

# BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the **special meeting** of BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 8.30pm in Biddenham Pavilion.

## MINUTES

### **Purpose of this meeting:**

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a relevant authority to admit to be honorary freemen or honorary freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority:

- a. Persons of distinction, and
- b. Persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent service to that place or area.

Granting the Freedom is the highest honour that Biddenham Parish Council can bestow. Although it carries no privileges, those who receive the honour are able to use the title of Freeman or Freewoman. As this is the highest honour that the Council can grant it should be used sparingly and should not be given too often in order to preserve its status and value.

**Present:** Cllrs Stewart Briggs (Chairman), Peter Chase, Francia Slade, Chris Gee, Harry Fowler, Laura Simmonds, Caroline Cross, Simi Otukoya, Aaron Melvin.

**In attendance:** David Brough (Clerk).

1 **Apologies for Absence:** None.

2 **Declarations of interest in items on the agenda:** None.

### 3 **Granting of Freedom of the Parish**

*Presentation of a nomination from Cllr Fowler: To admit Roger Rigby to be an honorary freeman of Biddenham Parish. For acting in a way that has shown distinction in parish life and contributed to the improved lives of Biddenham residents over many years through his devoted service as Borough Councillor.*

**Resolved** to admit Roger Rigby to be an honorary freeman of Biddenham Parish for the reasons outlined above and as detailed in the nomination letter attached.

### 4 **Administration**

*To make arrangements for the formal presentation of the "Freedom".*

**Resolved** to purchase a certificate and frame and to cover costs for presenting the award.

**Actions:** Clerk to contact Roger Rigby to confirm his acceptance. Clerk to work with councillors to determine an appropriate plan for presenting the award.

8 Queens Close Biddenham Bedford MK40 4AB  
Telephone 01234 262182

14<sup>th</sup> august 2023

Dear 

I am delighted to propose that Roger Rigby be awarded the Freedom of the Parish of Biddenham.

I am aware that such an honour should only be granted in exceptional cases and in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation and the policy of the Parish Council.

Roger represented the village as a Borough Councillor for many years and gave long and devoted service for no personal reward.

I have spoken to many people over the years who have said that they always found him to offer a sympathetic ear to problems and to more than willing assist wherever he could.

He never put party political interests above the ideal of service. I have been told, on many occasions, that some who would never vote for his party in a general election had no qualms in voting for him on a local basis.

As a Parish Council we are aware of the many and varied projects that he has supported, using his contacts and ward funds.

Put simply the Parish is a better place for his service.

The regard within which he is held is more than reflected in the award of an honorary Aldermanship made upon his retirement from public life.

If any further information is needed to support this recommendation, please let me know.

Kind regards,

