

**Minutes of a meeting of Brickhill Parish Council held on Thursday 7 January 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, Marriott, Seymour, Waterhouse, and Wilkins. The Clerk to the Council, Delia Shephard, was in attendance. PC Dave Hawkey attended for part of the meeting.

**Apologies:** Cllrs Rider and Royden (Borough Council commitment), Cllr Ovenell.

	<b><u>Apologies for absence</u></b> The apologies for absence were accepted. Cllr Laybourn apologised for her planned early departure at 8.30 pm.	<b><u>Action</u></b>
2	<b><u>Declaration of Interests in matters on the agenda</u></b> Cllr Waterhouse declared a personal interest in all matters pertaining to the allotments because of his allotment tenancy.	
3	<b><u>Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2009</u></b> <b>It was resolved:</b> to approve the minutes as a correct record.	
4	<b><u>Public Open Session</u></b> No members of the public were present.	
5	<b><u>Complaints</u></b> The Council received a written report from the Clerk concerning two recent complaints to the Parish Council (copy in minute book). It was noted that the complaint of bullying made by Mr S A M Thornley against the Parish Council had been considered by the Complaints Committee and had not been upheld. It was also noted that a further complaint of financial irregularity made by Mr S A M Thornley against the Parish Council had been refuted by the Clerk and reported to the Parish Council's External Auditors. The Parish Council endorsed the Clerk's action in dealing with this complaint which followed the correct procedures for a complaint concerning the finances of the council.	
6	<b><u>Allotments</u></b> The Council received a written report from the Clerk concerning management of Brickhill Allotments (copy in minute book) and discussed the contents. <b>Resolved:</b> to instruct the Clerk to write to Mr S A M Thornley in reference to his tenancies on plots 134, 135 and 137 and require him to sign an undertaking to remove all willow from his plots by 28 February 2010. The signed undertaking from Mr Thornley should be received by the Parish Council within 7 days of date of receipt of the letter; otherwise notice to quit on all three plots would be served. If the willows were not removed by 28 February 2010 notice to quit on all three plots would be served. If all three plots were not in full cultivation by 1 October 2010 notice to quit would be served on one or more of the plots. The Clerk was instructed to bank Mr Thornley's rent cheque upon receipt of the signed undertaking. <b>Resolved:</b> to write a letter to Mr S A M Thornley to be signed by the Chairman warning him that recent comments about the Clerk were unacceptable and constituted a form of harassment which would not be tolerated in line with the Council's adopted Dignity at work and anti-bullying policy.	Clerk  MF
7	<b><u>Police Matters</u></b> PC Dave Hawkey advised that reported crime figures in Brickhill were reduced compared with previous months. Burglaries had been less frequent and no complaint of Anti-social Behaviour at Mowsbury Park had been made since 22 September 2009. ASB Reports from Rooksmead were also reduced. Anti-social behaviour in Goldcrest Way continued	

	but an eviction notice had been served. There had been a fatal road traffic collision on Brickhill Drive during the early hours of 3 January 2010.																																					
8	<p><b><u>Financial Report and Accounts for Payment</u></b> A financial report showing expenditure against budget was circulated and the contents noted.</p> <p>Accounts for approval:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Cheque No</th> <th>Payee</th> <th>Details</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>100075</td> <td>Information Commissioner</td> <td>Renewal register entry</td> <td>£35.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100076</td> <td>SLCC</td> <td>Professional fees - ILCM membership Clerk</td> <td>£80.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100077</td> <td>D T A Tomkins</td> <td>Rota digging allotments</td> <td>£322.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10078 &amp; 10079</td> <td>Staff</td> <td>Salaries (Jan)</td> <td>£1,793.08</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100080</td> <td>HMRC</td> <td>Q3 PAYE &amp; NIC</td> <td>£1,530.84</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100081</td> <td>Pest"N"Us</td> <td>Rabbit control</td> <td>£110.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100082</td> <td>St Marks</td> <td>Office rental (Aug and Dec)</td> <td>£510.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100082</td> <td>Hall hire</td> <td>Complaints, Planning</td> <td>£17.87</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Resolved:</b> to approve the accounts for payment.</p>	Cheque No	Payee	Details	Amount	100075	Information Commissioner	Renewal register entry	£35.00	100076	SLCC	Professional fees - ILCM membership Clerk	£80.00	100077	D T A Tomkins	Rota digging allotments	£322.00	10078 & 10079	Staff	Salaries (Jan)	£1,793.08	100080	HMRC	Q3 PAYE & NIC	£1,530.84	100081	Pest"N"Us	Rabbit control	£110.00	100082	St Marks	Office rental (Aug and Dec)	£510.00	100082	Hall hire	Complaints, Planning	£17.87	Clerk
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9	<p><b><u>Budget</u></b> A draft budget for the financial year 2010-11 prepared on a “continuation” basis had been prepared and circulated by the Clerk in advance of the meeting along with a reserves planning document, this resulted in the need to draw on the Parish Council’s reserves in order to meet anticipated expenditure. These documents had been amended by Cllr Seymour and copies of the amended version were circulated at the meeting (copy in minute book). It was noted that the amended budget resulted in a “break even” budget. The budget was discussed. It was agreed to explore the use of investment bonds for reserve funds in order to maximise return.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> to adopt the revised 2010-11 budget proposed by Cllr Seymour.</p>	Clerk																																				
10	<p><b><u>Precept</u></b> It was noted that the precept figure in the budget would equate to an increase of approximately £2 per year for the average Band D house.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> to set the precept for Brickhill for the year 2010-11 at £57,700 and to authorise the Clerk and Chairman to complete the necessary paperwork outside the meeting.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that the Chairman would write an article for the March newsletter explaining the rationale for the increase in precept and the details of the budget.</p>	Clerk, MF  MF																																				
11	<p><b><u>Amendment to Standing Orders</u></b> Cllr Seymour had prepared a paper proposing changes to the way meetings were conducted by the Parish Council in the future and in particular relating to the length, agenda setting and completeness of information presented at meetings (copy in minute book). These proposals would necessitate changes to Standing Orders and the Council discussed these in some detail.</p>																																					

	<p><b>Resolved:</b> with immediate effect to amend adopted standing orders to incorporate the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A meeting of Brickhill Parish Council should normally continue for no more than two hours.</li> <li>2. With immediate effect at the expiry of the two hour period the Chairman will prioritise the agenda so that urgent business is immediately addressed and</li> <li>3. After two hours thirty minutes following the commencement of the meeting (unless there is a resolution to the contrary) the Chairman is required to declare the meeting closed with any business which is not concluded being deferred to the start of the next meeting.</li> </ol> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that Brickhill Parish Council reaffirms standing order number 20 and instructs Chairman and Clerk to ensure that relevant reports and discussion papers are circulated with the agenda and summons calling the meeting.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that Brickhill Parish Council agrees that the Clerk is solely responsible for the preparation of all agendas for meetings bearing in mind representations made by Councillors, priority of items to be addressed, the completeness of information available for each agenda item and to include on the agenda a suggestion or recommend action from the Clerk for the guidance of Councillors.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p>
<p>12</p>	<p><b><u>Boundary Committee Review</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Green presented a draft submission to the Boundary Committee's Electoral Review of Bedford Borough Council noting that it had not been possible to produce a full and formal evidence-based warding proposal based upon three member wards as there had been no support for such a scheme from the Borough Council. The Parish Council discussed a number of amendments to the submission and instructed the Clerk to add information about Ellis Road and about the road access to the houses by Mowsbury Park Car Park. The deadline for submissions was 11 January 2010.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> to submit the document, subject to the additions above, to the Bedford Electoral Review and to copy the submission to Ravensden Parish Council and to Bedford Borough Council (copy in minute book). (Cllr Laybourn left the meeting.)</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>13</p>	<p><b><u>Training Statement of Intent</u></b></p> <p>A training statement of intent considered at the November meeting of Brickhill Parish Council was reviewed (copy in minute book).</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> to adopt the training statement of intent with immediate effect.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>14</p>	<p><b><u>Community Engagement Statement of Intent</u></b></p> <p>A draft statement of intent of community engagement had been prepared and circulated by the Clerk in advance of the meeting. It was agreed to amend the Action plan supporting this statement to include engagement with allotment tenants and more involvement from volunteers.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> to adopt the amended statement of intent of community engagement with immediate effect (copy in minute book).</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>15</p>	<p><b><u>Clerk's Performance Appraisal</u></b></p> <p>Arrangements for conducting the Clerk's annual performance appraisal were discussed. The appraisal was overdue.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> to authorise the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to select an additional Council Member to work with them to conduct the Clerk's performance appraisal as soon as possible.</p>	<p>MF, RS Clerk</p>

