

BENTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 2 October 2006, at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall

Present Cllrs Hurlley (Chairman) Adams, Barnes, Barrington, Burton, Faichney, Heigh, Marshall, Rushton & Wills, DCllr Camacho. Also, the Clerk Mrs Burton and 3 parishioners.

1. Apologies Cllr Stannard & CCllr Ireton

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Adams declared an interest in items 6.1.4, planning application 08/2006/6714, and 8.4, letter from the NSPCC. Cllr Marshall declared an interest in item 6.1.3, planning application 08/2006/6672. These were recorded in the book.

3. Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 4 September 2006 were proposed by Cllr Marshall, seconded by Cllr Adams and agreed.

4. Police Report

PCs McClurg & Nagy attended. PC Nagy reported that it had been a quiet month in Bentham. There had been an assault on a youth outside the Asian Spice and a horse had been slashed in another incident, both of which were under investigation. Antisocial behaviour at the bottom of Robin Lane continues.

PC McClurg announced that several farmers in the area have been issued with Smart Water, which is used to mark property invisibly.

Cllr Burton asked about the monitoring of the drug situation and was informed that, due to insufficient specific intelligence, it had not been possible to mount the surveillance operation. Cllr Barnes reported groups of youths blocking the entrance to the Co-Op after 8pm and was informed that similar problems had been experienced at the Spar and CCTV footage was being considered with a view to prosecution.

5. CCllr & DCllr Reports

DCllr Hurlley commented on the recent Area Forum where parking charges in Bentham had been discussed. The meeting had been relatively well attended by Bentham residents and he hoped that the District Council had been made to think about the problems of policing illegal parking on the streets if charges are introduced. Craven District Council has taken out an injunction against the 'Craven Matters' website as it objected to the content.

Cllr Barnes asked whether DCllr Camacho had got Craven to write to the local NHS Trust regarding the closure of services at Westmorland General as requested at the previous meeting. DCllr Camacho said it had not yet been possible as the request had missed all the deadlines for the Craven Council meeting. Cllr Barnes then pointed out that it was now too late as the final closure decision had been taken that day – leaving the area with seriously depleted health care services and that, in the representation of Bentham residents needs, more effort should have been made.

6. Planning

6.1. Applications

6.1.1. 08/2006/6670 Detached dwelling to supercede application 08/2005/5615 at Harley Bank, Low Bentham

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

6.1.2. 08/2006/6671 Creation of 2 2-bed and 1 1-bed apartments (amended application 08/2006/6554) at 28 Station Road, High Bentham.

Whilst acknowledging that parking was unlikely to be sufficient grounds to refuse planning permission the Council were unhappy with yet further changes to this development. As Cllr Adams pointed out, the initial approval had been for 2 dwellings with parking which had been amended to 2 larger dwellings with no parking provisions and now to 3 dwellings without parking. This meant that potentially a further 6 vehicles would be looking for parking on Station Road which was already extremely crowded. He commented that the current trend in applications seemed to be to engineer out all the good points of an initial plan that ensured that the original application was approved once that approval was received.

RESOLVED: That the Council's concerns be expressed to the planning department

6.1.3. 08/2006/6672 Conversion of Redundant Water Pumping Station to All-Access holiday let unit at Badger Ford, Mewith Lane, High Bentham

Cllr Marshall declared a commercial interest

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

6.1.4. 08/2006/6714 Two storey gable extension at 26 Robin Lane, High Bentham.

Cllr Adams declared an interest and did not take part in the discussion. Two letters of objection from residents of Butterburg were read which commented on the loss of light and the overbearing presence of the proposed extension. Council agreed that their request for a site meeting to discuss the plans was reasonable.

RESOLVED: That a site meeting be requested before a decision is made

- 6.1.5. 08/2006/6715 Proposed work to protected trees – crown & thin oak and beech at 1 Highfield Terrace, Low Bentham.

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

- 6.1.6. 08/2006/6719 Replacement of rear entrance/garden room & outbuilding and completion of boundary to No 4 Lake House at 1 Lake House, Burton Road, Low Bentham

RESOLVED: That this application be recommended for approval

6.2. Decisions

- 6.2.1. 08/2006/6554 Demolition of former shop and workshop and construction of 2 new dwellings (amendments to 08/2004/4155) at 28 Station Road, High Bentham – GRANTED

- 6.2.2. 08/2006/6569 Single Storey Front Extension at Aragorn, Burton Road, Low Bentham - GRANTED

6.3. Correspondence

- 6.3.1. 08/2005/5441 Agricultural building for livestock at New Farm, Mewith, withdrawn

- 6.3.2. 08/2005/5652 Roofing material for affordable housing off Goodenber Road – appeal upheld

- 6.3.3. 08/2005/5715 Hot food takeaway at Arundel House, Low Bentham – appeal dismissed

- 6.3.4. 08/2006/6643 Construction of houses on Hillside Road – consultation extended

- 6.3.5. 08/2006/6658 Change of use at Gate House, Wennington Road, Low Bentham – withdrawn

- 6.3.6. 08/2006/6714 Letters of objection

7. Highway Matters

7.1. Vehicle strikes to Barclays – meeting 19 September

Cllrs Wills and Marshall and the clerk had met with Stuart Marshall of NYCC Highways to look at ways of preventing further vehicle strikes on Barclays Bank. It had been agreed to place signs at Egerton Lodge cross roads and Furlane Ends to direct HGVs away from Low Bentham and thereby hopefully bring them into Bentham from the other side. A new directional sign has also been agreed for the bottom of Robin Lane. Cllr Barnes suggested that an attempt should be made to get more directional information to Sat-Nav companies so that HGVs are not directed to problem areas. The clerk agreed to talk to NYCC Highways about this.

RESOLVED: That the new signs be approved

RESOLVED: That the clerk contact NYCC regarding Sat-Nav directions

7.2. Craven Area Forum Response

A response from Ken Martin regarding the action points raised at the Area Forum was read. The clerk confirmed that she had contacted Mr Martin regarding the grass cutting on Keasden Moor, as Newby Moor was the correct venue.

7.3. Pedestrian Crossings

Council agreed that no further dropped kerbs were required on the Main Street following the installation of those on the corner of Station Road and by Cleveland Square earlier in the year. Possible siting of a zebra crossing was discussed, but previous enquiries have shown that there is not a suitable point.

7.4. Mount Pleasant Drains

The clerk reported that these had been cleared. Cllr Wills asked if the water still needed to run up hill to access the drains, and was told that this was indeed still the case.

7.5. Mobile Speed Matrix

The Safer Craven Community Partnership letter regarding use of the Mobile Speed Matrix Sign was considered. Council agreed that requests for its use on Springfield, Station Road and Low Bentham Road should be made, but recognised that it may be some time before it was available.

RESOLVED: That requests be made for use of the Mobile Speed Matrix on Springfield, Station Road and Low Bentham Road.

7.6. Wesley Close culvert

Craven District Council confirmed that the culvert was now clear of any blockage. Cllr Wills had agreed to investigate a new trash gate and this was in hand. According to Graham Tarn the new development should not lead to any increased load on the culvert. Cllr Adams expressed some surprise at this as it appears that new drains have been put into it.

8. Town Hall Matters

8.1. Minutes of meeting of 11 September

These were proposed by Cllr Adams, seconded by Cllr Marshall and agreed.

RESOLVED: That all proposals be accepted

8.2. Bristan Response

A response from the tap manufacturers agreeing that the failure rate was unacceptable and offering to replace all taps with a higher specification was read. Cllr Wills asked that the Council's thanks to the clerk for her efforts in this matter be minuted. Cllr Marshall suggested that the clerk be given authority to agree any required changes to the water supply, e.g. pressure valves, after discussion with members of the Town Hall Maintenance committee rather than having to bring suggestions back to full Council. This was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Bristan offer be accepted

RESOLVED: That the clerk and Maintenance committee make reasonable decisions regarding the water supply if necessary.

8.3. Letters of apology

Letters from the organisers of the event on 2 September were read.

8.4. NSPCC letter

Cllr Adams declared an interest. A further letter regarding the Galley fire door was received requesting further signage. Council felt that this could lead to greater confusion and considered that the standard terms and conditions of hire should suffice.

8.5. Town Hall Meeting

RESOLVED: That the next meeting be held on Monday 9 October at 8pm at Wynn Stay

9. Low Bentham Playing Field

The calendar should be published this week.

10. Accounts for payment

The accounts were proposed by Cllr Marshall and seconded by Cllr Adams.

Mopps	370.00	J Burton	700.99
S Rogerson	286.04	R Green	435.53
D Whitfield	200.00	C Louth	95.44
W Holmes-Davies	120.37	Craven DC	84.00
Andrews	2.00	Flying Saucer	48.00
Yorkshire Water	160.61	Mazars	881.25
Hygiene Cleaning Services	19.90	Stannards	44.65
Horton Landscaping	70.00	Stannah Lift Services	124.84
Powergen	38.21	Inland Revenue	110.13

10.1. Audit – financial regulations

The accounts have been approved by the external auditors, Mazars. Their only comment was that the assets register should include all assets, not just property, and that a set of Financial Regulations should be agreed separate to the Standing Orders. The Clerk agreed to produce something for approval at the November meeting.

RESOLVED: That a set of financial regulations and an updated assets register be approved at the November meeting

11. Correspondence

11.1. Street Lighting – response from MP

David Curry MP had contacted the CEO of Pwergen, Paul Golby, regarding the increased street lighting charges. As a result the clerk had discussed a move to a fixed term contract, which would give a saving of £10 / month.

During these discussions the level of power upon which the calculations were made had been disclosed. Using the Council inventory Cllr Adams and Wills had calculated their expectation of usage, which was considerably lower. Council asked the clerk to go back to United Utilities to see if this was correct.

RESOLVED: That a fixed term contract be entered with E On Energy to reduce costs

RESOLVED: That United Utilities be contacted regarding the street lighting inventory

11.2. Extended Schools Coordinator

RESOLVED: That the Extended Schools Coordinator be invited to the November meeting

11.3. Civic Dinner, 18 November - received

11.4. NHS Response

A holding letter from one acting Chief Executive, passing the Council letter to another acting Chief Executive.

11.5. Community Luncheon, 31 October.

As the Chairman will be unable to attend, Cllr Wills agreed to go in his place.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Wills attend

12. Reports from other bodies

Cllrs Adams & Wills had attended a Bonfire meeting and mentioned that stewards were still required for the event. Items for the fire can be left from 26 October. They had also been to the joint Traders / Council meeting where car parking and the Christmas lights had been discussed.

Cllr Wills had also attended a LASRUG meeting. The provision of free bus travel to pensioners is likely to affect rail travel as older passengers are expected to leave the railway as a result of the unlevel playing field. This is a concern as it will affect the viability of the line.

Cllr Burton had attended a Bentham Development Trust meeting and reported that the Community Transport contract with Future Builders starts in December. The plans for the station building had been discussed and the project will hopefully be complete late Spring 2007. Tourist Information had settled into the Town Hall well, and they thanked the Council for the provision of extra signs.

Cllr Barrington said that the Multi Agency Older Peoples Reference Group for Craven were worried about the threat to the Harden Ward, which Cllr Barnes agreed was earmarked for closure in 12 months. It was agreed that the clerk should send a letter to the Airedale NHS Trust, and that both Cllrs Barrington and Barnes would supply more information to her for this purpose.

RESOLVED: That a letter be sent to the Airedale NHS Trust regarding the closure of the Harden ward

13. Items For Information
 - 13.1. Change in Fire Safety Laws
 - 13.2. Craven Branch Meeting October 2006.
 - 13.3. CPS Annual Update
 - 13.4. Street Renaissance Conference
 - 13.5. E-On Electricity Source
 - 13.6. The Newsletter – Voluntary / Community Groups
 - 13.7. White Rose Update, September 2006
 - 13.8. Country Aire, Summer 2006.
 - 13.9. The Playing Field, Summer 2006.
 - 13.10. Assembly Digest, September 2006.
 - 13.11. Inforegio – August 2006
 - 13.12. Inforegio Factsheets – Cohesion Policy
 - 13.13. Settle Victoria theatre – Whats On
 - 13.14. The future of food – 14 October

14. AOB - minor items only

Cllr Hurtle and several Councillors had attended the Civic Service at St Johns on October 1, where over £90 had been collected for cancer care.

Cllr Heigh asked for a letter to be sent to the main contractor following the damage done to the grass verge on Mewith Lane near Mewith House. Details of the contractor to be supplied to the clerk.

The clerk had found correspondence from 2001 showing that the sewage works at Low Bentham should be screened. This should be raised with the planning department.

Mrs Louth had reported that the disabled public toilet had been broken into, although no damage had occurred. Councillors agreed to keep an eye on the building.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.07pm