

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 7 February at the Pavilion, Deep Spinney, Biddenham

Present: Peter Chase, Graham Bates, Jon Gambold, Krzys Osuch, Terry Platt, Joe Warren, Francia Slade, Borough Cllr Roger Rigby and the Clerk were in attendance. In addition, there were 12 members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Chris Gee & Alan Jacobs

2. Declarations of interest

None

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3rd January 2018

It was resolved to approve the minutes.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

None

5. Public Open Session

Do we have an update regarding the work to cut back the overgrown shrubs on the land near the war memorial in front of Lavender Lodge? *There had not been update from the contractors although we do know the work has been approved by Mr Wingfield.*

Clerk

A while ago Highways asked for the hedge near Hampden Court to be cut back as it was blocking the sight lines in Gold Lane when turning right. Do we have an update on this? *No timeframe was given but the clerk would enquire and report back.*

Clerk

Gold lane white lines still outstanding – Cllr Gambold to speak with Highways.

J Gambold

Have there been any developments regarding the planning application for Biddenham House? *The Borough Council have informed us that it is being recommended for rejection. Has the listed building status for Biddenham House been taken forward? Not so far but the amount of local people who are opposed to the planning application should help strengthen the argument.*

There are cameras at the Deep Spinney/Bromham road roundabout; do we know what these are for? *It is believed these are in preparation for improving the roads in Bedford including the top of Ashburnham Road, the Sainsburys roundabout and the Manton Lane roundabout.*

A brief update regarding the application for land off Gold Lane and the Local Plan then took place.

‘Have your Say’ – this is a quick and easy way to object to the planning application for land off Gold lane. Details will be published in the next circular to residents and is particularly useful for anyone wishing to respond who uses a mobile device, it also provides a pro forma letter which makes it easier to respond. The parish council’s third letter will be a final reminder to ask people to object to the application.

It was reported that objection letters had been handed out at the Friday club which residents signed. Cllr Warren intends to visit other groups. It was proposed that if everyone at the meeting could go out and speak to 10 people that would ensure even more responses. Cllr Warren volunteered to co-ordinate the process. It was reported that there were some issues regarding the validation of objection letters as objections from two adults in the same household i.e. Mr & Mrs were being counted as one objection despite two letters being sent in. Cllr Warren offered to check with the Borough.

J Warren

The planning application did not include the full documentation and the parish council have objected to this process and said the deadline should be extended. It is vital to keep up the pressure on removing policy 19 from the Local Plan to protect the site in the future.

Is the Borough Council planning department influenced by numbers of objections or content? *The Borough do take notice of number of responses and if the application does go to a Planning Inspector they would consider local opinion.*

Cllr Gambold joined the meeting.

6. Planning

The report was noted.

Application for demolition of Biddenham House – the officer has recommended this application for refusal. However, there is not enough evidence of value to give the house listed building status. A decision notice around the 10th February will be published on the Borough website.

Fishing Lake – there has been an objection from the Environment Agency who want more information. The Bedfordshire Wildlife Trust also have requested an impact assessment. Once these documents are available there will be a further 2-week consultation period.

The final consultation date for the land off Gold Lane development has been extended. All documents must be submitted by 9 Feb. If the documents have not been received, then the consultation date moves on again.

Policy AD43 is within the current Local Plan document that runs until 2021. The new Local Plan 2035 include policy 19. The Borough can revise their policies, but the parish council do not believe this should happen and object to this.

Local Plan

It was agreed that the Clerk would compile a response on Biddenham PC using information obtained from the leaflets produced by Jon and circulated to residents. The local conservative group response would also be made available to the Clerk to incorporate any additional points. It was agreed that the parish council should object separately to Policy 19 and Policy 23 via the web response form.

Clerk
J Gambold
R Rigby

7. Clerk's report

A request had been submitted by the cricket club for permission to install a trophy cabinet in the upstairs meeting room. **It was resolved** to grant permission, but the contents would be the cricket clubs responsibility and the parish council were not liable for any loss or damage.

Clerk

No other matters for consideration.

8. Financial Matters

Accounts for approval –

(i) It was resolved to approve the accounts for payment with two further payments as follows:

AMF Services: £388.41 & £329.29 for servicing of the roller and Dennis mower
T Horton £55.00 for descaling the showers

(ii) To note the spend against budget for the PC

The report was noted

(ii) To note the spend against budget for the Pavilion

The report was noted. The chairman asked that the undesignated reserves used to balance the pavilion spend be included next month as per the documentation used for the draft budget for 2018/19.

9. Community Governance Review

Given the new housing development on land north of Bromham Road already has some houses occupied should the parish council be looking at increasing the number of parish councillors. This process is usually dealt with by requesting a community governance review. This had been considered previously by the parish council and the Borough would only consider a review once a new development is 2/3 occupied. **It was resolved** to review the situation again in one year's time when occupancy rates should be closer to 50%.

In the meantime, at the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council the planning committees would need to incorporate the new development. At this early stage in the development there would be very few planning applications. Cllr Rigby offered to clarify whether the position regarding permitted development rights for these new properties.

R Rigby

10. Matters in progress

White Lining on Gold Lane

This is now 7 months overdue. Cllr Gambold to press the Borough for a completion date.

J Gambold

Roundabout feature

It does appear that the safety regulations will require qualified operatives on site for the excavation and this will add another £4,500 to the overall cost. There are also utilities under the roundabout and therefore the preferred location might not be possible. The new revised costs are £18,500. Cllrs Rigby and Gambold would speak with the Borough Highways department to see if they would fund the road safety work. Members then considered alternative locations but the splays west of the roundabout have utilities underneath which is why we could not use the bulb planting machine and planted on the other side of the road. **It was resolved** to keep on the agenda for next month and Cllr Platt would defer Boden & Ward before a final decision is taken.

Coffin Path

It was reported that the RoW department have indicated it may be possible to put shingle down on the path - more information to follow from Chris Jones.

C Jones

Flooding outside Buttercups on Main Road.

Bedford Borough Council have applied for more funding from Anglian Water to improve the Biddenham Drain. Anglian water wish to resolve this in conjunction with the Borough Council Highways department. *Cllr Rigby would keep the parish council updated.*

R Rigby

It was resolved to add the ditch outside no 4 Main Road to matters in progress.

Village Green – no response from BT yet but the Clerk would continue to pursue via an alternative contact.

Clerk

11. Parish Concerns

It was reported that visitors to no 1b and 1c Biddenham Turn were parking on the verge. However, the parish council cannot do anything about this apart from request that the owners remind visitors not to park on the verges.

Oak trees – on right hand side of Biddenham Turn are covered in Ivy and should be reported to Beds BC.

Bus Stop paving slabs – the Wingfield estate have given permission to install the paving slabs and the Clerk would ask Gary Creek to liaise with Cllr Slade regarding the exact location.

It was noted that the new sports centre had a hard-standing area with plastic grass crete for parking. It would be worth reviewing how effective this as this would be a cheaper alternative to concrete grass crete to protect the grass verges.

There would be a public consultation shortly on the proposal for a speed reduction on Bromham Bridge to 20mph.

There is a no parking on the verge scheme on Grange Lane, Bromham, could we introduce this scheme in Biddenham? This would require signage and is part of a bigger scheme for this area of Bromham due to road safety concerns near the Primary School.

Clerk/GB

F Slade
Clerk

12. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 14th March

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Approved by Chairman 14th March 2018