

Minutes of a meeting of Bilsington Parish Council held at Bilsington Village Hall on Thursday 19th September 2024 at 7:00pm

Present: Councillors: L Lawson (Vice-Chair), M Bilham and R Thompson.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

Also present; Cllr L Harman (ABC) and P New (Neighbourhood Watch) and 3 residents

1092. **Apologies for absence:**

Cllr S Hudson and Cllr D Robey (KCC)

1093. **Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

1094. **Public participation:**

Two residents wished to discuss the possibility of introducing Speedwatch to the village as a measure to reduce speeding. They had met with the Kent Police Spedwatch team at an event who had outlined the scheme to them. The speedwatch team were invited to attend this meeting however due to annual leave and prior commitments they were unable to attend but have diarised to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council in November

1095. **Neighbourhood Watch:**

Report attached.

1096. **Kent county councillor's report:**

From the KCC point of view, like others, we are waiting to see what the new government will do in many areas, and have written to them at ministerial level on a range of issues including:

- Planning & Housing, especially the provision of infrastructure, how to fund this and when. This will be a key issue for Kent, given how much housing has been built over the last twenty years.
- The European Entry & Exit System (EES), due to come into effect later this year, which will have significant, potentially negative implications for Kent residents, especially with regard to what happens at Dover, and the surrounding roads. The Channel Tunnel will be OK, as they have more room on site for the checks than Dover, but will obviously be impacted if Dover problems back up onto the M20.
- All the issues surrounding migrants coming across the Channel.
- Adult Social Care and how to fund it.
- Children's Service's and SEND provision, including how to deal with the knock-on effect of the imposition of VAT on private schools, which will require extra capacity in the state sector.
- Highways & Transportation, which will require significant funding, including buses in this.

- Local government finance and structure. There is talk of devolution, but what this means is not yet clear. Certainly, the existing system in Kent, of District and County Councils, could be streamlined to the benefit of residents. However, over and above this, a different approach to social care provision is vital, as without this, KCC, and other similar authorities, will not survive in the long term.

1097. **Ashford Borough Councillor's report:**

The Local Plan Explained events ran throughout August, with the last online event being last Wednesday. The events were well attended. Work now starts on screening the many sites proposed by land owners and developers for inclusion in the Ashford Local Plan. Planners will consider their suitability to meet the housing target that the Borough is required to deliver by Government. The next round of public consultation is anticipated to be held in the Spring/early summer next year.

The Council has published its Borough Plan, which was picked up in the BBC Kent news! The plan has three themes: Planet, People, Place, which will form the drivers for projects that we will be looking to bring forward over the next 2/3 years and which will also shape the thinking behind the Ashford Local Plan.

1098. **Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17th July 2024 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

1099. **Planning matters:**

Planning application PA/2024/1575 – 4 Priory Cottages, Priory Road, Bilsington – Two storey rear and single storey side extensions.

Resolved: the Parish Council has no objection to the proposals.

1100. **Finance:**

Schedule of payments:

Staff costs July	£462.73
Staff costs August	£446.50
Clerk's expenses	£181.78
Information Commissioner	£40.00
Zurich Insurance	£421.46

Resolved: To authorise the payment of the items in the schedule of payments.

1101. **Parish Council website and Email address:**

It has been highlighted in the latest edition of the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide that all Parish Councils are eligible to use, and are advised to use, a .gov.uk domain for their websites and email communications. The community, suppliers and partners will now reasonably expect a local council to have a .gov.uk domain name.

To assist with compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), it is advised that Clerks provide official .gov.uk email accounts to their councillors, which must only be used for official council business.

The Parish Council's current website provider is currently seeking certification to be able to provide .gov.uk domain names and associated email addresses.

The Parish Council is asked to note the above as it has been indicated that the use of .gov.uk websites and email addresses will be a question on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return from the current year. Non compliance could lose the ability to claim exemption from external audit incurring additional costs to the Council.

1102. **Village Hall:**

Future events include:

22nd September cricket match – Village v the Cricket club

12th October Quiz night

23rd November Xmas Craft Fair

1103. **Highways:**

Correspondence has been received regarding the perceived speeding of vehicles particularly on Bonnington Road and Ashford Road requesting what the Parish Council intends to do about this.

One suggestion that has been put forward is for Speedwatch, this is reliant upon volunteers coming forward for training and giving their time to monitor speed at locations that are approved by Kent Police as compliant with Health and Safety.

Other matters could be considered as part of the Highways Improvement Plan which may require the Parish Council to provide the funding for as Kent Highways have a very limited budget for Highways improvements.

1104. **Other items for information:**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:20pm.



**REPORT FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.
BILSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL SEPT 2024**



AREAS AND CRIME TRENDS TO BE AERT TO

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

CRIMINAL DAMAGE

**THEFT FROM VEHICLES, LEAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ON SHOW IN A
PARKED CAR. VANS CARRYING TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE AT RISK**

THEFTS FROM GARAGES, SHEDS, BARNS, STABLES AND OUTBUILDINGS

**THEFTS OF INTERNET SHOPPING PARCELS FROM DOORSTEPS (VANS ARE
NOW FOLLOWED, EVEN REMOTE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTIES ARE
VULNERABLE**

SPECIAL CRIMES e.g. THEFT OF HIGH END KEYLESS CARS/KNIVES/DRUGS

BOGUS CALLERS/ROGUE TRADERS/SCAMS

FLY TIPPING

My work will ENGAGE WITH THE PUBLIC AND RESIDENTS OF COMMUNITIES.

WORK TO SUPPORT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS CAMPAIGNS

**IMPORTANTLY TO LOOK AHEAD AND ANTICIPATE, ALERT AND INFORM.
REACT TO CONCERNS OF RESIDENTS AND DEVELOPING/CHANGING CRIME
THREATS.**

**ONE OF OUR BIGGEST THREATS is SCAMS. These come on our mobile
phones, our landline phones, our computers, our laptops, by letter and on
occasions by face to face on our doorsteps.**

They can come from 3, 30, 300 and 3000 miles away.

May I draw council's attention this month to the theft of internet shopping parcels

This risk has developed over a period of 2 to 3 years and was fuelled by the arrangements to operate safely as COVID restrictions relaxed.

1. The theft of a parcel from a doorstep mainly in town areas where there is foot traffic by a “Chancer and opportunists” Sometimes the thief had no intention of committing the crime but there was a parcel and then it was gone!
2. Criminals developed a more serious approach and vans were now followed that risk grew around the time of Black Friday sales and of course Christmas as more and more online shopping took off.
It also now brought into play more rural and isolated premises so no property off the beaten track was safe now
3. Then we had vans taken as delivery drivers went to premises and the criminals were frustrated that many deliveries were being accepted by residents and so when the opportunity arose, they stole the complete van and all deliveries inside.
4. Sadly and I have no in depth details as yet but a delivery van driver was killed recently in the North of England as criminals tried to take the van and the driver was killed as the van drive off.

My work will need to address this risk in the coming months as we start to move towards Christmas.

We must encourage safe delivery arrangements.



CRIME

Parcel thefts rise from doorsteps as gangs follow courier vans



CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON ALERT not BILSINGTON but a warning

I have also dealt with a case of a hand held electronic device being spotter in use on KNIGHTS PARK to target a residents car. A very vigilant NHW member intervened to prevent any crime being carried out.

I have fully briefed the Serious Crime Squad who I worked with on keyless car thefts last year and early 2024. All info/intel has been submitted.



Knights Park (Ashford, Kent) Community Group

Peter New · 29 Aug · 🧑

Dear Readers

You will have already read the post from Trudi, a vigilant member of Neighbourhood Watch about the attempted car theft on Knights Park in AUGUSTUS WALK, KNIGHTS PARK, off of MILLBANK ROAD.

Good quality CCTV has been provided to the police of the incident at approx 1125 hrs today (Thursday 29th August)

Would anyone with CCTV or Camera Doorbell footage of the person shown below please make contact my email is below

Thank you for your help in this matter
Peter

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com)
Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch

👍👎 Heather Stanton and 3 others

6 comments

👍 Like 💬 Comment 📧 Send





AREAS TO IMPROVE

I think an area where we must seek to improve is to get residents to report all crimes.

Yes, we have online and 101 and now live chat but we must not shy away from using 999. Our vulnerable and elderly may only have a landline phone.

Let Force Control make the decisions on responses. We must combat the feeling of “They are too busy” “They won’t come” we must make the calls and put the onus on the police to decide. We can get a crime number and any feeling of shortfall in performance can be followed up with that number.

Far too many times crimes and attempted crimes are not reported.

The financial loss is much less than the insurance claim excess, so no crime number is needed as no claim is being made so no report is made.

A classic example would be shed thefts not reported and then a shed is a target and say £15000 of specialist fishing equipment or expensive bikes/golf equipment is stolen and sadly the police find it is the 6th shed theft in the area but 5 were not reported. No crime prevention alerts go out and the 6th shed may have been an avoidable crime.

Attempted thefts should always be reported because sometimes thieves return if they have been thwarted but have seen something they wish to target.

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR and CRIMINAL DAMAGE are other examples of crimes that must be reported.

All reports help to shape proactive patrols and importantly crime prevention advice.

I will make a verbal report on the following issues

- 1. AN INCIDENT OF ROGUE TRADING NEARBY IN ASHFORD and NHW Response.**
- 2. MY CONCERNS OVER E-SCOOTERS AND A DEVELOPING FIRE RISK IN COMMUNITIES**
- 3. THE ASHFORD POLICE ESTABLISHMENT.**

I look forward to a strong last quarter of the year working with you to help keep our residents safe and crime free and as important free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

Thank you all as always for your solid backing and support. I really appreciate that.

Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com) KENT POLICE VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

