

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 7th January 2015 at the Pavilion, Deep Spinney, Biddenham

Present: Cllrs Graham Bates (Chairman), Peter Chase, Anna Crowther, John Esam, Jon Gambold, Bryan Norris, Terry Platt, Francia Slade, Borough Councillor Roger Rigby and the Clerk were in attendance. In addition there were 8 members of the public and Andy Prigmore from Bedford Borough Council.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Krzys Osuch – the apologies were accepted

2. Declarations of interest

None

3. Speeding

At the parish councils request a speed survey had been carried out in the parish. The data was gathered from 2 sites:

Biddenham Turn, south of school entrance near the post box

Main Road, railings near the Three Tuns public house

Data had been circulated to members prior the meeting and printed copies of the summary data were distributed at the meeting. Mr Prigmore from Beds BC explained the significance of the results which showed:

Overall the 85th percentile speed was 30.4mph for Main Road and 33.4mph for Biddenham Turn. The 85th percentile speed is the indicator that the police would use to determine if there is a problem with speeding. In other words 85% of motorists are doing an average of 30.4mph for Main Road and 33.4mph in Biddenham Turn. This does of course mean that the remaining 15% of motorists are travelling at even greater speeds throughout the village. Of course there would always be one or two motorists that are exceeding the speed limit and the data did record several motorists travelling between 50-55mph and even between 60-65mph (measurements taken from Biddenham Turn) but these were isolated incidents. However, the Borough uses the 85th percentile speed (derived from the total data obtained throughout the whole period of the traffic survey).

Q How does this compare with other villages?

Speeds are much lower in Biddenham than in neighbouring villages such as Bromham which has problems with speeding along Village Road.

Q Can you confirm if there is a request to alter the speed limit to 20mph that this can only proceed when the average speed is 24mph or less?

This is partially true, reports show that unless motorists are travelling at 24mph or less then compliance with a change of signage to 20mph will simply not work.

Q Would the Borough recommend doing anything following these results?

Any traffic calming features will need to be lit and this would impact on the overall appearance of the village. Localised 20mph zones near schools appear to be successful and are already in place on Polhill Avenue. Flashing warning signs indicate 20mph speed limit at the beginning and the end of the school day and these signs would cost approximately £5K.

Cllr Norris questioned some of the statements made by Mr Prigmore:

In particular, it cannot be concluded from the 85% quartile figures that “85% of motorists are doing an average of 30.4mph for Main Road and 33.4mph in Biddenham

Turn.” Or that “This does of course mean that the remaining 15% of motorists are travelling at even greater speeds throughout the village.”

In fact, the survey data showed that, of the approximate 2,000 vehicles travelling through the village each weekday, between 20 to 32% exceeded the limit as they passed the village school, and 32 to 41% when they passed the post box in Biddenham Turn. On a Saturday, 54% of the (1,030) vehicles were exceeding the speed limit on Biddenham Turn.

This is not one or two motorists, isolated incidents, but between 530 and 794 drivers each weekday!

Regarding the ‘allowance’ of a 20 mph speed limit. One of the statements about speed limits from the Association of Chief Police Officers Speed Enforcement Policy Guidelines 2011 says, that [speed limits can be introduced when there are] “interventions(indicators) that make the limit clear to visiting motorists”

A Prigmore

Cllr Norris asked Mr Prigmore if he could provide any helpful suggestions as to:-

Q How can the Parish Council deal with the speeding?

The most effective method is to install average speed cameras which require little infrastructure and pose the best deterrent.

Q Could the Borough (Mr Prigmore) provide the parish council with a variety of options including approximate costs which could then be considered at a future meeting?

Mr Prigmore agreed to produce the information for consideration at the next parish council meeting.

Cllr Gambold asked if speed data could also be collected for Deep Spinney and Church End.

The Chairman thanked Mr Prigmore for attending the meeting and at this point he left the meeting.

4. **To approve the minutes of the previous meetings held on Wednesday 5th November 2014**

There was one minor change to reflect that meetings take place on the 2nd Wednesday of the month under item 13. **It was then resolved** to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

5. **Matters Arising from Minutes**

None

6. **Public Open Session**

Following on from the discussion about speeding it would appear that there are 3 separate issues:

- (i) excessive speeding
- (ii) non compliance with speed limit near the schools
- (iii) accidents/hot spots

When considering any speed reduction measures could the parish council also take into account the problem with dangerous parking around the area of the 3 Tuns, Noddors Way and the Village Hall Car Park and how this could be tackled?

Several residents attended the meeting to discuss the area of land known as The Paddock (land behind nos 21-39 Church End). Residents are keen to make the Paddock a green for use by the whole of the parish. There have been numerous unsuccessful planning applications and the latest application has now been taken to the planning inspectorate on appeal. A petition has been lodged by local residents

objecting to this application and the parish council had also objected to the application and these comments would be taken into consideration by the Planning Inspector. The Paddock is currently protected under Allocations & Designations Plan Policy AD43 as a protected urban open space. There is a public footpath access to the entrance of the Paddock which has been in existence for approximately 17 years. Residents felt that the Paddock could be managed as an additional green space and become a whole community facility for everyone in the parish to enjoy.

Would applying for Local Green Space afford the land any additional protection? What are the views of the Parish Council?

Landscaping of the large roundabout at Gold Lane – when will the council and members of the public be able to see the new plans including pedestrian access points and proposed planting?

Members resolved to add this item to Matters in Progress and the council would write to Mr Barcham at Bedford Borough Council to request a revised plan and also for the council to be consulted regarding planting, visibility splays and pedestrian points.

Clerk

7. **Correspondence**

Bedford Borough Council Local Plan – Local Green Spaces

It was proposed to put applications in for the following parcels of land:

The old cricket field (near Manor Hospital)

The two pony paddocks on Biddenham Turn

The orchard on land behind Day's Lane

The field off Vicars Close

The Pavilion Field (this was already protected under AD43 and is also listed in the Borough Community Asset Register)

It was resolved that Cllr Gambold together with residents from Church End would draft an application for the Paddocks. The remaining applications would be drafted by Cllr Gambold. The applications would be presented to the parish council at the 11th February for approval prior to submission. Due to the impending deadline of 27 February there was no choice but to submit all the applications at the same time rather than a piecemeal approach.

JG,
Church End
residents

8. **Planning**

The report was noted and there were no comments regarding the application for number 5 Day's Lane.

9. **Financial Matters**

- (i) Accounts for approval – **there were no accounts for payment** and members noted the payments that had been made since the date of the last meeting paid by BACS as below:

Ch	Payee	£	Description
BACS	A&C Restoration	111.32	Replace curtain rails x 2 at Pavilion
BACS	Chris Horne Gardens Ltd	592.80	Grass cutting
BACS	P Chester & Sons Ltd	1088.40	Maintenance work to clean/service all fans at the Pavilion plus service chiller unit
BACS	Chicheley Farms Ltd	105.00	Christmas Tree (S137)
	TOTAL	1897.52	

- (ii) Monthly spend against budget including current bank balances held – the report was noted.
- (iii) **It was resolved** to allocate £5,000 out of undesignated reserves towards the cost of the new toddler play area, £3,000 to be allocated in next year’s budget and to apply for a rural grant from Bedford Borough Council for the balance of the project (approximately £8K + VAT).
- (iv) **It was resolved** to approve the budget for 2015-16 at £40,150 – no additional funding would be required for the Pavilion which was currently self financing although £2000 would be transferred to earmarked reserves for the Pavilion for future redecoration of the building.

Clerk

Clerk

At this point in the meeting members agreed to consider a request from the cricket club for approximately £1500 for the landscaping of the far end of the Pavilion field. This could be paid for using undesignated reserves. **It was resolved** to fund the cost of the works at a cost of £1500.

Clerk

- (v) Members considered whether they could lower the Precept however, £6500 had been allocated out of undesignated reserves at tonight’s meeting and the total precept cost per household compared to other parishes still remained relatively low. **It was resolved** to set the Precept for 2015-16 for a total of £40,000 (£39,752 Precept + £256 council tax support grant).

Clerk

10. Management of the Pavilion

The report was noted.

The legionnaires risk assessment had recently been undertaken and a detailed report regarding this had been produced by the Clerk. Measures were now in place to deal with all the recommendations with the exception of the deadleg pipe in the cellar. It was agreed that the costs of removing the pipe would be prohibitive compared to the extremely low risk. The area of greatest risk was identified as the showers and there is a robust cleaning and prevention scheme in place to deal with this (as per the schedule circulated to all members). The overall risk assessment for the Pavilion was low/medium with a score of 15 out of a maximum of 45 and it was noted that the previous risk assessment indicated a rating of medium/high risk and members were pleased to see this improvement.

Clerk

11. To approve the revised colour drawings for the village sign

Revised drawings had been provided by Harry Stebbing. Members were delighted with the new drawings and agreed on the following minor revisions:

Colour of the grass and sky should be the same shade on both sides of the sign
 Upper quadrant should be same on both sides of the sign – no clouds but a solid block of colour as represented in the Church illustration
 The colours on the sign should be no brighter than those given on the drawings
It was resolved to instruct Harry Stebbing to proceed with the production of the village sign taking into account these minor revisions. The Clerk would also ask what the expected time frame for completion would be.

Clerk

12. Clerk’s Report

The report was noted – there were no matters outstanding not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

13. Matters in Progress

The report was noted

14. Parish concerns

Kissing Gate on Manor Road was causing problems for residents on mobility scooters accessing the Great Denham medical centre. The Borough had offered to remove the

small gate which would give clear access. Members were in favour of this option but requested Great Denham were informed of this proposal to ensure there were no objections.

Clerk

Pavilion car park lock up could this be later as users of the beauty salon occasionally had appointments later than 8:30pm? The clerk reported that the owner of the beauty salon had a key to the car park already to deal with these one off occasions.

The Village Hall newspaper recycling grant which is worth approximately £1000 will no longer be paid by the Borough Council. Cllr Rigby offered to speak with the Head of Environmental Services to confirm the situation.

Rural Bulk Waste collection – could a shredding facility be added? Members felt that residents should purchase their own small paper shredders or else bonfire any excess personal paperwork. The rural waste collection has been scaled back to only 1 visit per year and there would not be any funds to pay for this additional service.

Nomination forms for this year’s local elections – do we know when this paperwork will need to be submitted? The clerk reported that the Borough had written to all clerk’s informing them that the Borough will be holding some election briefing sessions at the end of February and that papers should be available from 1 March. The clerk would confirm once she had attended the briefing session.

Clerk

Clerk

SSSI – interpretation board does the Clerk know when this will be installed as it would be good to tie this in with the Biddenham Heritage Trail. The Clerk would contact the Bedfordshire Wildlife Trust to enquire.

Clerk

15. **Date of Next Meeting** – Wednesday 11th February 2015

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Approved by Chairman 11 February 2015

