



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Biddenham Parish Council met on Wednesday 7th September 2016 in the upstairs room of the Pavilion. Present were Parish Councillors Peter Chase (chairman), Jon Gambold (also a Borough Councillor), Chris Gee, Alan Jacobs, Krzys Osuch, Terry Platt, Francia Slade and Joe Warren. Councillor Graham Bates and Borough Councillor Roger Rigby sent their apologies. Stand-in clerk Sue Bottoms attended in lieu of Alison Southern, along with five members of the public.

COWSLIP MEADOW

Chris Jones came along and explained how he and some others were concerned for the upkeep of the meadow between the church and the Frank Branston Way, named Cowslip Meadow. This was kindly gifted to the people (i.e. the Borough Council) by the Wingfield estate some time ago, but in the last couple of years it's become a bit unruly. Removal of rampant ragwort has helped, and Chris put forward a proposal to buy a mower – which the council said it was happy to consider if a number of quotes were obtained.

WEB SITE

Councillor Warren has been busy with our new website supplier on the creation of a new web presence for both the Parish council and any village groups who might also wish to use it. We agreed to purchase "Biddenham.gov.uk" for £100 per annum, in addition to our current website address and "Biddenham.org.uk". Further work needs to be done, but the new site is expected to be live by the end of November, if not sooner. There will be a meeting of the council's website editorial sub-committee on 19th September to discuss content and contributors.

ROUNABOUT

After much work to consider alternatives, two designs have been selected as the final choice for what to put on the enlarged Deep Spinney roundabout. These are intended to "put Biddenham on the map" for those driving into or around Bedford, and also to commemorate the ancient Dovecote which used to stand by the village pond until it was criminally demolished in 1966. We'd like to re-christen the roundabout itself the "Dovecote Roundabout".

The first design would be four green-grey slate plaques, one for each road which adjoins the roundabout. Incorporating a dovecote emblem, two of these might say "Biddenham" and the other two "Dovecote". The other proposal is to have two square-section York stone pillars three metres tall placed diametrically opposite each other. The two visible faces would vertically spell out "Biddenham Dovecote", and a likeness of the dovecote would be carved into the top of each pillar. The first proposal is expected to cost around £6,000, the second £12,000. Given our reserves, this expense would not require any additional council tax.

The designs were endorsed by the council and the costs were considered reasonable enough for consideration in due course. A consultation exercise was agreed to be done at the Biddenham Show, where people were to be asked for their views on both the aesthetics and cost of the two proposals. *(This was indeed carried out, and the results indicated more people preferred the stone pillars. Thanks to anyone who took part. Any further comments are welcome, and should be sent to the clerk.)*

STREET LIGHTING

A resident of Deep Spinney had written to the clerk asking whether the street lights in their area could be dimmed or turned off in the middle of the night. This was primarily in the interests of saving electricity, and therefore cost and ecological impact. Enquiries at Borough Hall into this by Councillor Gambold revealed that there is a programme of



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

street light upgrades happening across the Borough, and that Biddenham is due to receive remote-controllable LED street lights next year. Nearer the time we will all be consulted about how these are to be programmed; we will seek and reflect the views of the village at that time.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 12th October. Do please come along if you have anything you'd like to raise.

Peter Chase