

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10 February 2016 at the Pavilion, Deep Spinney, Biddenham**

**Present:** Peter Chase, Graham Bates, Chris Gee, Alan Jacobs, Jon Gambold, Krzys Osuch, Terry Platt, Francia Slade, Borough Cllr Roger Rigby and the Clerk were in attendance. In addition there was 1 member of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

None

2. **Declarations of interest**

None

3. **To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 13 January 2016**

**It was resolved** to approve the minutes.

Clerk

4. **Matters Arising from Minutes**

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

5. **Public Open Session**

There were no questions.

6. **Planning**

**It was resolved** that Cllr Gee joins the planning subcommittee with Peter Chase and Graham Bates.

(i) The report was noted. There were no comments on the new applications.

It was reported that the residents of Windmill Hill had been successful in getting further changes to the layout for the new housing development to the rear of their properties (land North of Bromham Road.)

It was reported that the new traffic lights scheme at the junction with Biddenham Turn and Bromham Road has been postponed until the road works on Tavistock Street are completed and the new bypass is open.

7. **To consider proposals for an entrance feature on the Deep Spinney roundabout**

Cllrs Platt and Chase had met to consider suitable options and Cllr Platt had produced some designs for consideration. It was proposed to incorporate four similar low stone or brick structures, one facing each road which adjoins the roundabout. These would each depict a stylized emblem, with a word beneath, as follows:

- Opposite the road from Bromham: a dove, and the word Biddenham
- Opposite the new bypass: a traditional dovecote symbol, and the word Biddenham
- Opposite Bromham Road, i.e. from Bedford: the church tower, and the word Biddenham
- Opposite the road from Deep Spinney: the Biddenham dovecote, and the words 'Lost: 1966'

The designs would need to be simplified or else they could be distracting for motorists. **It was resolved** for Cllrs Platt, Chase and Gee to form a sub-committee to progress this idea. The group would approach a number of companies for ideas how these designs could be delivered and an estimate of costs involved. The Parish Council would need approval from the Borough Council's highways department.

TP  
CG  
PC

**8. Clerk’s Report**

The Parish Council have a vacancy and currently the legal notices are displayed throughout the parish. Assuming a local election is not called then the parish council will be free to co-opt after the 25<sup>th</sup> February.

Cllr Gambold asked if the Clerk could contact the Borough to ask when a community governance review for Biddenham would take place in light of the new housing developments off Bromham Road which will lead to an increase in the number of residents in Biddenham.

Clerk

The Sundial and war memorial would be cleaned and sprayed with fungicide early Spring. There was concern that the conifers directly behind the War Memorial have become very overgrown and are now encroaching onto the grass. This not only causes a problem for the grass cutting contractor but also is most likely the cause of the green fungal growth which continues to be a problem on the War Memorial. In addition the tree roots are causing the paving slabs to lift. **It was resolved** to write to Bidwells who manage this land on behalf of Mr Wingfield to request they contact the owners of the property and arrange for the trees to be cut back.

Clerk

Annual Parish Meeting – it was resolved to invite the Head Teacher of St James’ Lower School to attend to give an overview of the schools expansion plans to become a Primary school.

Clerk

Pavilion management

Clerk

1 quote had been obtained for the replacement lighting – the Clerk would chase for the other one for consideration at the March meeting. In the meantime it was resolved to transfer £1500 into earmarked reserves for the Pavilion for this work. The large hall and entrance lobby would be re-painted w/c 7<sup>th</sup> March. **It was resolved** to approve the additional cost of £840 for decorating the changing rooms and toilets.

**9. Financial Matters**

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

Ch No BACS	Payee	£	Description
BACS	Chris Horne Gardens Ltd	31.20	Grass cutting
BACS	Tom Locke	120.00	Cleaning out gutters and minor repairs (Pavilion)
BACS	SLCC	147.00	Clerk’s Membership fee
BACS	A Southern	91.11	Cleaning materials, pavilion keys, mileage for visits (Nov-Jan)
BACS	G Lawrence	1200.00	Cost for tree works for 2015-16 at the Pavilion including the children’s play area and car park (3 visits)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1589.31</b>	

Clerk

**(ii) To approve the revised Asset Register**

**It was resolved** to approve the revised asset register to include the stone base for the village sign and the new toddler play equipment.

Clerk

**(iii) Smaller authorities audit arrangements** (Biddenham Parish Council falls into Group 1 which are opted in authorities with income or expenditure exceeding £25K) **it was resolved** that from 2017 the parish council would use the external auditors approved by the SAAA.

Clerk

**(iv) Grass cutting arrangements** – the Parish Council had written to Stewart Briggs to formally request permission to take over the grass cutting arrangements for Deep Spinney (not Bromham Road or Windmill Hill) effective from 1/4/16. In addition the Clerk has requested a contribution from the Borough towards the cost of the grass cutting (similar to that given to neighbouring parishes including Bromham, Milton Ernest, Ravensden and Bletsoe.) Cllrs Gambold and Rigby offered to speak with Stewart Briggs on behalf of the parish council they would seek to obtain an explicit reply to the clerk’s letter.

R Rigby  
J Gambold

**10 Matters in Progress**

The report was noted.

Flooding near St James’s School – the problem is due to both sides of the footpath being grassed over with no drainage. The Borough is investigating what options/solutions are feasible. Cllr Gambold will keep the council informed of any progress in this matter.

JG

Speed Humps Deep Spinney – these have now been re-painted and white lining refreshed at the junction with Deep Spinney and the Only You Beauty Salon. Thanks to Cllr Gambold and Rigby for getting this work completed.

Observer Close Plaque – Cllr Bates needs a photo of the original plaque to proceed but the recent weather has prevented him from getting one.

GB

Traffic Calming – Gold Lane – Whilst this was still a concern **it was resolved** to wait until the new bypass opens and monitor how this affects traffic levels through the parish. It was noted that should the parish council request a traffic island calming scheme the cost of £6-8K would need to be paid for by the parish council.

Biddenham Turn – school signs and road markings. Cllr Gambold and Rigby to chase Highways for replacement “School” signs and also “Slow” road markings to warn motorists.

R Rigby  
J Gambold

Left hand lane road marking on new roundabout – this work had now been completed, the left hand lane is for left and straight on and the right hand lane will be a right turn only onto the new bypass.

Pedestrian entrances to Deep Spinney from Bromham Road – The remaining work to level and grass over the site will be carried out in the next financial year paid for by Ward Funds.

Clerk

SSSI interpretation board – when can we expect this to be installed? The Clerk reported that the design had been finalised and commissioned. She had contacted the Wildlife Trust several times for further information but had no response. She will contact the Bedfordshire Geology Group to see if they had any information relating to this.

**11 Parish Concerns**

Is there any news regarding the extension of the conservation area and would the parish council be consulted? Cllr Bates reported that Cllrs Gambold, Slade and himself had met with members of the Biddenham Society and the Borough Council. A report will be circulated and the parish council will be consulted – date unknown.

Verges on Main Road – is the Borough aware of the damage? Yes, Borough is aware and has contacted the owners to ensure they rectify any damage once the building work is complete.

Concern regarding increase in number of reported crimes in Biddenham. Members noted the majority were thefts from cars.

Darlow Drive – what is the maximum height permitted for boundary fences from the highways to a resident’s property. Cllr Bates responded that it was 2m (6ft). The clerk would circulate contact details for the planning enforcement officer who covers Biddenham.

Clerk

**12 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 9 March 2016 at 7:30pm in the upstairs meeting room of the Pavilion.**

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 Approved by Chairman 9 March 2016