



## *BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL*

Biddenham Parish Council met on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017 in the upstairs room of the Pavilion. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Peter Chase (Chairman), Jon Gambold (also a Borough Councillor), Chris Gee, Krzys Osuch, Francia Slade and Terry Platt. Clerk Alison Southern, Borough Councillor Roger Rigby and several members of the public were also present. Councillor Joe Warren sent his apologies.

### OUR BEAUTIFUL VILLAGE

There is not a great deal to report this month, so I'd like to take this opportunity to say a general thank you to those that turn up at Parish Council meetings in the interests of the care and upkeep of our beautiful village. Without the eyes and ears of residents who so obviously care about our environment, we wouldn't always spot issues that need our attention. Or, come to that, if we are already aware of certain things, we don't perhaps always appreciate how much people care about them, and want something done.

This month's meeting was no exception, and we had helpful input and concerns from members of the public about various specific matters to do with one or two property developments, and the general appearance of the village. As Spring has sprung, the grass is growing, and so is everything else! We are working to tidy up the verge near/behind the war memorial, re-surface the footpath and deal with drainage issues.

Such things may seem a little banal to some but, when you look at the village scene in the recent lovely sunshine we've had, you appreciate that – so close to Bedford – we have a jewel of a village at our heart. As seems the case in life generally, if you keep on top of things doing small things little and often, then the wider situation is kept under control. As your Parish Council that's our job. But we couldn't do it without your help and support, and your polite persistence. I don't mean to focus on the centre of the village either. Wherever you may live, please email our clerk, Alison Southern, or come along to a Parish Council meeting if there's anything at all that you'd like to raise.

### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Our meeting in May is the annual, larger gathering where we hear reports from organisations, clubs and societies from around the village. This is an opportunity to raise concerns of a wider nature, which may impact activities across the community. I am particularly pleased that the chairman of the governors of St James school, Tom Perry, will be coming along to update us about their move from Lower school to Primary school status – i.e. taking in two extra years of children. I also believe there will be reports from the Biddenham Society, Cricket Club, Village Pond and others.

If you're not a regular attendee of our meetings, then if there is any one meeting you should attend in the year this is it. Please come along. We hope to see you there.

Peter Chase  
Chairman, Biddenham Parish Council

### OUR NEW WEB SITE (AND OUR OLD ONE)

A member of the public asked why the old web site was still accessible, even though once viewing it there is a link to take you to the new one. The fact is we have been trying for months to get the management company behind the



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old site to give us control of it, so we can automatically send people to the new one – and the good news is that this is now close to happening.

The same person commented that the new site perhaps does not state prominently enough that this is the website for Biddenham Parish Council. Rather, it appears to be a site for the village as a whole. Our feeling is actually that this is no bad thing; however, we will look again at whether the Council's part of it needs to be made more obvious.

### ROUNDAABOUT FEATURE

After seeking views on the proposed Deep Spinney roundabout feature, via all village noticeboards and the web site, we received negative comments from just three villagers. As chairman, I asked each Councillor personally for their views, and the majority were in favour of the proposal. Coupled with largely positive views of people at the Biddenham Show and the endorsement of the Biddenham Society, we resolved to proceed with the project.

There were concerns about the cost, however. After some discussion, we decided that we would take forward two alternative proposals to the Borough's highways department: the original idea for two pillars placed diametrically opposite each other, or else one, taller centrally sited one. The latter would be cheaper, but would require replacement of the trees that have been planted on the roundabout with bushes. This would also arguably be less of a hazard for drunken or incompetent drivers, who like to drive over the roundabout rather than around it.

### BROMHAM ROAD SPEED SURVEY

A little before Christmas, we commissioned a survey of the speed of traffic on the Bromham Road. Sensors were placed near the pedestrian crossing, and the results make interesting reading. Although the imposition of a 30mph limit along the entire length of the road has resulted in a reduced average speed for all traffic, only a small minority (about a quarter) keep below the limit. Of most concern is that, at all hours of the day and night, odd cars are travelling excessively fast. Speeds above 50mph are common, and even some over 60mph. It was resolved that we would start a dialogue with the Borough highways department to discuss what to do. This may be nothing, or warning signs, or speed cameras. We will consider our options carefully.

### DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Do please come along if you have anything you'd like to raise.

Peter Chase