



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

This month's **Parish Council Meeting** was held on Wednesday 11th October 2017 in the upstairs room of the Pavilion. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Peter Chase (Chairman), Jon Gambold, Alan Jacobs, Krzys Osuch, Francia Slade and Terry Platt. Clerk Alison Southern, Borough Councillor Roger Rigby and two members of the public were also present. Councillors Chris Gee and Joe Warren sent their apologies.

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

The recent, unannounced works by BT on the village green were raised. We were very unhappy about the way traffic was directed over the grass by BT's contractor, and how their own heavy vehicles damaged the ground and grass. We undertook to write to BT to express our dismay at their workers' insensitive behaviour. We are also going to ask Chris Horne, who is contracted to maintain our verges throughout the village, to make repairs (the bill for which will be sent to BT).

MAIN ROAD FOOTPATH

We discussed the footpath between St James' School and Gold Lane, which is showing signs of deterioration and damage from recent building works. We have been provided with two quotes, one considerably cheaper than the other – and within that two possible treatments. One of these is about twice the price of the other, but will last longer. Either way, the long term cost of either type is about the same.

We decided our view is that the cheaper option provides a more appropriate look and type of surface for our village. It is a light dressing of fine gravel, rather than a stark (if durable) tarmac.

As St James' School will be being visited by builders from spring until September next year (to build new classrooms) we resolved to put money aside this year and commission the entire length of the path to be resurfaced in one go. This will happen late next year or early in 2019.

ST JAMES' PRIMARY SCHOOL

At our last meeting, we resolved to donate £2,000 to St James' school to provide maths equipment. I wrote in this article about why we'd decided to do so.

The school thanked us for our donation, and I was invited by Tom Perry (chair of their governors) and Maria Soulsby (head-teacher) to visit the school and take a look around. This happened the day after our most recent meeting, so I feel it appropriate to say a few words about it here.

Having had little to do with the school in my time as a resident, it was truly an eye opener. Here, at the heart of our community, is a very busy place! Children of different ages are taught using different techniques, appropriate to their stage in life. Recent good ideas, some from other countries, have (after careful consideration) been introduced both nationally and by local choice. Modern technology is making its way in too, and I saw impressive video screens that have replaced blackboards in some classrooms. Throughout, it was great to see the dedication of the teachers and the attention and application evident in the pupils.

As the school moves from Lower to Primary status, adding two new years for 9 to 11 year-olds, the new classrooms to be built next year will help the school flourish. It is an exciting time, freeing up space for them to do things better. I wish them well.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 8th November 2017. Do please come along if you have anything you'd like to raise.

Please note: All meetings in 2018 will take place on a Monday evening (usually the second of the month), not Wednesdays as now. This is to ensure a higher turnout of councillors, and to avoid clashes with meetings at Borough Hall which our Borough Councillors often need to attend.

Peter Chase
Chairman