



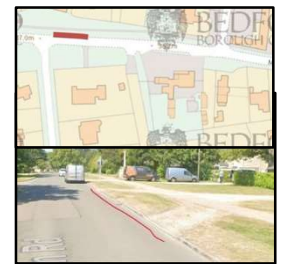
BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The **Parish Council** met on Tuesday 9th January. Present at the meeting were Parish Councillors Peter Chase, Caroline Cross, Chris Gee and Simi Otukoya. Apologies were received from Harry Fowler, Laura Simmonds and Francia Slade. Also present were the Clerk, David Brough, myself, and Borough Councillor Jon Gambold. Sadly, one of our Councillors, Aaron Melvin, has resigned from the Parish Council for personal reasons. Aaron will be missed, not only did he contribute effectively to debates, he also lowered our average age! On behalf of the Parish, I thank him for his contribution.

After what I hope was an enjoyable Christmas and New Year for everyone its back to sharing with you Parish Council matters. At our meeting this month there were several 'big ticket' items for the Parish to discuss.

We seemed to spend a large part of last year discussing the traffic problems caused outside St James' school and the Parish has been working with the Borough to find a way to ameliorate this. A suggestion that has been proposed is to install a double yellow line on the northside of Main Road (near its junction with Vicars Close). This will effectively create a passing place for vehicles and make a start on easing two-way flow along this road. There will need to be a local consultation as part of the traffic regulation process. But, subject to no major objections, it could be installed by the summer.



Also discussed was the problem of speeding, specifically along Biddenham Turn where the Speed Indicator device has recorded speeds in excess of 80mph. Councillors debated the option of speed tables at each of the Darlow Drive junctions on Biddenham Turn but concluded that average speed cameras were the only enduring means of managing speed on such a long straight road. As the Parish is in the fortunate position of having the funding to meet the cost of providing these it was resolved that the Parish will approach the Borough Council and offer to pay for this equipment to be installed; so over to them to help make it happen.

Still on the subject of speeding, the Parish agreed to ask the Borough Council to refresh its feasibility report on providing two pedestrian refuges on Bromham Road; one near the junction with the Bromham Road service road and one near the path on the south side of Bromham Road that connects Malcote Close and Deep Spinney. These would provide additional crossing points on this busy road and also have the incidental effect of slowing vehicle speeds. Once we have these refreshed costs, we will know whether there is scope to contribute to providing these facilities.

One particular bug bear people have raised with me has been the impassability of the Red Gate public footpath at the bottom of Day's Lane and Main Road. I can empathise with these concerns as the owner of a Westie with short legs and a low flying undercarriage. So, I am pleased to report that Parish Council has agreed to meet the cost of stoning a section of the footpath – from its junction with Main Road to the end of the field. I am just waiting for a date from the Borough Council for the work to begin.

I am also pleased to report that the Parish Council supported a funding request from the Biddenham Conservation volunteers for crown-lifting and coppicing works at the Village Pond by a specialist contractor.



Hopefully, residents will have noticed that work has started on the playground refurbishment at the Pavilion. This is scheduled to finish around the end of February/beginning of March and should provide a great space for youngsters to enjoy.

Finally, in a paragraph that's sure to be close to people's hearts the Parish Council considered its precept for the next year. Reviewing our costs for the year and planned expenditures Councillors concluded that there should be no increase in the Parish Council portion of council tax for individual households for the next financial year.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday 13th February 2024** at **7.30pm** at the **St James's Barn, Church End** and all are welcome.

Stewart Briggs

Chair – Biddenham Parish Council