



BIDDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL

The **Parish Council** met on Tuesday 4th June. Present at the meeting were Parish Councillors Peter Chase, Caroline Cross, Chris Gee, Harry Fowler and Helen Humphreys. Apologies were received from Simi Otukoya, Laura Simmonds and Francia Slade. Also present were the Clerk, David Brough, and myself.

The first meaty item of business was to discuss the CIL funding request from the Village Hall Management Committee. Three members of the Committee attended eager to learn the outcome of the project scoring. Happily, we were able to advise them that their eco project had scored highly against our CIL criteria. Councillors were unanimous in agreeing to the recommendation that the Parish Council support their request of a £20,000 funding contribution to their project. Once completed this will see the existing heating replaced with electric infra-red heaters including smart controls, the lighting replaced with dimmable LED panels and the electricity supply upgraded to a 3-phase supply. It was really great to be able to help with the eco improvements to the Village Hall which is used by nearly 500 residents and hundreds more attending private events. We hope they are successful with their other funding bids to complete this project to improve an important local community focussed asset.

The observant of you who visit the Pavilion will have noticed the solar panels have been erected on the roof of the building. The even more observant may have noticed that one of the panels was hit by a cricket ball shortly after installation. I guess it was a foreseeable event – who knew we had such talented cricketers! However, we will have to explore how we can protect the units from any further ‘strokes’ of bad luck – if we can’t then it may be that we insist on the cricket club using small bats or softer balls!

Those who punish themselves by regularly reading my column will recall back in March we agreed to progress a request with the borough council for average speed cameras on Biddenham Turn. A meeting with several Councillors and the borough council was held at the end of May to discuss the parameters of the project and help their engineering team pull together a costed design. The next step will be for the borough to prepare their feasibility report which will show suggested column locations and project costs. I am also pleased to report the borough council will concurrently also be looking at including in their report (as a separate item) a similar scheme for Bromham Road (although for clarity no decision in respect of this location has been taken by the Parish).

A major part of the meeting was reviewing the Annual accounts, receiving the internal audit report and agreeing the external Annual Governance and Accountability Form. This is our reassurance that the money we spend on your behalf is accurately recorded and properly accounted for. I would like to thank our clerk who has done a great job in ensuring we only spent the money we have on things we can ensuring our decisions were suitably made and accurately recorded. It sounds dull and tedious (and David probably thought it was at times) but it gives reassurance that we are operating within the law and following good practice.

A well done to the Conservation Group who cleared the vegetation growing out into the red gate public footpath. Their invaluable work means that the way is now clear for the ‘stoning’ of the path by the borough council; basically, this means laying hardcore along the path from Main Road to the end of the field. Once completed and when the winter comes this well used public right of way will remain useable for many residents.

As the summer approaches can I wish you all happy holidays, good weather and disruption free travel.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday 2th July 2024 at 7.30pm** at the **St James’s Barn, Church End** and all are welcome.

Stewart Briggs

Chair – Biddenham Parish Council