

**Minutes of the Biddenham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020 starting at 7.30pm.**

**In line with emergency Coronavirus Government legislation, the Parish Council will not be holding face-to-face meetings for the foreseeable future so this meeting was held by Zoom Conference facility.**

**Present: Cllrs P Chase – Chairman, G Bates, S Briggs, H Fowler, K Osuch, J Warren and Mrs Lyn Lyman (Clerk). In addition there were 3 members of the public.**

**In attendance: Borough Cllrs J Gambold & R Rigby.**

**129. Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies received from Cllrs C Gee, A Jacobs and F Slade.

**130. To receive Declarations of Interest regarding items on the Agenda**

No Declarations of interest made.

**131. To Approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020:**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting were unanimously accepted. The minutes will be signed at the next face to face Parish Council Meeting.

**132. Public Open Session:**

There have been two complaints from residents living in Deep Spinney regarding thoughtless parking by people using the Pavilion facilities as the car park has been closed due to the Covid 19 lockdown.

Resident 1: Double yellow lines aren't working efficiently as they don't cover enough of the area. Vehicles are also reversing into driveways. Can we get the gate moved forward or bollards into the grass to make one way access? Tennis players appear to be the major troublemakers and footballers on Saturdays. Residents don't want the grass verge made into a parking area. They have Covenants on their homes saying no on street parking, no parking on verges, no turning, no parking. The residents want to know how things can progress. Drug dealing has been taking place in the entrance to the Pavilion car park. The residents have a good connection with the Police which is effective regarding the drug dealing situation.

In terms of enforcement – Borough Traffic Enforcement Officers need to come out and ticket the cars so that the obstructions can be removed as soon as possible. The land does not belong to the Parish Council so we have no jurisdiction. Penalty notices need to be handed out so that drivers realise what can happen to them if they cause obstructions.

Making the verge into a car park is now off our agenda so will not happen and the Pavilion Gates cannot be moved.

The Pavilion should be open as from 4<sup>th</sup> July so the gates will be open during the day time.

Resident asked if we can re-open the car park now and not wait until 4<sup>th</sup> July, this may be the way to go forward. Cllrs agreed to this, and Mrs Slade will be instructed to put this in place. The Resident will ensure the gates are locked at 8.30pm if she has the code. Pavilion staff have responsibility for locking the gate.

It was suggested that a log of activity be kept – if the parking office are advised they can deliver notices. B Cllr Rigby agreed to obtain contact details of the Enforcement Team and Cllr Chase will deliver notices to those houses which are affected. B Cllr Rigby will take this up further with Borough but he did say that parking tickets may not have been issued due to Covid 19. *Action: RR / PC*

Resident 2 (by e.mail):

As a resident of Deep Spinney, it has long been an issue trying to get in and out of the junction just near the Pavilion. When it was announced that yellow lines were going to be painted around the junction there was relief that something was finally going to be done. Then the yellow lines appeared but it looks like someone ran out of paint.

Whoever was in charge of this project needs to give his head a good shake. Did they even bother to come and look at the half a job?

The junction is not better but worse.

Someone needs to get out of their office and take a physical look at the waste of public money on these pathetic yellow lines. The lines that should have gone at least to the first speed bump, and then round the corner at least 15 meters.

I have attached two recent pictures for you to ignore, of vehicles parking with no consideration for other road users and footpath user, let alone ignoring the yellow lines.

(Kathy Giles & Cliff Jones).

Speedwatch Group:

- It was reported that the Speedwatch Group activities have been suspended due to Covid 19 restrictions. Activities in Bedford can restart on or after 13<sup>th</sup> July. Members of 70 years of age and over cannot take part for their protection for the time being. More people under the age of 70 years of age are needed to join the group.
- Bedford Borough speed van may be able help for the time being.
- Speed of traffic on Biddenham Turn is of concern but the site has been checked but not many speeding vehicles have been observed. Only one in an hour, compared with over 30 in the same amount of time on Bromham Road.
- Sites to set up the Speedwatch equipment have to be approved officially. Bromham Road South site has still to be approved.

Pedestrian gates on footpaths within the parish:

- Given the Covid 19 regulations, a request was made for the gates to be tied open so they don't have to be touched by walkers. Whilst we are being encouraged to use cycles, it was noted that not all gates are cycle friendly.

- It was also noted that most of the footpaths are in the parish of Great Denham. Footpaths are the responsibility of Borough Council. Residents were advised to contact Andy Prigmore.

Manor Hospital had advised that they have parts on order to be able to fix the squeaky air conditioning units. Cllr Chase agreed to chase this up again. *Action: PC*

Garden waste collection: can frequency be increased from once monthly? B Cllr Gambold said it is not envisaged that collections will return to fortnightly collections.

Visits to the Barkers Lane tidy tip can be booked on line. Cllr Warren agreed to put this information on the website. *Action: JW*

**133. Coronavirus measures Update:**

The Pavilion will reopen on 4<sup>th</sup> July.

The phone line set up for coronavirus is now unmanned, but takes voicemail messages. These are then forwarded to [help@biddenham.org.uk](mailto:help@biddenham.org.uk), which is monitored by volunteers.

**134. To Consider Planning:**

The updated list which had been circulated was discussed.

There have been quite a few new planning applications this month. 4 approvals and no rejections or appeals.

2 Vicars Close: the verge has now been made good.

Gold Lane nothing further has been heard about starting the housing development.

**135. To Agree Financial Matters**

(i) To approve accounts for payment: The statement of expenses which had been circulated was accepted.

(ii) To note the spend against budget for the Parish Council and The Pavilion. The statement which had been circulated was accepted.

Cllr Chase had updated the budget forecast. This has shown there has been a 1/3<sup>rd</sup> drop in income for the Pavilion due to loss of booking fees, parking fees are down and the Cricket Club income waived as they have not played yet this year.

The Borough Grant form for a grant towards the Pavilion unforeseen loss of income has been completed and a response awaited.

**136. To accept Reports**

Clerk's Report (circulated previously)

Bedford Borough Council Network: A proposed Zoom meeting is to be held in September. Cllr Fowler would like to attend and Cllr Bates has already accepted.

*Action: LL*

Website domains: Biddenham-pc.org opens up in a peculiar site which isn't our proper website so Cllr Warren agreed to follow this up. *Action: JW*

The St Georges flag has been ordered but not yet received so the Clerk will chase this up. *Action: LL*

### Borough Cllrs Reports

B Cllr Rigby:

The Mayor's question and answers session this evening was grim. The Borough has one of the worst R ratings (infection rate) of Covid 19 in the country. The Mayor is concerned about opening up the town again and not sure when to do this. There should be guidance from the Mayor towards the end of this week. Most of the schools have re-opened.

Consultation on houses in multiple occupation has gone out and is on the Borough website.

Road works are still planned to commence on Clapham Rd etc this summer – the first task is to relocate the remaining underground services to clear the way for the roundabout scheme. The utilities works programmes have been widely disrupted due to Coronavirus, so we are awaiting final confirmation of what programmes are deliverable by the various utility companies before determining the full programme.

Temporary works in the High Street are being considered - but these do not affect the permanent scheme. Again the permanent works have been delayed by various procurement and supply chain issues that have arisen over the last couple of months. We are aiming to commence works on the High Street in Spring 2021 (again this is a working assumption rather than a final confirmed date).

B Cllr Gambold:

The Railway bridge is now open although it is unclear if the cycling markings are actually correct; Jon is pushing for this to be looked into.

### **137. Matters in Progress**

The War Memorial has been re-pointed and the bench has been rubbed down and polished.

Bromham Road speed limit: no official response has yet been received from Andy Prigmore but it has been heard un-officially that the speed limit is to remain at 30mph.

“Biddenham welcomes careful drivers” signs – the Clerk has asked Andy Prigmore about the signs and B Cllr Rigby confirmed that Andy was looking into the signage situation.

A request for 2 new litter bins has been made to Paul Pace and followed up twice.

Lyn Lyman has resigned as Clerk and has kindly given 3 months' notice. The vacancy is to be advertised on the website, within the village and BATPC. Cllr Chase will write the advert and job description and Cllr Osuch will provide interim assistance until the vacancy is filled. Lyn was thanked for helping out at such a sad and difficult time.

### **138. Parish Concerns**

Concern was shown at the lack of grass cutting on a portion of Biddenham Turn. Borough does not cut this area. It is thought the school has been cutting it but no

longer do so. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Chase should ask Chris Horne to include it in his programme.

*Action: PC*

**139. Date of next meeting**

8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 starting at 7.30pm. Arrangements to be confirmed. Normally there is no meeting held in August; the next meeting will decide if one is necessary.

Meeting closed at 8.46pm