Cllr Hurtley asked if she could find out about the trash gate inspections on Lairgill and Greenfoot as he would like to know when they are inspected and by whom. Cllr Marshall asked if a plastics recycling bin would be sited in Bentham in the coming year, which DCllr Barrington agreed would be the case. He then asked about a light bulb recycling point and DCllr Barrington agreed to look into this.

7. Planning

7.1. Applications

7.1.1. 08/2007/8049 Demolition of existing timber building to form chiropody/podiatry & therapy practice at British Legion Building, Grasmere Drive, Bentham.

Cllrs Heigh & Marshall declared an interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.1.2. 08/2007/8050 Proposed agricultural workers dwelling at Bracken Hill Farm, Burton Road, Low Bentham.

Cllr Hurtley declared an interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.1.3. 08/2007/8056 Creation of conservatory to side, adjoining kitchen & utility room at 26 Pye Busk Close, High Bentham.

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.1.4. 08/2007/8072 Conversion of garage to dining room & utility at 32 Millholme Drive, High Bentham.

Cllrs Barrington & Heigh declared an interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.1.5. 08/2007/8092 Convert barn to provide employment generating uses with living accommodation at Sunderland Barn, Bentham Moor, Burton In Lonsdale

Cllr Wills declared an interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.1.6. 08/2007/8099 Removal of 50m hedge (ash) & lay existing hawthorn & replant with new hawthorn to fill gaps at Burnside Nursery, Low Bentham Road, Bentham.

Cllr Marshall declared an interest. The clerk read a letter from neighbours of the site worried about the removal of the hedge. Cllr Marshall was asked to clarify the situation and stated that the hedge had not been managed for many years and the applicant wished to lay the hedge in a traditional manner. This required removing some of the tall ash trees and replacing them with more traditional hawthorn. Cllr Burton commented that unmanaged hedges grew tall and straggly and open in the bottom, the only remedy for this was to lay the branches – which was a common practise and he was surprised it required planning permission.

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

- 7.1.7. 08/2007/8108 Conversion of single 2-storey warehouse to 3 dwellings at Armstrongs Garden Centre, King Street, Bentham.

The Council were concerned at the lack of parking in the proposed development, both on King Street and on the Main Street. There have already been problems with access on to King Street which has been partially fixed with the KEEP CLEAR in the road. People expect to park near their house, and as such this development will add at least another 3 cars, and potentially more, to the Main Street which is already at capacity. It was also commented that planning approval for 3 offices in the same building was only recently given, and that there is a requirement for office units in the town. Furthermore, as offices are only occupied during the day and people are more prepared to walk to work from the local car parks, parking would not be an issue.

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for rejection on the ground of inadequate parking provision for 3 residential units

- 7.1.8. 08/2007/8118 Two storey rear extension at Fair View, Low Bentham Road, Bentham

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.2. Decisions

- 7.2.1. 08/2007/7830 Addition of garden room extension at West End Farm, Cross Lane, Low Bentham – GRANTED

- 7.2.2. 08/2007/7862 Detached dwelling (reserved matters relating to 08/2005/5265) at plot adjacent to Fern Cottage, Doctors Hill, Low Bentham – GRANTED

- 7.2.3. 08/2007/7921 Single storey side extension at 1 Millholme Drive, High Bentham - GRANTED

- 7.2.4. 08/2007/7923 Illuminated Cross on Front of Chapel at High Bentham Methodist Chapel, Station Road, High Bentham - GRANTED

7.3. Correspondence

- 7.3.1. County planning decision allowing retention of Pre-Fab at High Bentham school - received

- 7.3.2. Meeting with Colin Walker

Members of the Council had met with Mr Walker, Director of Planning & Environmental Services, on 19 November. As before he had been very forthright with his responses and admitted that Planning Enforcement was something of a poor relation and needs a higher profile. The Council had learnt a great deal about the enforcement process and had found the meeting very useful.

8. Highway Matters

8.1. Letters regarding vehicle strikes on Barclays

The clerk read letters of support from John Marsden, CEO NYCC, and David Curry MP, who both expressed their concern about the situation. She then read a letter from NYCC Highways which stated that they only have a duty to maintain the highway, not improve it, and that usually it is down to the property owner to deal with damage caused by passing traffic.

Cllr Marshall asked if the information on vehicle strikes went back prior to the road resurfacing in 2005, or if this had been the catalyst for the problem. The clerk only has information from mid 2005 and agreed to contact Barclays about earlier information.

RESOLVED: That Barclays be asked if they can supply information on vehicle strikes prior to June 2005.

- 8.2. Temporary closure of C382 Eskew Lane, 3-7 December - received

- 8.3. Temporary Closure of C386 Mewith Lane, 3-7 December - received

8.4. Other Highways Matters

The Clerk read a letter from a resident of Summerhill regarding continued problems with the pavement outside their houses (Cllr Heigh declared an interest)

RESOLVED: That a reply be sent explaining that this situation is outside of the Council's control and that the letter has been copied to NYCC Highways.

Cllr Wills had met with Stuart Cracknell, and had been surprised to find the vast area that he and 2 assistants are expected to maintain. Cllr Wills added that it was surprising that any of the roads were still fit to use Cllr Marshall and Ken Martin had met with the Duty Manager at the CoOp as their hauliers are unhappy crossing the road with deliveries following the changes in parking. It had been suggested that they should use the rear access from Grasmere Drive, but there appeared to be a reluctance to do this. It had been agreed that the situation would be monitored and deliveries possibly brought forward to early mornings.

Cllr Hurtle reported that a culvert is blocked on the B6480 between Low Bentham and Wennington on the long straight just into Lancashire

RESOLVED: That Lancashire Highways Department be informed of the blocked culvert

9. LDF Meeting

9.1. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting were proposed by Cllr Adams, seconded by Cllr Heigh and agreed. The public meeting had been well attended and the Council's submission had been submitted before the closing date.

Cllr Wills went on to add that he had also attended a Craven Housing meeting on 28 November regarding a proposed scheme for more affordable housing on Wesley Close. The main comments raised had been about the flood risk and access from Goodenber Road. He had been most surprised to discover that Craven Housing

were unaware of the potential school site next door. Cllr Wills went on to point out that the Craven Housing application is due for consideration in the coming month which was potentially a problem on two counts:

- the school site was not acknowledged or considered in the application, and was not considered in the LDF
- the Christmas break would make it difficult for the Council to meet before the January meeting

In the discussion that followed it was suggested that a meeting be requested with the LEA. At this point the clerk brought forward agenda item 14.2, a letter from Bernadette Jones, which stated that the committee responsible for the new school did not see any point in meeting with the Council.

RESOLVED: That the Planning Department be asked to defer the Craven Housing application until early January if it is circulated before Christmas.

RESOLVED: That a letter be sent to Bernadette Jones acknowledging her letter and asking for a meeting in February if there is no obvious progress with the school by 31 January 2008, with copies sent to John Lee, John Marsden & John Watson.

10. Website

10.1. Tenders

No further replies had been received and the Council agreed to leave this discussion until the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the website be left to the January meeting

11. Town Hall Matters

Cllr Barrington declared an interest and left the room.

11.1. Minutes of meeting on 12 November

These were proposed by Cllr Adams, seconded by Cllr Barnes and agreed

RESOLVED: That the requirements for licensed door staff at large public events be made clearer.

RESOLVED: That the Cllr in charge of such events be given improved training regarding the fire alarm system.

RESOLVED: That better arrangements be made for smokers following the introduction of the smoking ban.

RESOLVED: That Sourpuss be allowed to hold another event in April 2008.

RESOLVED: That work on netting the Town Hall eaves be scheduled for this winter.

11.2. Other Comments

Cllr Heigh mentioned that the automatic door had seemed over sensitive at a recent coffee morning. Cllr Adams agreed to check the sensor was working correctly.

Cllr Wills told the meeting that the fault on one of the boilers had been repaired and the inspection certificate would be available shortly.

12. Precept Meeting

Craven District Council usually require the precept request towards the end of January. The clerk had already circulated grant request forms to interested parties, requesting their return, with accounts, by 7 January.

RESOLVED: That the Precept Meeting be held in the Lower Hall on Monday 21 January at 7.30pm

13. Accounts for payment

The accounts for the current month were proposed by Cllr Adams, seconded by Cllr Hurtley and agreed.

Mopps	375.00	Norwich Union	230.93
EOn Energy	56.02	R Green	442.25
Craven DC	90.00	C Louth	84.84
Andrews	19.20	J Burton	604.75
Hygiene Cleaning Supply	19.39	British Telecom (inc TIP)	295.98
Post Office	15.85	AOL	14.99

Cllr Stannard commented on the phone bills and suggested that a better package, including broadband be considered. He agreed to survey current deals available.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Stannard look at possible telephone service suppliers.

The clerk informed the meeting that the cost of the Tourist Information broadband had been missing from the accounts since the TIP transferred to the Council in April. She apologised for the oversight, and it was agreed that previous versions of the minutes should be amended to show this expense.

RESOLVED: That the monthly Council Meeting minutes, since April, be amended to show the Tourist Information broadband costs (£14.99/month).

14. Correspondence

14.1. Letter from Ian Godfrey regarding land on Butts Lane

Ian Godfrey's solicitors had written to the Council regarding the amenity land on the Butts Lane estate. The Council had suggested in December 2006, following advice from Craven's legal department, that 5 years maintenance was insufficient funds for the Council to take over the land in perpetuity and that 30 years would be more realistic. The reply, some 11 months later, was that this suggestion was ludicrous. The clerk explained that

she had canvassed opinion from the Clerks Forum and received useful advice and information. In all examples where land had been taken on by other Councils at least 20 years maintenance had been received, and in one case where the developer had refused to bring the land to adoptable standards residents who had taken it on had been left with problems with public liability insurance that had made their houses virtually unsaleable.

RESOLVED: That the Council reiterate it's position to Mr Godfrey, and ask if other potential owners of the land have been informed of the public liability insurance requirements

14.2. Letter from Asst Director Children & Young People's Service regarding New Primary School – see item 9

14.3. Letter from Colin Iveson regarding Kerbside Recycling Scheme survey - received

15. Reports from other bodies

Cllr Burton reported that the Youth Café would be starting in the Wenningdale Room in January, until the Station building is ready.

He had also attended the Bentham Development Trust AGM and told the meeting that the Station lease had now been sealed and tenders for the building work would go out during the second week in December. The annual accounts had been approved.

Cllr Marshall said that the Collingwood & Longstaff alms houses had had an update in the maintenance report and work was ongoing.

As Chairman of the FOB Steering Group he reported that Bowman and Riley have been appointed to produce plans for the suggested development of the car park on Station Road. These will be put out for public consultation in the New Year.

Cllr Marshall had also attended the Civic Dinner at Coniston Hall as the Council representative. Some 90 guests including the High Sheriff of Yorkshire had been present and over £1200 had been raised for the Bentham First Responders and the Air Ambulance.

Cllr Heigh had tried to attend the Playing Fields AGM, but no one else had attended..

Cllr Barrington reminded the meeting about the Traders Christmas Fair on 7 December, Cllr Adams added that a stall has been booked for the sale of Bentham Calendars.

Cllr Wills had attended a LASRUG meeting and reported that vandalism at the station was a problem. He also mentioned that Dales Railcards are now available

16. Items For Information

16.1. YLCA Information Sheet, 2 November

16.2. University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust NHS Foundation Trust Public Consultation

16.3. Fire & Rescue Authority Summary of Accounts 2006/7

16.4. The Playing Field, Autumn 2007

16.5. Country Air, Autumn 2007

16.6. Dales Parish Plan Newsletter

16.7. White Rose Update, Nov 2007.

16.8. Assembly Digest, Oct 2007

16.9. NY Minerals & Waste Development Framework Site Allocations Preferred Options

16.10. InfoRegio News, Sept 2007

16.11. Scope Collections 2008/9

16.12. YLCA Advice Notes 20,21,23

16.13. EOn/Powergen

17. AOB - minor items only

The Clerk introduced 4 items which had arrived since the agenda was advertised. She read a letter from CCllr Ireton thanking Cllr Marshall and the Council for supporting the Civic Dinner. There was also a thank you letter from the Bentham Youth Café for the second part of their precept grant and the Council's support.

She reminded the meeting that the Post Office closure plans for Craven have now been released, and that both High & Low Bentham Post Offices were safe.

A request had been received from the Playing Fields Association regarding the boggy piece of land it currently rents from Craven. The PFA want the Council to consider taking on ownership. It was agreed that this item should be added to the January agenda.

Cllr Barnes asked about noise nuisance and was told that there was an out of hours number for complaints. The clerk agreed to supply it to him.

Cllr Stannard asked about the timetable for the tree work on Low Bentham Playing Field. The clerk replied that she had requested this of the tree surgeon, but as yet it was not available.

Cllr Faichney asked if the gravel extraction right issue had been resolved. Cllr Wills told the meeting that he was still waiting for written evidence of this before it could be taken further.

Cllr Adams noted that the police were last at a Council meeting in April and asked if they could give some kind of report, written or otherwise at the January meeting. The clerk agreed to put this request forward.

Cllr Barrington had attended an Airedale Foundation Trust meeting in Settle. A member council would be set up and a member for the Settle / Bentham area will be elected.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.13pm