

**THE 114<sup>TH</sup> VILLAGE CONFERENCE HELD AT THE  
BELL CENTRE, GREAT BADDOW ON THURSDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2008**

Prior to the official meeting, an exhibition of play equipment ideas had been arranged. A reception had been arranged from 7.00 p.m. for parishioners to meet with Parish Councillors, Borough Councillors and the Essex County Councillor for informal talks.

The Chairman of the Council, Councillor Mrs Christine Shaw, welcomed everyone to the meeting. The business meeting of the Village Conference then took place.

1. **PRESENT**

Councillor Mrs Christine Shaw (Chairman of the Parish Council) presided over the meeting, which numbered 17 members of the public and 10 parish councillors. The members of the public included Inspector Cheryl Callow, Sergeant Nikki Gander, PCSO Maz Keenan and PCSO Karen Lucas, Glen Finch (Clerk to the Great Baddow Parochial Charities) and Richard Beck (Great Baddow Community Association).

Apologies for absence were received from David Saddington, Dan Glading and Councillor Stephen Martin.

2. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous Village Conference held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007, which had been circulated, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Christine Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs Maureen Miller.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

A member of the public asked if the resurfacing of Meadgate Avenue was still scheduled for the financial year 2008/2009 and was told that it is.

4. **PRESENTATION AND REPORT FROM THE POLICE**

Inspector Cheryl Callow spoke to the meeting, outlining some of the achievements of the last year, including the opening of a police office in the Vineyards. She stressed that Great Baddow is a relatively low crime area but appealed to the community to continue its vigilance in reporting suspicious events. She said that the Neighbourhood Action Panel is working very well in Great Baddow and thanked the Parish Council for its support.

Sergeant Nikki Gander also spoke to the meeting and reported about the closure of a crack house during the year. She stressed that this kind of activity affects the quality of life of everyone and firm action must be taken against it. She stressed the need for residents to speak to the police about any problems, before they get overwhelming.

Parishioner's Questions and Comments

4.1 Can more speed checks be done in Baddow Road?

This can be done

4.2 What is the situation with parking?

Parking has been de-criminalised and is now dealt with by the Borough Council. Cllr A Sosin told the meeting that Chelmsford Borough Council is undertaking a parking review.

4.3 What is happening about the turning off of streetlights at night?

This is being trialed by Essex County Council and will be subject to review.

5. **REPORT FROM THE FIRE SERVICE**

No one was present and there was no report.

Cllr S Martin entered the meeting at 8.20pm

6. **PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

A detailed written report had been circulated to all those present providing details of the Council's activities during the 2007/2008 financial year. The Chairmen of the Committees then proceeded to expand verbally and answer questions on the report.

7. **HIGHWAYS AND AMENITIES**

Cllr Andrew Sosin addressed the meeting and made reference to the following: the road resurfacing in Meadgate Avenue, Longmead Avenue and the Causeway; the Parking Review to be carried out by the Borough Council; junction protection schemes; pedestrian crossings in Baddow Road and Maldon Road; the Park and Ride Scheme; traffic schemes for the entrance to the development at Cundells Field; the installation of a light in Sawkins Avenue; extra dog waste bins installed by the Borough Council and the new bus shelter installed near Purbeck Court. The Parish Council team keep a sharp eye out for potholes, defective streetlights, overhanging vegetation and litter. Thanks go to Don Hood and Mike Passfield, for their work as litter pickers in keeping Great Baddow cleaner than it might otherwise be. Cllr Mrs Maureen Miller was also thanked for her continuing vigilance and persistence.

Parishioner's Questions and Comments

7.1 The facilities at Riverside in Chelmsford were discussed and it was proposed by Norman Jackson and seconded by Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson that the Parish Meeting notes that the Borough Council's plan for the re-development of Riverside omits important facilities which citizens currently enjoy, namely an outdoor pool, diving boards and sufficiently deep water facilities for activities such as scuba diving and synchronised swimming. The meeting calls upon the Borough Council to reinstate those facilities to the proposed refurbishment. This was carried unanimously.

7.2 Deep potholes were reported in Seabrook Road and Cllr S Sosin said that he would report this.

7.3 A question was raised about the traffic calming in Molrams Lane. It was reported that the Highways department are aware of the problems but do not seem to be prepared to take any action.

8. **GROUNDS AND ALLOTMENTS**

Cllr Stephen Martin thanked Peter Jeffrey and the team for the fantastic job that they do in all weathers to keep the parish looking good and in keeping the facilities in working order. The office staff were also thanked for their input into the administration elements.

New swings and a teenage Youth Shelter were installed and the teenage play equipment will be replaced following consultation. Fencing on the All Weather Sports Courts has been replaced, which is part of an ongoing replacement plan. These courts and the football, cricket and tennis facilities all continue to be well used. There was a break in at the Grounds Office during the year but security shutters have now been installed.

The Lawn Cemetery continues to be well kept and is looking lovely again this year. This gets very favourable comments from both residents of the parish and visitors alike. The final fencing is now in place completing the cemetery extension.

Thanks were given to Terry Hull and Anthea Reeve, who are the Allotment Representatives, for their help and support during the year. Also thanks were given to David Sewell who recently retired as the Vicarage Lane representative. Plot availability is very limited and the council is looking to clear further areas to make more.

Parishioner's Questions and Comments

8.1 The matter of the overlap between football and cricket was raised and it was agreed to refer this to the next meeting of the Grounds Committee.

9. **PLANNING**

Cllr Sid Bass addressed the meeting. He said that the Planning Committee meets every two weeks and that during the year they had dealt with 132 applications. Members of the public are always welcome. The Parish Council's Planning Committee is not the Planning Authority. Borough councillors can be asked to call-in applications and representatives of the Parish Council will then attend the planning meeting at the Borough Council. Trees also come under planning if they are in the conservation area or have TPOs on them. The Planning Committee use the guidance on extensions from Chelmsford Borough Council to help in their deliberations.

10. **PARISH HALL AND BELL CENTRE**

Cllr Mrs Diana Ronaldson addressed the meeting. The Parish Hall has been redecorated using the Community Payback scheme. The entrance way by the main gate has been repaired, new blinds have been fitted in Committee Room 1, two new cookers have been bought for the kitchen and a new fixed electric urn has been installed. There has been damage to the floor caused by stiletto heels and hirers are reminded that this type of footwear should not be worn. An energy audit of the hall is to be carried out to help the council reduce its carbon footprint. Lynn Alderson, the caretaker, Helen Bonner, the cleaner and Mick Pratt, the handyman were all thanked for their hard work

The inside of the Bell Centre has also been redecorated using Community Payback and it looks very much brighter. Hirers are reminded that only three cars are allowed in the car park and Essex County Council, the landlords, are undertaking inspections of the wall. A number of new hirers have started using the Bell Centre and this is good news. Lynn Alderson, the caretaker/cleaner was thanked for her work.

11. **PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES**

The Clerk reported that the accounts close on 31<sup>st</sup> March each year and are audited by an external auditor. The audited accounts are then made available for public inspection. The un-audited Receipts and Payment figures were circulated to those present.

12. **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

The Chairman welcomed two new councillors who joined the Council in May – Veronica Sadowsky and Keith Ronaldson. They have been councillors for nearly a year now, and they have contributed a great deal over the year. Jenny Reed, the Administrative Assistant, left during the year, and Cheryl Clark joined the Council to replace her.

An extremely successful year was had with two performances from Essex On Tour. The second show attracts no subsidy but everything worked out well. There was a puppet show of the Elves & The Shoemaker for children in November and an evening of Stanley Holloway's life story and music and monologues in February, which were both excellent performances.

The Council had hoped to have a drop in facility up and running during the year to cater for an older age range than the group that meet in the Bell Centre. Unfortunately negotiations took far longer than anyone expected but the stage has now reached, where a planning application has been made by the YMCA to use the old optician's premises in the Vineyards. We do hope that this will enable a start up in the near future.

Ideas and comments are always welcome, and the Council does its best to help with problems that arise for people. Our aim continues to be to enhance facilities for parishioners and to make Great Baddow place that people find attractive and welcoming to live.

13. **GREAT BADDOW PAROCHIAL CHARITIES**

Mr. G. Finch gave the report, prepared by the Chairman John Shaw. The Trustees have met on 7 occasions during the year to deal with the routine administration. One new almsperson has been appointed at Kinghams and sadly three almspersons have died. Replacing these people was hard due to the restrictions placed by the charities deed and thought has been given to asking the Charity Commission for changes. Planning for new fire and health and safety recommendations used up much time. The St Mary's Court parking area was badly in need of updating, so a new block paving area was laid. Grants were made in December for the support of the needy of the parishes of Great Baddow and Galleywood. Each resident of the Almshouses was presented with a Christmas gift.

14. **GREAT BADDOW ARTS AND LEISURE CENTRE**

Ann Wood gave a short reported prepared by David Saddington, who had given his apologies. Hires have continued to increase and the regular hirers sustain the financial health of the centre. The activities that are carried out are diverse but each in its own way provides an opportunity for leisure activities for the residents of the parish, which is fulfilling one of the primary aims in restoring the premises. This has been a successful year.

15. **GREAT BADDOW COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

Richard Beck, the Chairman of the Association for the last 20 years, gave a report. Membership has increased to 1600 members, the turnover is £250,000 per annum and the centre employs 15 full and part time staff. The finances are in good shape in spite of increased running costs and usage of the building is very high. Free use of the committee room is given to groups in the village. The usual programme of events has been run and other events such as the Fun Run have been supported. The Health and Safety programme is still being developed. The total smoking ban does not seem to have had much impact on income and an outside patio area is now available. He thanked the staff at the Association for their work. The Parish Council is thanked for its support. .

16. **NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

Ann Wood gave a report prepared by Mr Dan Glading, the Neighbourhood Area Co-ordinator. Unfortunately, ill health during the year has prevented him from fulfilling all of his duties. Bulletins have been displayed as a mean sof communicating to the public. As ever, volunteer help has not been forthcoming. The PCSOs have been very helpful, particularly in the Meadgate area. Bogus callers continue to be a problem and there have been a number of cases of arson. Residents should be vigilant and report anything to the police.

17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- A question was raised about a dilapidated shop in the High Street. Buildings have to be in a dangerous structural state or have public health grounds before anything can be done about them. Cllr A Sosin has reported the weeds in the gutters. The Parish Council cannot take any action on the matter and cannot secure the premises.
- A question was raised about lorries transporting soil driving along Beehive Lane. Traffic movements from developments can only be controlled by planning conditions.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.37 pm, with the Chairman thanking those in attendance for coming.

Signed: .....  
Chairman of the Parish Council

Dated: .....