



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

The most recent **Parish Council Meeting** was held on Tuesday Wednesday 18th May 2021 at the Pavilion with social distancing and safety measures in place. The emergency Government legislation that allowed the Parish Council to hold meetings by video conferencing had expired so we had no option but to return to face-to-face meetings. It seemed strange to be meeting in person rather than via a pc screen and had we all not needed to wear face coverings, sit 2 metres apart and have the doors and windows open I'm sure it would have been a welcome change! The social distancing and face coverings made it difficult to be heard and to hear so my apologies to those present if at times some of what was said was not clear and audible.

Present at the meeting were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Stewart Briggs, Peter Chase, Harry Fowler, Chris Gee, Alan Jacobs, Kryz Osuch and Francia Slade. Borough Councillors Jon Gambold and Roger Rigby, Clerk David Borough, Pavilion manager Deborah Slade and 2 members of the public were also present.

ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS

At this year's May meeting appointments are made for the forthcoming municipal year. As was telegraphed in previous Chairman reports, Peter Chase stood down from the role of Parish Chair at this meeting. Before moving on I think it is important to recognise the fantastic work Peter has done as Chair for many years. Peter has provided great leadership and shown real empathy and support for the village and its residents. He will be a very hard act to follow but the Parish is lucky in that Peter will remain as Parish councillor and continue to apply his enthusiasm and drive to the issues facing our Village. On behalf of myself, and I am sure of all Parish Councillors and residents he has helped, I would like to say a big thank you to Peter.

So, as you may have gathered a new Chair for the Parish was elected for the 2021/22 year. I am very pleased to receive the support of my fellow Councillors for the role and to be able to represent local residents. I hope to meet more of you as I walk my Westie dog around the village. Please do stop and say hello. As well as electing a new Chair, I am really pleased to say Peter hasn't completely moved to the back benches as he agreed to take on the role of Vice Chair, so I will have his experience and knowledge to nudge me along. We also agreed three sub-committees to provide scrutiny of planning applications for different parts of the village, a Personnel Committee and for the first time a new Pavilion Committee to provide support to the Pavilion Manager in developing and growing this wonderful asset.

Councillors undertake these roles in a voluntary capacity and I'd like to thank them all for contributing their time for the village.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Each meeting starts with a public open session which provides an opportunity for the public to raise issues of concern with the Parish. At this meeting we received an update on the continuing monitoring of speed data on Bromham Road. Despite speeding continuing to be a problem on this road the data did show that the SID – Speed Indication Device – was having a mitigating effect which is encouraging but all recognised the only true way to manage speeding on this road was by having average speed cameras. Unfortunately, due to the volume of traffic using the road the SID's battery unit needs regularly replacing and this is not sustainable on a voluntary basis. This is an issue we discussed later in the meeting. Councillors were also alerted to correspondence with the Clerk and the subsequent actions he had taken. More detailed information is provided in the Agenda papers which can be accessed on the website (<http://biddenham.org.uk/>)

The Parish Council was updated on the application for the construction of a roundabout on Bromham Road by Davidsons Developments Limited which had been agreed at the Borough Council's Planning Committee the night before (APPLICATION NO: 20/02761/FUL). The Parish had responded to the consultation but as is the way with many planning applications, several aspects of the proposal were dictated by national and local policies/guidance which the Parish Council was unable to influence. The Planning approval requires the roundabout to be built within the next three years so expect some congestion when the work starts.

The Parish Council also agreed, subject to the Highway Authority's approval (the Borough Council), to the installation of a standalone column on Bromham Road to allow a solar charging unit to be fitted to the SID thus negating the need for the constant replacement of the battery. It also reviewed the proposal from Borough Highways for an extension of yellow line parking restrictions on Deep Spinney.

A separate report prepared by the Pavilion manager was also considered by the Parish Council. It had become clear to the Parish Council that it needed to improve the functionality of how users of the facility could book activities at the Pavilion, reflecting how more and more people are conducting life via the web. The wi-fi has been improved and the Parish Council agreed to implement an improved booking system so that users could see the availability of the facilities and make online bookings. We hope this will encourage and increase the use of the facility and thanks to Deborah Slade for researching options and recommending a solution.

OUR NEXT MEETING – **IMPORTANT INFO**

The Parish Council meets every **THIRD TUESDAY** of most months. We very much welcome hearing from residents, there being a public "open session" near the start for anyone wanting to say something. Please call in and let us know anything concerning you about our village, or just listen. The date for the next meeting is **Tuesday 15th June** at **7.30pm** at the Pavilion in Deep Spinney.

Information about the next meeting will be posted on our village website (<http://biddenham.org.uk/>) and in the noticeboards around the village.

Stewart Briggs

Chairman