

Minutes of a meeting of Brickhill Parish Council held on Thursday 1 July 2010 at St Mark's Church & Community Centre, Calder Rise, Bedford commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs Fitzpatrick (Chairman), Blakeman, Buchanan, Chambers, Green, Laybourn, Waterhouse, Wilkins, Seymour. PC Dave Hawkey attended for items 5 and 6. The Clerk to the Council, Delia Shephard, was in attendance. Two members of the public attended for part of the meeting.

Absent: Cllr Ovenell, Cllr Marriott (holiday), Cllr Rider (Borough commitment), Cllr Royden (prior commitment)

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| <p>1 Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Ovenell, Marriott, Rider, Royden and Seymour.
It was resolved: to accept the apologies for absence.</p> | Clerk |
| <p>2 Declarations of interest in items on the agenda
Cllr Waterhouse declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the matters pertaining to the allotments because of his allotment tenancy.</p> | |
| <p>3 Minutes of Previous Meeting
It was resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 24 May 2010 as a correct record.</p> | Clerk |
| <p>4 Public Open Session
The members of the public expressed concern about the implications of the Bedford Borough's Draft Allocations and Designations Policy for Brickhill. Mr Tenant, a resident of Tyne Crescent, was concerned about the size of planned houses near to Ashmead Road which were on very large plots. The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council's response to the Draft Allocations and Designations Policy would be discussed during the meeting</p> | |
| <p>5 Police Matters
PC Dave Hawkey gave a verbal report on policing in Brickhill and circulated local crime figures. There had been 10 burglaries in the parish (5 were attempted burglaries) and garden sheds were also being targeted. However, criminal damage offences had reduced. Antisocial behaviour was still being addressed; no specific hotspots had been identified although problems in Woodlands and on Goldcrest Way were still taking up police time. The 5-a-side football tournament would finish on Tuesday 6 July 2010. It had been extremely successful and it was hoped to repeat the event next summer.
<i>(Cllr Seymour joined the meeting.)</i>
In response to a question PC Hawkey confirmed that Bedfordshire Police had no funding for Community Safety Forums and the Brickhill Forum had been previously funded from the personal funds of members.</p> | |
| <p>6 Bedford Borough Draft Allocations and Designations Consultation:
It was resolved: to deal with agenda item 9 next ie the response to the Borough's Allocations and Designations Consultation document and the Council members scrutinized and discussed the relevant maps and documents. The inclusion of three sites near Manton Lane was noted.
It was resolved: to make the following responses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Brickhill Parish Council does not agree with the Urban Area Boundary review principles para 16.6 iii which states that "open spaces adjoining the main existing built-up area will be excluded from the urban area except where they are enclosed by a major road or other clearly defined boundary | |

such as a river.” The Parish Council does not regard these criteria as the most useful in determining whether open spaces should be included in the urban area.

2. Para 16.8 excludes the Nature Reserve North of Curlew Crescent (and presumably the Community Orchard) but Brickhill Parish Council would argue that these open spaces are as much an integral part of the built up area as the allotments site or the school grounds at Beauchamp Middle School. For this reason the Parish Council believes that these amenities should be included inside the urban area boundary.
3. Para 16.11 Brickhill Parish Council agrees that the area of land around Ashmead Road and to the north of Tyne Crescent (ie the Woodlands Park housing estate) should be incorporated into the urban boundary. However, the Parish Council cannot comment on the exact position of this part of the boundary change as (according to the A&D consultation draft) it is not yet determined. It is the Parish Council’s view that consideration should be given to the inclusion of all or part of the proposed Country Park within the urban area. The proposed parkland should again become an integral feature of the urban area as it provides an important amenity to the built area.
4. Brickhill Parish Council has given consideration to the Urban Open Spaces and Gaps Policy AD47 and the Local Gaps Policy AD48. The Parish Council is in support of these policies and particularly welcomes the inclusion of the gap between Cleat Hill and the main built up area of Bedford as being worthy of additional protection to prevent coalescence and to preserve the separate identity of Cleat Hill.
5. The Parish Council agrees with the policies proposed to protect local shopping included in Chapter 10 of the document.

6 Financial Matters:

7.1 A financial report had been circulated showing transactions against budget from 24 May to end of June and this was noted (copy in minute book). The following accounts were put forward for approval

Cheque No	Payee	Details	Amount
100133	Bedford Security Services	Padlock and keys	£57.26
100134	ARC Restoration	Repair to notice board	£47.00
100135	Anglian Water	Allotments water supply	£435.22
100136	P Hawking	Allotments maintenance	£162.00
100137	St Mark’s Church	Photocopying	£36.27
100139	Taste Real Food	Community Grant	£200.00
100140	Mrs J Barrow	Delivery of newsletter	£153.00
100141 & 100142	Staff salaries (June)		£1878.03

It was resolved: to approve the accounts for payment.

7.2 The council discussed allotment rents for the year beginning 1 October 2010 noting that there had been a substantial increase in October 2009. The recent adoption of the Brickhill Allotments Strategy meant that existing tenants with multiple plots who qualified for a concessionary rent would only be entitled to the

concession on the first plot.

It was resolved: that the allotment rents for the year beginning 1 October 2010 remain as £52 (full) and £30 (concession). *(Cllr Waterhouse did not participate in the vote or the discussion preceding it.)*

7.3 An application for a grant in the sum of £120 been made by Mrs Brian Marsh on behalf of Brickhill Community Safety Forum. Cllrs Fitzpatrick and Seymour declared a personal interest in this item by way of their membership of Brickhill Community Safety Forum Committee. The Forum had no funds and was unable to secure funds from Bedfordshire Police or any other source. The Forum incurs expenses for room hire etc for its regular quarterly community meetings. The Forum had supplied its constitution but had no bank account.

Clerk

It was resolved: to approve a grant in the sum of £120 to Brickhill Community Safety Forum, the funds to be held by the Parish Council and applications to meet Community Safety expenses from this sum would be authorised by the Parish Council in the usual way at Parish Council meetings. Applications would be submitted in writing to the Clerk and would first be approved by the Community Safety Forum.

(Cllr Fitzpatrick and Cllr Seymour did not participate in this vote.)

Clerk

7 Website:

A report from the Clerk on difficulties experienced with ParishCouncil.net and the development of a new website had been circulated before the meeting (copy in minute book). The report contained alternative proposals for making provision for the website (either by using the services of vision ICT or Simon Edgar) which were discussed. Cllr Wilkins noted that it was still possible to make use of the Project Involve Website option which was free and supported by Bedford Borough Council and urged the Council to reconsider this possibility. The clerk confirmed that she had attended training on Project Involve and was able to use the relevant software. The merits of all the alternative proposals were discussed at length.

It was resolved: to withdraw from the agreement to work with ParishCouncil.net and seek alternative website provision.

Clerk

It was resolved: to authorise Simon Edgar of NYS to create a customised website for Brickhill Parish Council at a cost not exceeding £510 and for the website to be maintained by him at a cost not exceeding £35 per month.

Clerk

8 Boundary Commission Response:

The Council discussed the Boundary Commission's published draft recommendations for the electoral arrangements of Bedford Borough Council which excluded the Ellis Road part of Brickhill from the Ward of Brickhill and involved changes to the existing Brickhill Parish Ward Boundaries.

It was resolved: to submit the following comments to the Boundary Commission for their consideration –

Clerk

1. Ellis Road

Brickhill Parish Council remains opposed to the transfer of the Ellis Road area to De Parys ward on the grounds that the Ellis Road area is a part of the distinctive and cohesive community of Brickhill.

2. St Thomas More School and Houses in Mowsbury Park

Equally, the Parish Council remains convinced that St Thomas More School and the four properties in Mowsbury Park are an integral part of the distinctive and cohesive community of Brickhill. Their inclusion in the Clapham Ward disregards the geographical access to these properties, their isolation from the community of Clapham and the principle of a clearly identifiable boundary for each ward. The Parish Council understands both the legal constraints of the Bedford Electoral Review which precludes any

recommendations affecting the external boundaries of parish councils and the Commission's reluctance to create a parish ward of four electors in Clapham. However, the Parish Council understands that Bedford Borough Council is committed to undertaking a community governance review in the very near future during which the Brickhill parish boundary could be amended to address this problem. Therefore the ward of four electors could be a very temporary phenomenon. Unless a pragmatic and joined up approach to this process is developed it is very difficult for the Parish Council to see how any anomalies in ward boundaries can ever be corrected.

3. Brickhill Parish Electoral Arrangements

Brickhill Parish Council does not regard the proposed new warding arrangements contained within the draft recommendations as satisfactory. The proposed arrangements would not provide electoral equality. The proposed one member Ellis Road ward would only contain 99 electors which is totally disproportionate to the number of electors per councillor in the other three wards.

Again the Parish Council has requested a review of its external boundary and understands that Bedford Borough Council is willing to undertake this review in the near future. The Parish Council hopes that this review will result in changes to the external boundary of the parish eg inclusion of Woodlands Park in the Brickhill parish. If so, there will be a need to review internal parish warding arrangements again. Clearly this is outside the scope of the current review but the Parish Council is unwilling to suggest a new internal warding scheme for the parish at a time when this review is anticipated.

9 Consultation on Waste Core Strategy

A consultation on the Waste Core Strategy document produced by Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council has been sent to the Parish Council for review.

It was resolved: to make no comment on this consultation.
(Cllr Laybourn left the meeting.)

10 Freight Strategy Workshop

Cllr Blakeman had attended a Freight Strategy Workshop held by Bedford Borough Council on 17 June 2010 and had circulated a report summarising the information provided (copy in minute book). It was noted that a consultation would be held in the July and a final document would be presented to the Executive Council on 15 September 2010.

It was resolved: to write to Bedford Borough Council in the meantime advising that Brickhill Parish Council did not wish to see increased HGV traffic on any roads in the parish.

Clerk

11 Gathering on the Green

A report on progress and preparations for the Parish Council's Gathering on the Green event on 4th August 2010 had been circulated in advance of the meeting and the contents were discussed. The Clerk noted that the success of the event was dependent on support from Parish Councillors and volunteers and everyone was encouraged to offer help especially before and after the event. Cllr Green asked whether the Mayor had been invited and the Clerk confirmed that this would be arranged.

Clerk
All Councillors

12 Annual Report of Brickhill Parish Council

The council noted that Brickhill Parish Council annual report had been published in June before the QPS deadline of 30 June 2010. Printed copies had been placed in the community centres in Brickhill and an electronic version was available on the website.

DRAFT

Approved by Chairman
2 September 2010