

**Minutes of a meeting of Brickhill Parish Council held on Thursday 2 September 2010 at St Mark's Church & Community Centre, Calder Rise, Bedford commencing at 7.30 pm**

**Present:** Cllrs Fitzpatrick (Chairman), Blakeman, Buchanan, Chambers, Laybourn, Royden, Waterhouse, Wilkins, and Seymour. PC Dave Hawkey attended for item 5. Gordon Pearsall of Bedfordshire Police attended for part of the meeting. Seven members of the public attended for part of the meeting. The Clerk to the Council, Delia Shephard, was in attendance

**Absent:** Cllr Green, Cllr Ovenell, Cllr Marriott, Cllr Rider

	<b><u>Action</u></b>	
1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Green, Ovenell (unwell), Marriott (holiday) and Rider (Borough commitment). Cllr Royden had attended for the public open session but was unable to stay due to a Borough commitment and gave apologies for leaving the meeting early. <b>It was resolved:</b> to accept the apologies for absence.</p>	
2	<p><b>Declarations of interest in items on the agenda</b> Cllr Waterhouse declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the matters pertaining to the allotments because of his allotment tenancy.</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> <b>It was resolved:</b> to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1 July May 2010 as a correct record.</p>	
4	<p><b>Public Open Session</b> <i>Several members of the public had attended the meeting to express concerns about the very recent introduction of the new number 10 bus service between Woodlands and Bedford Bus &amp; Railway Stations. These concerns included the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Use of Larkway and Falcon Avenue as part of route:</b> <i>it was said that these were quiet roads in proximity to schools, residents had not been consulted about the introduction of buses to these roads, and the roads were heavily parked during day and night and therefore were unsuitable for buses. There would be a safety issue for children and other pedestrians attending Brickhill Lower. There would be damage to the grass verges and a hazard as buses would mount the pavement/verge. It was asserted that Falcon Avenue was 5m wide and too narrow for buses. One resident of Falcon Avenue said he did not want buses on his road.</i></li><li>• <b>Noise and timing of buses:</b> <i>it was said that the noise of the buses (beginning from 6.30 am) was totally unacceptable to residents. The timing of the buses was said to be inappropriate.</i></li><li>• <b>Unsuitable position of stops:</b> <i>it was said that the bus stops had been positioned to fit in with lamp-posts and were in unsafe locations and residents had not been consulted about bus stops near their homes</i></li><li>• <b>Unsuitable route:</b> <i>it was argued that the route of the new service was not suitable, it would be better to join the Woodlands service to the no 6 route. Several residents felt it would be better to route the bus service along Brickhill Drive, Linnet Way and Waveney Avenue avoiding Larkway and Falcon Avenue. Others argued that Dove Road should be used.</i></li><li>• <b>Lack of Consultation:</b> <i>several residents were disappointed that there had been no direct and formal consultation with residents about the provision of the service and no warning of its introduction with bus stops erected at the weekend.</i></li></ul> <p><i>The Chairman advised residents that the Parish Council had not been directly</i></p>	

*consulted or involved in the introduction of the new bus service which had been arranged by Bedford Borough Council and Stagecoach. In the past the Parish Council had campaigned successfully for proposed bus routes to be changed (eg Westrope Way) and the Parish Council's job was to listen to local concerns and represent the whole community's views to the relevant agencies. He reminded the meeting that buses previously ran down Larkway to Brickhill Drive (via Dove Road) and that the funding for the new service had come from S106 planning obligation money which was a condition of the planning permission granted for the housing development at Woodlands Park imposed by the Planning Inspector.*

*Cllr Royden, Brickhill Ward Councillor for Bedford Borough advised members of the public that he was aware of local concerns which seemed to focus around the position of stops and the route which the bus was taking. He had already asked Stagecoach to move several bus-stops. Relevant officers from Stagecoach, Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Police had been involved in the initial siting of the bus stops. Cllr Royden confirmed that if the route or any bus stop was unsafe then no member of the Parish Council would wish to retain it. Stagecoach had determined that Dove Road was unsuitable for the bus service and this was why Falcon Avenue had been used. Stagecoach did not want to duplicate the existing service on Kimbolton Road and Brickhill Drive (no 6). Many Brickhill residents, including the elderly, did want additional bus service provision in the area. The new service had been introduced using S106 money as a subsidy but if the route did not prove to be commercially viable Stagecoach would not run the service after the initial subsidy (approx £100,000) had been used.*

*Following further discussion between members of the public and Parish Councillors it was agreed that the Parish Council would ask Stagecoach and Bedford Borough Council to participate in a public meeting to explore issues around the bus service and its route once the service had been running for a few weeks. The Parish Council would publicise this meeting.*

*Gordon Pearsall of Bedfordshire Police had been invited to attend the Parish Council meeting by Cllr Stuart Buchanan to discuss issues connected with traffic calming and traffic collisions in Brickhill. The Parish Council agreed that this was an important subject which merited a separate discussion and a formal agenda item. Mr Pearsall was thanked for his attendance and advised that he would be invited to make a formal presentation to the Parish Council at a later date.*

## **5 Police Matters**

PC Dave Hawkey circulated crime figures for Brickhill and noted increases in violent crime, criminal damage and theft whilst vehicle crime had reduced. The figures included Woodlands Park and there had been high visibility policing on this estate in recent weeks. Problems with anti-social behaviour had been addressed by this and by action from bpha. A school parking vehicle was being organised and would be attending the Brickhill schools. The next meeting of the Community Safety Forum would be on 14 October 2010 at 7.30 pm at Brickhill Baptist Church. Neighbourhood Watch Workshop would be on 11 October at 7.30 pm at St Mark's. Police Smartwater supplies for Brickhill had been exhausted.

**It was resolved:** to donate any remaining PC Smartwater supplies to the Brickhill Safer Neighbourhood Team for use before they reached their use-by date.

The Chairman thanked PC Hawkey for his report and for the work that he and the police cadets had done at the Gathering on the Green in August.

## **6 Financial Matters:**

6.1 A financial report had been circulated showing transactions against budget to

the end of August and this was noted (copy in minute book). The Clerk advised that the allotment figures did not include staff salary costs which were all shown in the general payroll column, a corrected version of the report would be produced and circulated. The Clerk drew attention to the fact that the Parish Council's funds were still all held in Co-op Bank Accounts. It had not been possible to transfer £25,000 to Fixed Term Guaranteed Rate Investment Bonds as previously agreed as the Bonds considered were either closed or would not accept an investment in the name of a Parish Council. Further research on investment opportunities would be undertaken. The following accounts were put forward for approval

Cheque No	Payee	Details	Amount
100180	NALC	quality status application fee	117.50
100181	St Marks Church	Hall Hire	26.00
		Office Rent	300.00
100182	White Hart Press	Newsletter print costs	415.00
	P Hawking Gardening		
100183	Services	Allotment plot clearance	198.00
		Gardening Vouchers for	
		allotment competition	30.00
100184	A Southern	Allotment Keys and spare locks	86.35
100185	Bedford Security Service	Membership to Association	64.73
100186	NSALG		
100187,			
189		Staff Salaries	1,877.83
100188	M Bowler	Plot Deposit refund	50.00
100190	A Southern	Postage for allotment renewals	56.58
100191	BDO LLP	External Audit Fee for 09/10	470.00
100192	Supplies Team	Toner cartridges b&w and colour	299.88
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,991.87</b>

**It was resolved:** to approve the accounts for payment.

6.2 **It was resolved:** to note completion of the annual external audit and receipt of the external audit report. There were no matters to be brought to the council's attention by the auditors.

6.3 **It was resolved:** to arrange a meeting of the Finance Advisory Group to begin budget preparation by the end of September 2010.

6.4 A request from Cllr Royden to consider contributing to the cost of publicity leaflets for the number 10 bus service did not find favour with the Council.

## 7 Village Green

A report on the Eighth National Seminar on Common Land and Town and Village Greens which had been attended by Cllr Seymour had been circulated before the meeting and was noted.

**It was resolved:** to formally request Bedford Borough Council for voluntary registration of Waveney Green as a village green and to write to the Mayor of Bedford to request his support with this application.

Clerk

## 8 Gathering on the Green 2010

An evaluation report prepared by the Clerk on the Gathering on the Green community event held on 4 August 2010 had been circulated before the meeting.

**It was resolved:** to thank Brickhill Community Centre for its support with this event and to repeat the event in the summer of 2011.

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| 9  | <p><b>Brickhill Sustainable Community Pilot</b><br/>         The Clerk reported that good progress had been made by the Steering Group responsible for the Brickhill Sustainable Community Plan. Mr Simon Baldrey, resident of Brickhill, had been elected as Chairman of the Group. Arrangements for distribution and collection of community questionnaires were in hand and support from Parish Councillors with this task would be greatly appreciated. The next stage was collation of the data from the questionnaires and discussion of a draft action plan at a multiagency workshop to be held on 10 November 2010 (provisional date) venue to be determined.</p>                  |                   |
| 10 | <p><b>Brickhill Allotments</b><br/>         A report on management of Brickhill allotments was tabled (copy in minute book).<br/> <b>It was resolved:</b> to continue to monitor problems with bonfires and to co-operate with the Environmental Health Department at Bedford Borough Council.<br/> <b>It was resolved:</b> to arrange a bulk purchase of straw and manure for the benefit of allotment tenants. The Parish Council would fund the initial outlay and collect monies due from the tenants directly. Delivery would be to plot 131.<br/> <b>It was resolved:</b> to move the allotment noticeboard from its position by the gates to plot 131 at the centre of the site.</p> | Clerk             |
| 11 | <p><b>Quality Parish Council Accreditation Application</b><br/>         The clerk advised that the Council's QPS application would be submitted during the next fortnight.</p>  | Clerk<br>Chairman |
| 12 | <p><b>Special Area Charges</b><br/>         The Parish Council noted correspondence concerning a review of Special Area Charges which was being conducted by Bedford Borough Council. The Clerk had prepared a draft schedule of information (copy in minute book) to be submitted to the Borough.<br/> <b>It was resolved:</b> to submit the schedule as presented but with the addition of staff costs for the allotment service.<br/> <b>It was resolved;</b> to ask the Borough Council to clarify the way the charges have been and are to be calculated and to raise the whole topic at the next Parish and Town Council Network meeting at the Borough.</p>                          | Clerk<br>Clerk    |
| 13 | <p><b>Consultation on local referendums to veto excessive council tax increases</b><br/>         A draft response to the government's consultation on local referendums to veto excessive council tax increases had been prepared by the clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and circulated before the meeting.<br/> <b>It was resolved:</b> to approve the draft response and submit it to the consultation.</p>   | Clerk             |
| 14 | <p><b>Correspondence</b><br/> <b>14.1</b> A Letter from Enforcement Officer Environmental Health, Bedford Borough Council re Bonfires at Brickhill Allotments was noted, the Clerk had already replied on behalf of the council.<br/> <b>14.2</b> Nominations to County Committee of BATPC had been requested.<br/> <b>It was resolved:</b> to nominate Mark Fitzpatrick to the Committee of BATPC.</p>   | Clerk             |