

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at the Pavilion, Deep Spinney, Biddenham**

**Present:** Peter Chase, Graham Bates, Chris Gee, Krzys Osuch, Terry Platt, Francia Slade, Joe Warren, Borough Cllr and the Clerk were in attendance. In addition there were members of the public.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Gambold, Jacobs & Cllr Slade – **it was resolved** to accept the apologies.

**2. Declarations of interest**

Cllr Warren declared a local interest relating to item 11 - request for funding from St James Church

**3. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

**It was resolved** to approve the minutes

Clerk

**4. Matters Arising from Minutes**

Please can we thank Mr McGuire for performing the Remembrance service.

Details regarding the new website were included in The Loop including how to register for news notifications, at the moment only 16 people have signed up for this service. Cllr Gee is still chasing the old website provider for transfer of the old domain name and will liaise with Cllr Warren and the Clerk. The clerk will be uploading the agendas, minutes and financial reports in the future.

There were no other matters not covered elsewhere within the agenda.

**5. Public Open Session (15 mins)**

Weed killing – update from November meeting by Mrs Norris

I contacted Bedford Borough Council regarding the use of weed killer in Biddenham. The Borough have informed me that it is a legal requirement that every local authority must apply herbicide particularly along the edge of pavements and kerbs (highways stipulation). I have complained that the way it had been applied was less than satisfactory with the worst affected grass verges outside the village barns. I intend to speak with Brian Hayward to ensure any future use of herbicide is applied in a competent way and will keep you informed.

It was noted that the Christmas tree had not yet been taken down. The clerk confirmed it would be removed on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January. There had been a few reports that the Christmas tree was not lit however the Clerk was unsure if this was simply because the timer was set to go off at 10pm. The electrician had attended on Christmas Eve and could find no fault with the timer or the supply. Members asked if the timings could be altered for next year so the Christmas tree is lit between 3:30pm and midnight.

Clerk

It was reported that a large branch was hanging down on the Oak tree on Main Road near Kings Corner (on left hand side going towards Biddenham Turn). This should be reported to Bedford Borough Council.

Clerk

*Cllr Rigby joined the meeting*

**6. To formally adopt the power of general competence**

Biddenham Parish Council meets the eligibility criteria to adopt the power of general competence. It has 2/3 elected councillors and a qualified Clerk (CilCA) who has undertaken training in the power of general competence.

**It was resolved** to adopt the power of general competence with immediate effect and this would remain in place the next local elections May 2019.

**7. Deep Spinney roundabout – to receive a report**

The minutes of the last sub-committee meeting had already been circulated to all members of

the parish council. The committee were waiting on quotes from other providers as to date there were no satisfactory quotes to compare with Boden & Ward. It was confirmed the project brief was the same for all companies. The parish council had received 2 replies from residents to say there should be more consultation and also regarding the overall expense of the project. The committee had attended the Biddenham Show and included an article in the Loop. Members suggested that perhaps we could put something on the parish website and on the notice boards. In addition, perhaps a notice could be left at the Three Tuns and also the Church. If anyone has any other suggestions how the group should consult with residents, please contact either the Clerk or Peter prior to the next meeting. There would be an agenda item for the February meeting.

Cllr Platt

There followed a brief discussion as to whether the parish council should not perhaps be consulting more widely with its residents perhaps by undertaking a neighbourhood development plan (NDP)? Bromham Parish Council are undertaking an NDP primarily because there are still areas in Bromham where large developments have been proposed for development for example Barkers Drive. **It was resolved** that the clerk would circulate information regarding neighbourhood development plans to all members.

Clerk

The greatest risk to Biddenham is for development to the west of Gold Lane. However, 4 large developments in the rural parishes have been put forward and are being considered by the Borough. These would meet all the housing required by the Borough for the period 2022-2035.

*Cllr Gambold joined the meeting*

**8. To consider a name for the new Sports Pavilion on land north of the Bromham Road**

Will this whole area of St James's be within Biddenham or a separate parish? Biddenham currently has 860 households and the westerly development off Gold Lane (approx. 500 houses) will fall within the parish of Biddenham. The easterly section is in Queens Park. The middle section (the old golf course) is owned by Mr Wingfield and it is not known when this will be developed. However, this middle section would fall within the parish of Biddenham. The whole development will take many years and it also takes time before the developers formally hand over the land to the local authority.

The parish council had been asked for suggestions for the name of the new sports facility off the Great Ouse Way. The sports facility will also provide parking for the country park and members felt this should be incorporated within the title. **It was resolved** to put forward the name Biddenham Country Park Sports Centre.

Clerk

**9. Planning – to note the report and comment on any new applications**

11 Biddenham Turn – large oak with a TPO. There was concern that the developer could ignore the TPO and fell the tree to provide clear site access. The Borough are aware and the planning committee have deferred making a decision pending a site visit.

The report was noted and there were no other comments on the remaining applications.

**10. To note the Clerk's report and consider any matters arising**

The report was noted. The Biddenham Show committee have approached the parish council to see whether they could insure the event under the parish council insurance. The clerk had asked for copies of their current insurance schedule and risk assessments and would report back at the next meeting.

Clerk

There were no other matters not covered elsewhere within the agenda.

**11. Financial Matters**

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

BACS	Payee	£	Description
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BACS	Viking Direct	100.54	Cleaning materials, vacuum cleaner replacement hose
BACS	Bedford Window Cleaning	200.00	Pavilion cleaning x 2 visits
BACS	SLCC	118.50	ILCA online training course for Cllr Warren
BACS	EoN	5.57	Christmas tree electricity supply
BACS	Chicheley Farms Ltd	135.00	Christmas Tree (S137)
BACS	Beds SLCC	58.00	Branch training day for Clerk (Finance)
BACS	PJB Heating	198.00	Boiler Servicing and gas safety inspection
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>815.91</b>	

Clerk

**It was resolved** to approve the accounts for payment and an additional payment of up to £200 to St James’s Church (S137 grant) towards the cost of the pew cushions.

Clerk

(ii) **To consider and agree the budget for 2017-18**

A draft budget had been circulated for the Pavilion and Parish Council. **It was resolved** to approve the draft budget of £20,370 for the Pavilion. Members then considered the budget for the parish council. The costs for the roundabout feature had been removed from the budget as funding would come out of undesignated reserves, ward funds and CiL Funds and an agreed design and costs had not yet been finalised. The largest increase was for the grass cutting as the Borough are insisting that the parish undertake all the grass cutting within the 30mph limit and this will now include Bromham Road including a large section near Bromham Bridge and Windmill Hill. The Borough had not confirmed this earlier and therefore it had not been possible to obtain a quote from Chris Horne for this additional work so an estimate had been included. Once a site visit has been carried out and a quote obtained this will be added to the draft grass cutting budget for 2017-18. In addition, the cost of fertiliser is unpredictable so the quote is based on last year’s costs but there may be an increase in the price at the time of purchase in the Spring and Autumn. Cllr Warren asked whether there should be a budget line for youth activities i.e. football or rugby however members felt that it was not for the parish council to initiate these activities. Any groups who wished to apply for funding could do so anytime within in the financial year and therefore there was no need for an additional budget item. **It was resolved** to agree the budget of £41,907 for the parish council for 2017-18.

Clerk

(iii) **To consider and agree the precept for 2017-18**

**It was resolved** to set the precept at £40,000, any shortfall to meet the budget would be taken from undesignated reserves.

Clerk

(iv) **To consider and agree hiring fees for Biddenham Cricket Club commencing May 2017**

Proposals and costs had been circulated and it was proposed to set a fixed annual sum with an inflationary increase (RPI) added every year of the agreement. The parish council had proposed fee of £1500 and the cricket club had proposed £1100. **It was resolved** to set the annual fee for the cricket club at £1100 + inflationary increase (RPI) throughout the 7-year agreement.

Clerk  
Cricket club

**12. Matters in Progress**

Flooding on footpath near St James School– no progress.  
Traffic survey – no results yet Cllr Gambold will speak with Highways

Cllr

Road markings – completed remove from MIP  
 Pedestrian entrances –completed remove from MIP  
 Coffin path – no other matters at the moment  
 Footpath 13 – Chris Jones is researching the status of the path as this information could provide legal weight when negotiating for re-instatement of the coffin path. The path is included within the proposed extension to the conservation area which is good news.  
 War memorial – paving slabs – clerk to meet with Gary Creek  
 Road outside Lavender lodge –Cllr Gambold will speak with highways to see what progress has been made  
 Biddenham turn – road markings/signs/timings. There is still a problem with motorists in the left-hand lane going straight on instead of turning left only into Biddenham Turn. Cllr Gambold will speak with Highways.

Gambold

C Jones

Clerk

Cllr  
Gambold

13. **Parish Concerns**

Website –should we include more information regarding the new development on land north of Bromham Road? **It was resolved** to put a link to the Borough planning department and include a map of the new development

Cllr  
Warren

Residents living north of Bromham Road have complained there are insufficient crossing places. Members considered the current provision was sufficient and that there would be further changes to the Bromham Road as and when the new roundabout is installed near the old golf course.

Potholes in Gold Lane and also on the section of Bromham Road from Day’s Lane to the Gold Lane roundabout – Cllr Gambold offered to raise with Highways

Cllr  
Gambold

The traffic light phasing on Biddenham Turn heading from Bedford towards Bromham is delayed whilst waiting for other sets to change. This is frustrating because currently no one is turning out of the new development. It was confirmed that this needs to be in place for when the new development starts to become occupied and also for contractors vehicles currently entering and exiting the site.

It still remains extremely difficult to turn right towards Bromham Bridge due to the sheer volume of traffic. The Borough are aware but can’t do anything other than close off the right-hand turn. The quickest and safest option would be to drive up to the Frank Branston roundabout then turn around heading back towards Bedford and then take a left turn into Bromham Road.

14. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February

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 Approved by Chairman 8 February 2017