

Minutes of the Biddenham Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 12th February 2020 at The Pavilion, Deep Spinney, Biddenham starting at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs P Chase – Chairman, S Briggs, C Gee, H Fowler, F Slade, K Osuch, J Warren and Mrs Lyn Lyman (Clerk). In addition there were 6 members of the public.

In attendance: Borough Cllrs J Gambold. Andy Prigmore – Manager of Traffic Operations for Bedford Borough.

78. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from: Cllr A Jacobs and BC Cllr R Rigby.

79. Declaration of Interest regarding items on the Agenda:

Declaration made by Cllr Osuch regarding planning application 2 C Main Road and Scout Funding Request.

Cllr Bates declared an interest regarding the Scouts Funding Request as he is “County Vice-President” of the Scouts and former Chairman of the Leslie Sell Activity Centre in Bromham.

80. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th January 2019:

The Minutes of the Parish Council previous meeting were unanimously accepted and duly signed.

81. Public Open Session:

Junction of Days Lane: utilities dug up the footpath but have left it in a rough state. It was confirmed that utility companies have 12 months in which to return and finish the permanent surface. Andy Prigmore will chase up. *Action: AP*

Sundial: the small ditch around this is now full of weeds so ideally a barrier is required. Gary Creek is to be asked to look at the situation. *Action: LL/GC*

Vicars Close a lot of work has been done to a house there but the verge needs reinstating. It is in the conservation area. (Pauley Utilities were the contractor). Cllr Chase agreed to visit the site.

Action: PC

A wreath was left on the seat by the sundial and had stuck to the seat so now the seat requires tidying up. Gary Creek is to be asked to do the work. (Dixon Daycore varnish may need to be used). *Action: LL / GC*

The War Memorial needs cleaning. Gary Creek is to be asked to do this.

Action: LL / GC

Bromham Road, between the illuminated pelican crossing sign: Resident said vehicles travel up around 60mph along this piece of road and for that reason he is against an increase in the speed limit on Bromham Road. A second resident supported the limit

staying at 30mph. Another resident supported the change to 40mph. Various reasons for and against this were discussed.

Andy Prigmore said repeater signs cannot be put up in 30mph area, but 40 mph will have repeater signs on lampposts at 100 metres intervals. All properties are set back making the road feel more rural to drivers. Unfortunately there appears to have been no police patrolling.

Andy Prigmore explained the process – an error in the order had been corrected, anyone can make their comments. The consultation ends on 21st February when the officers will consider the responses and the Portfolio Holder will ultimately make the decision.

Speed Indicator devices were discussed. It was felt that the one on Bromham Road may be in the wrong place but this is a sign moved with both Biddenham and Bromham parishes at the discretion of the Borough Councillors. The usefulness of the SID on Gold Lane is being assessed. It may either be moved around the village or the PC may consider purchasing a second one.

Bromham Road is a long road and contains two identical numbering systems – one in Biddenham and one in Bedford. A resident living on Bromham Road, Biddenham was complaining about receiving post which wasn't his and asked if there could be better signage for Biddenham. A sign to say Biddenham Welcomes Careful Drivers or to commemorate VE day perhaps

Visitors are having trouble locating Manor Hospital as the signs are obscured by foliage when coming down Gold Lane. Andy Prigmore will follow this up.

Action: AP

82. Parking in Deep Spinney:

Double yellow lines are now in place. Football Teams are parking in Deep Spinney/Pavilion causing visibility issues. The cars are possibly parked for a couple of hours. Some people used to park in Days Lane then walk to the Pavilion. The hospital is not in use at the weekend and the car park is usually empty – maybe the car park could be used?

Ideas for improvement:

*Grasscrete type surfacing could be used on the green verge but would need to find out who actually owns the verge.

Action PC

*Could the opposite end of the pavilion be used? Only a small amount could be used as it would encroach onto the outfield of the cricket area. There is a slope to enable emergency vehicles to get off of the car park. There is a steep drop. Don't really want to take green verges and cover them with tarmac.

*Andy Prigmore will get a quote for the pavilion car park.

Action: AP

The mood of the meeting was not to do anything else.

83. To consider planning:

The updated list which had been circulated was discussed.

10 Biddenham Turn had been refused.

Vicars Close: No comments.

An email had been received from a resident concerning Planning application 20/00165/FUL 2C Main Road. Cllrs had no objections and Cllr Chase will go back to the resident. **Action: PC**

Lavender Lodge – Cllr Chase is trying to make contact with Mr Newton. **Action: PC**

84. To Agree Financial Matters:

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

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

Mrs Slade and the Clerk are clarifying the pavilion payments in time for the next meeting. **Action: LL**

85. To Accept Reports:

Clerks Report: was circulated previously.

A request for funding has been received from Bedfordshire Scouts, specifically towards providing some furnishings for the replacement dormitory block. Their target is £50K of which they have 50%.

We could consider contributing so long as the project goes forward. They have half of the £50,000 needed. We could say that we would be in agreement to donate £500 but we need to know this is legal. Subsequently it has been confirmed by BATPC that we could do it using Section 137 powers. As the Parish Council does not specifically have a grants policy, Cllrs Gee & Briggs will consider putting a policy together.

Action: CG/SB

It was agreed to write back to the Scouts advising that the Parish Council would be in agreement to make a grant of £500 so long as it was for the benefit of Biddenham residents and would only be given provided the project goes forward. **Action: LL**

A resident has requested that there are a couple of areas on Deep Spinney which need tidying up. A quote is to be obtained from Greg Lawrence. **Action: LL**

Borough Cllrs Reports:

B Cllr Rigby: No report available.

B Cllr Gambold:

In principle, the plan for the Oxford/Cambridge rail link has been agreed. Bedford rail station will be moved to its old site.

Continued expansion of St Mary's: Would the Parish Council consider making a donation to the PCC of £150 to include things in their welcome pack to deliver to all houses? B Cllr Gambold was asked to put this in writing to The Clerk. **Action: JG**

The Local Plan has been adopted. Jon Shortland (Borough head of planning) will need to write the next plan by 2023 to allow housing to be built straight away.

At the Town & Parish Council Conference a refresher presentation on CIL was made also advising that if the money was not spent within 5 years of it being received, it would be clawed back by Bedford Borough. A year end report of CIL money received, retained and spent needs to be provided. Borough took an action to create a template for this report.

86. **Matters in Progress:**

Cllrs Chase & Bates and the Clerk attended the Town & Parish Council Conference where it was advised that the Bromham Bridge may be open in April, (one way), and fully re-opened in time for the River Festival. Traffic will be able to go into town but not return. Traffic lights will be used between 9am and 3.30pm and be manually controlled.

87. **Parish Concerns:**

Following Alison Southern's untimely death, the Parish Council was asked if they would be making a donation to the Cancer Charity of the family's choice. After discussion it was unanimously agreed to make a donation of £200. **Action: LL**

Bugler VE Day – Cllr Slade said the bugler would need to know when he would be needed. Cllr Slade had given Cllr Chase the number of the piper.

Cllr Chase said that Bedford Borough website is much improved and well worth looking at. Councillors should encourage residents to look at it too, and use it.

Cllr Chase is going to meet Richard Fuller MP at The Houses of Parliament on 26th February. If anyone would like a tour of the Houses of Parliament a tour could be arranged.

88. **Date of next meeting:**

Wednesday 11th March 2020 starting at 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.