

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th November 2016 at the Pavilion, Deep Spinney, Biddenham

Present: Peter Chase, Graham Bates, Chris Gee, Jon Gambold, Krzys Osuch, Terry Platt, Francia Slade, Joe Warren, Borough Cllr Rigby and the Clerk were in attendance. In addition there were 3 members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Jacobs – **it was resolved** to accept the apologies.

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Warren declared a local interest regarding item 14 - request for funding for St James Church

3. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 12th October 2016

It was resolved to approve the minutes

Clerk

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

Remembrance Sunday service – David Maguire the minister from Great Denham had offered to take the service should the minister from St James’s not be available.

It was noted that the road markings on Bromham Road approaching Biddenham Turn and similarly phasing of the traffic lights had not yet been altered. Cllr Gambold reported that Borough Highways are aware the junction is not running smoothly but experience has shown that motorists need time to get used to new signals and road markings and highways will continue to monitor the situation.

5. Public Open Session (15 mins)

The pavement from Main Road towards Gold Lane near Thorpe House has quite a few cracks along it – can this be reported to Highways? Cllr Gambold offered to undertake a site visit and then report to Highways.

JG

Which areas of the parish is your grass cutting contractor responsible for? *All of the parish with the exception of Bromham Road and Windmill Hill.*

It was reported that weed killer has been applied throughout the parish without due care and attention. The area near the War Memorial and on the corner approaching Church End is particularly bad and it appears that the weed killer has spilt onto the surrounding ground killing healthy grass. The clerk advised that Chris Horne does not use weed killer and it would be the Borough Council’s contractors who have mistakenly undertaken this work. Last year the same problem occurred and the Borough were instructed not to undertake this work. **It was resolved** to write to the Borough Council and remind them not to undertake weed killing in the areas the parish has responsibility for grass cutting. A copy of the letter would be sent to the Borough Cllrs who offered to speak with Stewart Briggs.

Clerk
Borough
Cllrs

6. Parish Website

Cllr Warren gave a brief report on the new website and the key points were:

The new domain name -.gov.uk – we are currently unable to obtain this but remain in discussion with the domain company. Similarly, there has been no correspondence regarding transferring the legacy website and we will press 1&1 to escalate this on our behalf.

The website launch has proved successful with 503 hits on the new site so far.

Lots of local groups have indicated they want to include their information on the new website.

The village calendar website will be removed from general circulation and the Biddenham village website will now be used to record all village activities.

Would members be in favour of opening a Twitter account - other parishes such as Great Denham have a twitter account. Members were not in favour and **it was resolved** not to

pursue this option.

Neighbourhood watch – currently the group membership is quite low but the information we have been given has gone onto the website. A poster had been produced by the Neighbourhood Watch Group which will be sent to the editor at the Loop.

St James’s PCC meet on the 15th and will consider whether the Loop could be included on the new website.

If any members want material on the website please let Cllr Warren know.

The next meeting of the sub-committee will take place on the 22 November.

7. Deep Spinney roundabout – to receive a report

Cllr Chase had recently attended the Biddenham Society AGM and gave a short presentation regarding the proposals for the roundabout, this was generally well received. The favoured design of two tall pillars has been out with our preferred stonemason for costing. However, it is proving difficult to source two lengths of stone long enough (approx. 3m long) and we are now considering whether to make the main part of the pillar out of two or even three pieces of stone. We have asked for designs - if perhaps it was 3 pieces it might look more like a design decision and perhaps more attractive. Members hoped that costings and designs would be available for consideration at the January meeting.

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

It was confirmed that 1 application had been refused - 92 Bromham Road.

59a Day’s Lane - members had asked if the Borough’s tree officer would undertake a site visit regarding the application for tree works to the cherry trees. This was because access to the site is not possible and therefore members could not undertake a site visit and make an informed decision on the application.

20 Darlow Drive – it was reported that the neighbours are now satisfied with the revised plans and this should now be decided under delegated powers.

11 Biddenham Turn – it was reported that new drawings for a scaled back application have been submitted. There should be a new planning application number and the parish council will be consulted on the revised plans.

There were no other comments on the remaining applications.

9. Financial Matters

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

BACS	Payee	£	Description
BACS	RBL Poppy Appeal	50.00	Civic Wreath
BACS	A Southern	11.99	Cleaning materials
BACS	J Pooley	37.00	Pavilion hiring fees refund
BACS	TSO Host	2.99	Website fees
BACS	Opus Gas	36.61	Gas supply for Pavilion
BACS	Legal & General	140.88	Ill health pension liability insurance
BACS	T Horton	55.00	Descale of showers
BACS	Lubbe & Sons Ltd	3360.00	Bulbs and planting
BACS	A Southern	27.35	Replacement padlock and car park key
BACS	F Slade	30.00	Payment for bugler at service

Clerk

(ii) **To note the spend against budget**

It was resolved to accept the report.

(iii) To confirm closure of Barclays Bank Account

It was resolved to close this account and move the funds to the HSBC Money Manager account - ok

(iv) **To note receipt of CiL Funds and consider how these should be allocated**

Clerk

CiL funding – this is the community infrastructure levy charged by the Borough for new housing. In this financial year Biddenham PC has received £1279 (from the property on Duck End Lane) and £5360 (from the development of the 3 properties near to the Golf Club on Bromham Road.) This gives a total amount of **£6639**. This neighbourhood proportion of the levy can be spent on a wider range of things other than the rest of the levy (which Beds BC receive), provided that it meets the requirement to “support the development of the area” by funding:

- a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure OR
- b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area

If the parish council do not use the money to support the development of the area within 5 years of receipt or uses it for other purposes, then the funds would need to be repaid to the Borough council.

No decision was made regarding allocation of funds since there was no immediate requirement to spend the levy. Prior to allocating any funds the council would first check with the local authority to ensure the spending was permitted given the strict criteria.

(v) **To confirm Pavilion hiring fees for 2017**

Members considered that a small increase in the hire fees should be implemented as utility costs and service charges and repairs will inevitably increase in the next financial year. **It was resolved** to increase hire rates as follows:

Hourly rate for regular hirers by 50p per hour to £13.50.

Hourly rate for one off hirers by £1.00 per hour to £27.00

Children’s party (under 12s) increase by £1.00 to £38 for a 4hr slot

Clerk

As part of the discussion regarding hiring fees members asked what progress had been made regarding the revised cricket club agreement. The PC have opened a dialogue with the cricket club about the renewal of their agreement which expires in May 2017. The club will come back to us after their committee meeting in November. The club have requested a 7-year term as this demonstrates the club has long term plans and allows them to apply for funding. We have agreed that a 7 year would be acceptable. It was noted that despite being in the original agreement historically the parish council have not charged for the junior cricket matches. Members asked if the parish council will be charging the football club? Cllr Warren reported that he had contacted the football club to enquire if places were available on the team but was told the team was full. Is the club not open to Biddenham residents and do they not hold trials? The clerk reported that the club did hold trials and these were advertised locally. The cricket club also confirmed they had passed on details to their junior members who might wish to join the team. However, there are a limited number of spaces available because the team that play at Biddenham is only for 1 year group. All remaining year groups play at Wootton who hold their own football trials.

It was resolved there would be no charge for the junior football team as there is currently no charge for junior cricket at the Pavilion.

What about St James’s school use of field – would we be charging? The parish council need more information from the school about their proposal before any decision can be taken.

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| <p>10. To consider a request for a financial contribution towards the cost of the firework display at Bedford Golf Club in the parish of Great Denham
 Great Denham Parish Council had approached Biddenham Parish Council to ask for a financial contribution towards the firework display held at Bedford Golf Club. Members considered how many residents from Biddenham would have attended and whether they should support this event which is a commercial event. It was not possible to identify how many residents attended the event although it was advertised in The Loop. It was resolved not to contribute towards the event.</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |
| <p>11. <u>To note the Clerk’s report including management of the Pavilion</u>

 The Biddenham Gardening Society had written to the parish council regarding the Borough’s decision to half the green bin collecting during the winter months due to budget cuts. Members understood that the Borough had undertaken a borough wide consultation and this proposal had been approved by the Borough Executive committee in order to make savings of approx. £500K. Whilst it was inconvenient to some parishioners they could order additional green bins from the Borough or take their waste to the tidy tip and the Borough would not alter their decision.</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |
| <p>12. To approve the calendar of meetings for 2017
 The calendar of meetings was approved.</p> | |
| <p>13. Matters in Progress
 Flooding on footpath near St James’s School - no further update
 Traffic survey is currently underway on Bromham Road. Six months after the bypass opened the Borough would collect data and then after 1 year another data survey would be undertaken and the results compared. The parish council have also requested a speed survey on Bromham Road and Cllrs Rigby and Gambold will be asking for details of the Borough’s survey to combine with our own findings.

 Biddenham Turn road markings – it was reported that the work had now been completed. Cllrs Rigby and Gambold would confirm with the Borough that the road markings include the school safety warning triangles near to the two schools.

 Coffin path –the conservation area extension has been approved which includes the field and incorporates the coffin path. This is very good news and as a result of the lobbying and presentations from the Biddenham Society, Borough Councillor Roger Rigby, the portfolio holder at Bedford Borough, Councillor Colleen Atkins, the parish council and local residents.</p> | |
| <p>14. Parish Concerns
 Drains in village along main road are blocked with leaves particularly near the bus stop – Highways usually clear these as part of their yearly programme of maintenance but the Clerk would contact them to ensure the work was included on the schedule.

 The road near to Lavender Lodge has sunk down following electricity works. Cllr Gambold reported that Highways are aware and have requested this is repaired. This item will be added to matters in progress.

 New bypass – now that the new bypass has opened there is so much traffic congestion on the bypass turning right onto Bromham Road towards Bromham bridge. There was concern that an accident could occur due to sheer number of stationery cars unable to move out of the way of motorists heading out of Bedford. It was resolved to wait for the Borough’s traffic survey to be completed and this matter will then be raised at Beds BC by our Borough Cllrs.</p> | <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Borough Cllrs</p> |

The Biddenham Society has voted to install a blue plaque near to the coffin path and had asked for a financial contribution from the parish council. This would not be an official blue plaque but something of similar quality and installed to demonstrate the local historical significance of the coffin path. Members were not in favour of this proposal which could damage the relationship between the landowner and the Borough and Parish Council particularly following the Borough's decision to extend the conservation area. **It was resolved** not to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the plaque.

Clerk

Local Interests were declared by Cllrs Slade, Bates and Warren

The clerk had received a request from St James Church for a financial contribution towards the cost of replacement pew cushions. Cllr Warren reported that the Church raises a lot of its funds via the various groups such as the congregation and fund raising activities. Perhaps the PC should wait until these have been exhausted before making a contribution. Members asked if the Clerk could contact St James to ask how much they required and to include as an agenda item for January.

Clerk

- 14 **Date of next meeting: Wednesday 11 January 2017**

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Approved by Chairman 11 January 2017