

BENTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 5 November 2007, at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall

Present Cllrs Adams, Barrington, Barnes, Burton, Heigh, Hurlley, Taylor & Wills (Chairman). Declr Camacho & CCllr Ireton. Also, the Clerk Mrs Burton & 7 parishioners.

1. Apologies Cllrs Faichney, Marshall & Stannard

Cllr Barnes had rung to inform the clerk that he was stuck in traffic on the M6 and would be late, he actually arrived during item 7, planning.

The Chairman informed the meeting that Cllr Stannard had been in hospital but was now home, and wished him a speedy recovery. A Get Well card was circulated for the Cllrs to sign.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Heigh declared an interest in items 7.1.1 & 7.1.3/4, planning applications 08/2007/7966 and 08/2007/8017/8.

Cllr Adams declared an interest in item 14.1, outstanding precept cheques. Cllr Barrington declared an interest in item 7.1.2, planning application 08/2007/7983, item 10, Town Hall Matters, and items 15.1 & 15.2, correspondence from Craven DC. These were noted in the book.

3. Public Participation

Mrs Mulligan asked to comment on item 12, Local Development Framework Response, and the Chairman felt it would be most sensible to wait until this subject was discussed.

4. Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 2 October were proposed by Cllr Adams, seconded by Cllr Hurlley and agreed.

5. Police Report – none present

6. CCllr & DCllrs Reports

DCllr Camacho informed the meeting that Craven were considering extending the recycling scheme which had been introduced as a trial. He added that he hoped that more areas of Bentham would be covered in the new scheme. Cllr Adams pointed out that Bentham Traders would like to recycle but under the current system are unable to. DCllr Camacho said this was being considered but that household collections were paid on the rates whilst business collections were paid separately and this complicated matters.

DCllr Barrington said that she was the Craven representative on the Forest of Bowland Joint Advisory Committee, who are considering producing a map similar to the one produced this summer for Bentham. Craven is now in consultation over its budget, which will be fixed for 3 years, although at this point the level is not known. At a meeting in Burton about speeding she had heard that the backlog of requests for the mobile speed matrix has been worked through and therefore it should be available relatively quickly if requested. District Councillor surgeries will be held in the community centre on 24 November and the Victoria Institute on 8 December.

CCllr Ireton reported that the leader of the County Council had met with the leaders of the District Councils to consider better two-tier working for the benefit of rate payers. He added that it had been pointed out that the goal should be improvement of services not profit! Moving onto the school CCllr Ireton said that 2 further sites have been dismissed. The one near Naylor Myers has been dismissed as flood plain by the Environment Agency and the site at Wesley Avenue has been rejected by the planners on visual impact and highways grounds – even though this site has been earmarked for development. Cllr Wills will be attending the meeting of the temporary governors with the LEA on Wednesday and agreed to report back to Council, at which time the Council will request a meeting with the LEA to try and find out what is happening if no concrete proposals have been made.

7. Planning

7.1. Applications

7.1.1. 08/2007/7966 First floor extension over existing garage/utility room at The Old Byre House, Slaidburn Road, High Bentham

Cllr Heigh declared an interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.1.2. 08/2007/7983 Alterations to existing roof and windows at 9 Highfield Terrace, Low Bentham

Cllr Barrington declared an interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.1.3. 08/2007/8017 Sun room extension at Lane House Farm, Mewith, Bentham

Cllr Heigh declared an interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.1.4. 08/2007/8018 Sun room extension & change window back to door at Lane House Farm, Mewith, Bentham (listed consent)

Cllr Heigh declared an interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

7.2. Decisions

- 7.2.1. 08/2007/7768 Conversion of single 2 storey warehouse building into three 2 storey self contained office units at Armstrongs Garden Centre, King Street, Bentham – GRANTED
- 7.2.2. 08/2007/7796 Covered area at rear of hotel (smoking shelter) at Punch Bowl Hotel, Low Bentham – GRANTED
- 7.2.3. 08/2007/7809 Conversion of existing plumbing office back to terraced residential dwelling at 10 Stonegate Low Bentham – GRANTED
- 7.2.4. 08/2007/7812 Change of use of garage to workshop and barn to retail area/studio at West Stonegate House, 13 Main St, Low Bentham - GRANTED
- 7.2.5. 08/2007/7824 Covered area at rear of hotel (smoking shelter) at Punch Bowl, Low Bentham – GRANTED
- 7.2.6. 08/2007/7828 Extension of annex building into main dwelling & conservatory at Mill Dam Farm, Mewith, Bentham - GRANTED

7.3. Correspondence

- 7.3.1. Retention of pre-fab unit 2306 at Low Bentham CP School
RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval
- 7.3.2. Planning Enforcement note, Punch Bowl Barn track
 The owners have been contacted and given 3 months to comply with the planning conditions.
- 7.3.3. Planning Enforcement correspondence regarding Caravan at Clay Barn, Waterside Potteries
 The residential unit put on site meets the planners definitions of a caravan and will therefore be allowed to stay.
- 7.3.4. Planning Enforcement correspondence regarding land at Lingham, opposite Tennant House
 As planning permission for the agricultural building was refused the access road and site must be returned to the original condition within 2 months or enforcement proceedings will commence. The containers may require planning permission and the reason for their presence is being sought. Planning permission is required for the earthworks to widen the beck and the Environment Agency has also confirmed further licenses and consents may be required for this work. The landowner has been urged to stop work whilst the reasons for this work are ascertained and the lack of permissions considered.
- 7.3.5. 08/2007/7763 Conversion of barn to 3 holiday lets at Mill Dam Farm, Mewith Head Lane, Mewith, Bentham – WITHDRAWN

8. Highway Matters

- 8.1. Reply regarding 'stopping-up' 16/18 Hillside Road, Low Bentham
 A representative of the architects had written accusing the Council of a volte face over the proposed stopping up, even though the Council had expressed it's concerns at the time of the application. The clerk had spoken to a member of the housing association who understood the problem and is attempting to discover whether the turning areas further up the hill are adopted.
- 8.2. Meeting with Atisreal regarding vehicle strikes at Barclays
 Five Cllrs and the clerk had a very useful meeting with NYCC Highways and Atisreal, Barclays agents to try and move forward on the problem of vehicle strikes. The Highways position was that the bank is too close to the road. The Atisreal position was that the road was inadequate for modern traffic as the building had been there for a long time but vehicle strikes were a relatively recent problem. Putting funding issues aside, it was agreed that altering the camber of the road and the height & width of the pavement would be the most suitable fix as preventing the vehicles tilting and moving them further into the road should stop most of the vehicle strikes. Subsequent to the meeting NYCC Highways had agreed to survey the junction, design a fix and estimate the costs. At this stage it is unlikely that the costs (estimated at £5-10,000) will be met by NYCC Highways as there has not been a fatality at the site. The Council agreed that it should continue to exert pressure on NYCC to ensure that the problem is solved BEFORE there is a death.
RESOLVED: That letters should be sent to NYCC Highways, the CEO NYCC and David Curry MP regarding the problems with the junction and the relatively small cost to prevent a fatality.
- 8.3. Notice of road closure – Tatterthorn Road at Langer End - received
- 8.4. Reply regarding crossing on Main Street
 A report from NYCC Highways showed that the only place for a crossing on Main Street was near to Robin Lane, which would result in the loss of all the parking bays in the area, and speed up traffic approaching the junction with Station Road. The report questioned how well such a crossing would be used as pedestrians would have to come up one side of the road to go back down the other to access the shops.
- 8.5. Other Highways Matters
 The Chairman is meeting with Stuart Cracknell of NYCC Highways on Friday 9 November to show him the areas which need repair. He asked for all Cllrs to report any problems to him by that date.

9. Website

- 9.1. Tenders
 Only one reply had been received and the Council agreed to leave this discussion until the next meeting.
RESOLVED: That the website be left to the December meeting

10. Town Hall Matters

- Cllr Barrington declared an interest and left the room.

10.1. Minutes of meeting on 15 October

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

RESOLVED: That the hiring charges for 2008 remain as for 2007.

RESOLVED: That the remaining maintenance budget be used to sort out the eaves and the Wenningdale drain

RESOLVED: That the ballroom be decorated if sufficient maintenance funds remain.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Marshall and the clerk should liaise over implementing good recording of H&S issues in the Town Hall and providing a suitable paper trail.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Wills source a guard for the Wenningdale boiler as per the fire risk assessment

RESOLVED: That a promotional leaflet be put together to advertise the Town Hall.

10.2. Event on 3 November

Over 320 people had attended the event on 3 November which had, in the main, gone well. The new smoking ban had thrown up some unexpected problems with large numbers of the attendees leaving the building to smoke. Council agreed that it needed to consider how best to solve this problem and agreed that another committee meeting should be held on 12 November. The Chairman thanked Cllr Barnes for his attendance at the event.

RESOLVED: That a Town Hall Maintenance & Marketing Committee meeting be held on Monday 12 November at 7.30pm

11. Quality Status Update

The clerk circulated Cllrs with a list of the requirements for Quality Status showing which had been achieved. The 2 mandatory sections left are the introduction of a newsletter and a printed annual report, both of which are in hand. This left the discretionary part of the Communications section. The clerk asked Cllrs to consider which areas the Council should be attempting to achieve. It was agreed that this should be added to the January agenda for further discussion.

RESOLVED: That the discretionary part of the Communications section of the Quality Status Requirements should be further discussed at the January meeting

12. Local Development Framework Response

When invited to comment, Mrs Mulligan expressed her concern about the progress of the LDF consultation process as she had only learned of the public meetings in Bentham after they had occurred. The clerk explained that due to the postal strike the publicity had only arrived on the Monday prior to the meetings on the Thursday – which had been too late. DCllr Camacho added that Craven Cllrs were equally outraged at the lack of publicity and the Planning Department had been informed of this.

The Council agreed that it needed to make an informed response by the closing date of 23 November and that to ensure that it's response was representative of Bentham a public meeting should be held.

RESOLVED: That a public meeting be held in the Lower Hall at 7.30pm on Friday 16 November

13. Allotment Update

The clerk announced that she had received a further 2 enquiries about allotments, taking the total to 9 and that apparently the site at Calf Cop had now been allocated. Craven DC had still not replied regarding the availability of any suitable land owned by the District Council. Initial advice from Craven's solicitor was that all representation needed to be considered and the Council needed to demonstrate what matters were considered, what actions were taken and the reasons for these. It was agreed that the next stage in looking for suitable land would be to advertise locally to see if any landowner was prepared to rent out something suitable.

RESOLVED: That an advert be placed in Bentham News seeking suitable land for allotments.

14. Accounts for payment

14.1. Outstanding Precept Cheques

Cllr Adams declared an interest

As the Youth Café will be running again this winter it was agreed to release the second part of the precept grant. Since the Bonfire had been cancelled it was agreed that payment was not required this year.

RESOLVED: That the Youth Café grant should be paid

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

Mopps	375.00	Norwich Union	230.93
Powergen	279.20	Horton Landscaping	41.13
Post Office	3.76	C Louth	84.84
Stannah Lift Services	129.71	R Green	482.64
Andrews	6.74	J Burton	616.45
Viking Direct	46.61	C Newsam	97.50
EOn Energy	56.02	The Phone CoOp	3.42
Craven DC	90.00	Bentham Youth Cafe	250.00
Hygiene Cleaning Supply	19.39		

15. Correspondence

15.1. Letter regarding Craven offer of land on Grasmere Drive

Cllr Barrington declared an interest **and left the room**. The Council agreed that it was only interested in the land around the Legion Hut as it wished to prevent development of this area, and that a letter to this effect should be sent to Craven.

RESOLVED: That a letter be sent confirming the Council is only interested in land at the Legion Hut

15.2. Letter regarding light at rear of Grasmere Drive

Cllr Barrington declared an interest. After 18 months of correspondence Craven DC have admitted that the light is theirs but that they would rather remove it than repair it. DCllr Camacho agreed to discuss the problem with officers at Craven

15.3. Update of housing demand in Bentham - received

15.4. Healthcare Commission letter regarding earlier comments about Westmorland General

Following the Council's letters regarding changes at Westmorland General and to the ambulance service some 12 months ago, a reply had been received explaining that the healthcare Commission was conducting an independent review and would reply shortly.

15.5. SELRAP letter regarding Skipton – Colne railway

The treasurer of the Skipton – East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership had written requesting Bentham Town Council's support to re-open the Skipton to Colne railway. The Council agreed

RESOLVED: That a letter of support be sent to SELRAP

15.6. Letter regarding St Boniface altar - received

16. Reports from other bodies

Cllr Burton reported that the Youth Café would be starting again in the Wenningdale Room shortly. Emily Thornton has been appointed as part time youth worker and will be overseeing the project.

Cllr Adams had attended an Aid in Sickness meeting and confirmed that 5 grants had been made in the last 6 months. An article will be in the next Bentham News to advertise this charity, which considers grant requests in confidence.

Cllr Barrington will attend the next Traders meeting where the Christmas lights will be discussed.

She had also attended a Community Association and reported that the Out of School Club is stopping due to dwindling numbers and lack of funds.

17. Items For Information

17.1. Defra booklet – Ways to tackle climate change

17.2. 4 Youth – programme Autumn 2007

17.3. Town & Parish Standard, September 2007.

17.4. Model Code of Conduct Advert

17.5. Lancaster District Local Plan, 'saved' policies

17.6. Balfour Beatty Information

17.7. YLCA information, w/e 12 October

17.8. The Hub Newsletter Oct-Dec 2007.

17.9. Up Coming activities at Looking Well

17.10. European Regional Policy – basic essentials, January 2007.

18. AOB - minor items only

The Clerk introduced 3 items which had arrived since the agenda was advertised but required a response before the next meeting. The Civic Dinner is on 30 November. It was agreed that a Bentham Cllr should attend.

The planning application on land at 4 Goodenber Road has gone to appeal.

Craven are reviewing their Licensing Policy Statement and request comments by 28 November.

Cllr Heigh asked about the felling of trees on Station Road. DCllr Camacho said that Planning were checking it out.

Cllr Barrington mentioned the speed of traffic past Tennant House and the problems it was causing with the access used by livestock. Cllr Wills agreed to add this to the items being discussed with Mr Cracknell.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.23pm