

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10th June 2015 at the Pavilion, Deep Spinney, Biddenham

Present: Peter Chase, Graham Bates, Jon Gambold, Krzys Osuch, Francia Slade, Terence Platt, Alan Jacobs and the Clerk were in attendance. In addition there were 5 members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Crowther - **it was resolved** to accept the apologies

2. Declarations of interest

None

3. Election of Chairman

At the May parish council meeting Cllr Chase had offered to stand as chairman. Due to the small number of parish councillors in attendance it was agreed that he would chair the May meeting and to place this item for consideration at the June meeting. Cllr Chase confirmed he would be happy to remain as Chairman for the forthcoming year. There were no other volunteers from the council and **it was resolved** for Cllr Chase to continue as Chairman.

4. Parish Council vacancies - Co-option

Following the May elections there are currently 2 vacancies on the parish council. Mr Alan Jacobs a resident from Deep Spinney had offered to join the parish council and had submitted a personal statement. **It was resolved** to co-opt Mr Jacobs with immediate effect.

5. Declaration of acceptance of office

Cllr Jacobs signed his declaration of acceptance of office.

6. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 13th May 2015

It was resolved to approve the minutes.

7. Matters Arising from Minutes

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere in agenda.

8. Public Open Session

Members of the public were concerned regarding the erection of the new fencing/hoarding as part of the works for the new bypass. The fence panels are obtrusive, and inconsistent with other sections of the bypass i.e. Church End and surely a better more aesthetic solution such as creating soil bunding could have been used. The fence completely removes the sweeping views of the landscape towards Bromham which are an integral part of the landscape of this part of the parish. Cllr Rigby advised that the fencing is approximately 72m long by 2.5m high. What purpose did this fencing serve? Did the Borough instruct Breheny to erect the fencing? Residents and members alike were concerned that the fencing would provide an ideal background for graffiti and fly posting. In addition the location of the fencing had effectively cut off the new cycle route and underpass from the roundabout and the land behind would be now be completely out of sight. **It was resolved** that the parish council would write to the Head of Roads and Environment a Mr Stewart Briggs, with copies to Paul Rowland (Head of Planning), Mayor Dave Hodgson and Glen Barcham

What was happening with the bus stop on Bromham Road (northbound heading towards Northampton) that had been removed as part of the recent roundabout improvements? Where will this be re-located to?

Clerk

Clerk

RR/JG

9. Local Green Spaces

The Borough Council had now advised all parishes that more detailed evidence is required to support any submissions for local green spaces.

Cllr Gambold and the Clerk had submitted several sites within the parish as part of the initial consultation process. Cllr Gambold was confident that there would be sufficient evidence to support the applications for the Pavilion field and the site near the hospital. However, he was struggling to find evidence to support the applications for the other sites and has asked local residents and experts in their field for assistance. The Chairman asked whether he needed any assistance from other members and Cllr Gambold responded that he would continue with the task and report back at the next meeting. The deadline for supporting evidence is the 31st July. Members asked whether this added protection had a limited timescale and were advised that there was no defined time limit for this green space protection although these green spaces would be submitted as part of the Local Plan.

JG

10 Planning – to note the report and comment on any new applications

The report was noted.

The Clerk advised that the applicant had submitted revised plans for the application for Duck End Lane and this was passed onto to the committee members for consideration.

The Parish Council had objected to the planning application by the Manor Hospital. It was noted that Mr Page had thanked the parish council for their support in the matter. There were no other applications for consideration.

11 Traffic Surveys

The parish council had requested speed surveys for the following roads in the parish:

Biddenham Turn
Main Road
Gold Lane
Deep Spinney
Church End

Members had recently met to discuss the findings of all the surveys and agree how the council can take the matter forward. There were three proposals:

(i) A request for additional speed surveys for Bromham Road

Cllr Gambold had initially suggested that speed surveys were undertaken for Bromham Road. However, it was reported that the Borough would be able to provide the parish council with the data obtained 2 years ago prior to reducing the speed limit on the Bromham Road. No further speed surveys would now be undertaken.

JG

(ii) Gold Lane – how can concerns regarding safety be addressed?

Although the survey indicated that motorists were largely compliant with the statutory speed limit there was a perception that the road was too narrow for cars travelling at 30mph. The widest section of the road was just north of Thorpe Close near to Thorpe Lodge. Cllr Gambold had asked the Borough for suggestions regarding traffic calming for Gold Lane and one proposal was to install a small semi circle shaped island which would be separated from the pavement. This would be on the left hand side of the road as you turn into Gold Lane from Deep Spinney and therefore give priority to motorists coming from the village. This would also have the benefit of disadvantaging any potential rat runners choosing to drive through Biddenham to avoid the traffic congestion on Bromham Road during the rush hour.

Members were broadly in favour of this proposal but felt that more was needed to tackle the problem at the other end of Gold Lane on the corner with Main Road.

Cllr Gambold re-iterated that the road markings in this area will all be repainted during

the summer months. Cllr Chase requested a site visit with Cllr Gambold and Andy Prigmore to consider what if anything could be done regarding motorists cutting the corner of Gold Lane.

JG/PC

(iii) Local Schools – should the council approach the schools regarding road safety? Members felt that they should not contact the school. During the morning and afternoon drop off and collection the sheer volume of cars arriving and leaving and parked near the schools meant that motorists had no choice but to slow down. There was concern regarding safe parking however this was something the school should communicate with its parents and not a matter for the parish council. The current road signage near to the schools was rather old and scruffy and there was probably insufficient signage to warn passing motorists. Cllr Chase suggested that during the site visit with the Borough Highways department they incorporate a walk past the schools to review the signage and whether any improvements could be made.

Cllr Gambold also reported that as part of discussions that took place regarding speeding in the parish one proposal was to alter the traffic priority on Biddenham Turn and Main Road to give priority to traffic exiting Darlow Drive. The idea is that this would interrupt traffic flow and ultimately slow motorists down. Members were not supportive of this proposal and again this would be discussed during the site visit. It was noted that costings, drawings and ultimately consultation with local residents would be required before any alterations are made to the roads.

Clerk’s report

At the May meeting it was reported that a tree had fallen on land fronting no 63 Main Road. As no one knew who owned the land and this is within the conservation area the Clerk had contacted the Borough for assistance in this matter. The Borough gave approval for the tree to be removed but advised it would be the responsibility of the parish council to pay for this. The Clerk has instructed our contractor to carry out the works as soon as possible. The Clerk had obtained a Land Registry title and map for this part of the parish. Unfortunately a small semi circle of land does not appear to have been registered to anyone (which was the land where the tree was) and although a resident had suggested the land had been gifted to the parish council many years ago there was no evidence of this in the parish records. Members agreed that the parish council would continue to cut the grass in this part of the parish and undertake any works to the trees as and when necessary.

The report was noted. Members asked the Clerk to instruct an alternative electrician to remove the broken flood lights at the front of the Pavilion.

12 Financial Matters

- (i) Accounts for approval – **it was resolved to approve the accounts for payment** as below:

Clerk

Ch	Payee	£	Description
BACS	Bedford Cleaners Ltd	450.00	Deep clean of Pavilion kitchen, window cleaning and high level interior cleaning of building
BACS	Solutions 4 Playgrounds	15780.00	New toddler play area installation
BACS	Solutions 4 Playgrounds	132.00	Play area annual inspection
BACS	Greg Lawrence	80.00	Tree works prior to new toddler play area installation

BACS	Kohler Mira Limited	336.58	Supply/install new service pack for thermostat unit to away changing room showers
BACS	A Southern	30.52	Car parking, expenses, cleaning materials for Pavilion and mileage (March-May)
TOTAL		17,808.90	

The monthly spend against budget was noted. It was noted that an additional column would be added which would be a projected year end spend.

13 Matters in Progress

Observer Close plaque – a resident from Observers Close has offered to obtain the original plaque and locate this on their property. Members felt that the plaque should be displayed near to the Day's Lane road sign and remain the property of the parish council. The clerk was waiting for permission from Highways to erect the plaque on their land.

Clerk

SSSI – notice board – **it was resolved** to chase the Bedfordshire Geology Group and the Bedfordshire Wildlife Trust.

Clerk

Flooding outside St James's School – Cllr Chase offered to write to the Borough regarding this.

Chairman

14 Parish Concerns

Members enquired if there was any news regarding the overgrown hedges outside nos 92-98 Bromham Road.

RR/JG

The clerk would send a copy of the letter originally sent to the Borough to Cllrs Rigby and Gambold who offered to chase.

Clerk

Hedgerow along Bromham Road on Harpur Trust land - this was removed several months ago and is a complete eyesore. Is there any news when the development will be starting?

RR/JG

15 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 8th July 2015 at 7:30pm in the upstairs meeting room of the Pavilion

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 Approved by Chairman 8th July 2015