

Minutes of the Meeting of Brickhill Parish Council held virtually on Thursday 4th February 2021 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllrs Fitzpatrick, Holloway, Green, Blakeman, Ward, Durham, Johns, Charles Royden, Rider, Corinne Royden, Grant, Reeve, Jarman-Webb, Rani, Borough Cllrs Phillippa Martin-Moran-Bryant and Moon, nine members of the public and the Clerk (Mrs S Bottoms) were in attendance.

Absent: None.

Summary of the meeting: -

Table 1 – The Minutes

Item	Description	Action by
1.	Apologies for Absence: None.	
2.	Declarations of interest in items on the agenda: i) To receive written requests for a dispensation: None received. ii) To consider any requests for a dispensation: None.	
3.	To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7th January 2021: The minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.	

Item	Description	Action by
4.	<p>To consider action to fill the vacancy in the East Ward through co-option:</p> <p>It was resolved that the Clerk would advertise the vacancy with the intention of considering applicants at the March meeting.</p>	Clerk
5.	<p>Public Open Session (15 mins):</p> <p>East-West Rail:</p> <p>Mr Brent Fielder, Chairman of Wilden Parish Council said that Wilden Parish Council are part of a group of parish councils opposed to the plan by E-W Rail to run a double track line through those parishes and Brickhill. In his view, Route E is the wrong route.</p> <p>In the fight against this, a Facebook page has been set up as well as a meeting with the relevant Government minister and also a petition.</p> <p>The group support moving freight off the roads resulting in less pollution and congestion, but support a route running south of Bedford (near Wixams) running eastwards from there and not through the centre of Bedford.</p> <p>E-W Rail originally proposed 5 possible routes, two north running through Brickhill and Bedford and two south of Bedford. The group believes the route should be chosen on three key criteria : -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic, minimising cost to the tax payer whilst generating the most benefit. Route E in the technical report of 2019 was the most expensive. • Secondly environmental, minimising damaging construction and in the long-term avoiding air contamination from diesel particulates. 	

Item	Description	Action by
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finally, the actual use of the line. Originally E-W rail were asked to find a route mainly for passengers, but since then it has become increasingly apparent that it will carry more freight than originally envisaged. <p>E-W Rail has told the group they would never build a mainly freight carrying route through the centre of a busy town and up steep inclines as it was too expensive requiring too much infrastructure.</p> <p>Given the points raised, the group believe that Route E is the wrong route as it will involve a massive engineering project in the centre of Bedford to increase the size of the railway station causing disruption for years. Once the station is completed there will be more traffic driving into Bedford to access the additional trains and freight trains will be running along the route 24 hours a day.</p> <p>The trains will be diesel, not electric.</p> <p>The route is supported by the Mayor and some borough councillors. E-W Rail and the Borough Council now suggest it is a cheap route. The issue is to be debated at the Borough Council on the 24th February.</p> <p>The exact alignment of the route has yet to be announced but is expected in the next couple of months but the corridor is very narrow through Brickhill and Ravensden limiting the options available.</p> <p>He ended by asking that the Parish Council consider joining the fight.</p> <p>Two residents spoke in support of Mr Fielder and asked how the Parish Council can support this route when it runs through a major urban area and it is a blight on the parish running through the green area north of Woodlands Park. The southern edge of the narrow corridor runs right up against the houses.</p> <p>It was noted that when this was debated in the past, the parish councillors for Woodlands Park had not supported it.</p> <p>Mr Fielder said that his expectation is that the Parish Council will listen to residents and oppose it.</p>	

Item	Description	Action by
	<p>Following discussion, it was resolved to arrange an extraordinary meeting to debate this matter in detail. There would be an open session to allow residents to express their views, the meeting would then close to further comments from residents to give parish councillors the opportunity to debate and agree what action the Parish Council wished to take.</p>	Clerk
6.	<p>Financial Matters: To consider and agree action on the following:</p> <p>i) To approve bank reconciliations and any accounts for payment:</p> <p>It was resolved to approve the bank reconciliations and the accounts for payment listed in the table that appears at the end of these minutes.</p> <p>ii) To agree a payroll provider to process the payroll from the 1st April 2021:</p> <p>Following discussion, it was resolved to appoint Mrs Pam Anthony as the payroll provider. The Clerk will make contact with her.</p>	Clerk
7.	<p>To receive reports from the Borough Councillors:</p> <p>A report had been received from the Brickhill councillors and the Clerk would put a copy on the website.</p> <p>Following a question from Cllr Blakeman, Borough Cllr Royden said that the Manton Lane footbridge, which was installed during the snowy weather, will be open once safety checks had been completed.</p>	

Item	Description	Action by
	<p>Referring to a concern about the traffic lights on Kimbolton Road raised at the January Parish Council meeting, he said that the Borough Council are going to install an advance stop line for cyclists at this location, which will pull back the stop line for vehicles by around 4m. This will improve visibility to all of the signal heads while also improving facilities for cyclists at the junction. These works will be carried out together with other measures required following the road safety audit and snagging inspections. We expect this to take place shortly.</p> <p>Highways officers have reviewed visibility to the traffic signal heads on all approaches to the traffic signals and are happy that the recent changes to the signal head louvres do not require any further adjustment. They also believe that no further signal heads require louvres at this stage; however, this will be monitored over the next few months and additional measures will be installed if deemed necessary.</p> <p>Borough Cllr Moon has spoken to Cllr Rani and is going to arrange a socially distanced site meeting to review remaining snagging issues on Woodlands Park.</p>	Cllr Rani
8.	<p>To agree a plan and timescale for the upgrade of the Mowsbury Walk play area:</p> <p>The Clerk reported that she had met with Reids Playground Maintenance at the play area and asked it to refresh the quotation originally produced at the end of 2019. As the new quotation was approximately £4,000 more than the original, she had sought a further quotation from Playsource, the company who had undertaken the cleaning of the play equipment on Waveney Green completed last year.</p> <p>She had met on site with Cllr Fitzpatrick to consider options.</p> <p>She would meet up with both Cllrs Rani and Fitzpatrick once the new quotation has been received.</p>	Clerk

Item	Description	Action by
9.	<p>To receive any update on the installation of the grasscrete parking area in Rooksmead:</p> <p>Cllr Royden said that he expected it to be completed before the end of this financial year.</p>	
10.	<p>To receive any update on the average speed cameras in Brickhill Drive:</p> <p>The Clerk had circulated a proposed scheme layout received from Allan Burls of Bedford Borough Council. Mr Burls was also consulting with the police and was awaiting a response.</p> <p>Cllr Durham asked if it was worth investigating a width and weight restriction on Brickhill Drive before the new distribution facility off Manton Lane is open. The quickest way to the A1 is via Brickhill Drive and the new facility will increase heavy goods vehicle movements significantly. Such a restriction would also stop heavy goods vehicles coming through Brickhill from Wentworth Drive. Other roads in Brickhill experience this problem including Waveney Avenue.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick noted that this would be a highways matter but one problem is that Brickhill Drive is a distributor road.</p> <p>Cllr Grant asked whether a time limit on such vehicle movements was an option to remove disruption which would be caused to residents from night traffic. Cllr Royden said that an approach could be made to the Borough Council to find out the options. Brickhill Drive is an arterial route and also a bus route so width restrictions would not be acceptable. It is important to take care not to then direct vehicles to use other Brickhill roads. Weight restrictions are only enforceable by the police but that is difficult for them to patrol.</p> <p>It was resolved to ask the Borough Council to review the options including advising the vehicle owners to use major roads which keep heavy vehicles out of Brickhill.</p>	Clerk

Item	Description	Action by
11.	<p>To review the Grant Application Criteria and agree any changes needed:</p> <p>The Clerk had circulated a copy of the Grant Application Criteria for councillors to consider.</p> <p>It was resolved that the Grant Application Criteria would remain unchanged but that in future the Parish Council would be more stringent in deciding to whom they give grants. It will only give grants to organisation or groups based in Brickhill or who are primarily serving Brickhill residents and not to larger organisations who may include in their range of people they support, some Brickhill residents.</p> <p>It is for Brickhill residents themselves from their personal funds to choose whether or not to support such organisations.</p>	
12.	<p>To discuss the power cuts in the Moriston Road, Rede Close, Tyne Crescent area and agree any action:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick had circulated supporting information about an intermittent power problem affecting about 50 homes in this area. With more residents at home at the moment and in particular working from home this is a particular problem.</p> <p>It was resolved that the Parish Council take this issue up with UK Network Power who have responsibility for the substation covering this area.</p>	Clerk

Item	Description	Action by
13.	<p>To discuss BPHA plans to replace garage blocks in Mallard Hill and Rooksmead with houses:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick had circulated supporting documentation about this. There have been problems with the garages in these areas with underuse, anti-social behaviour and with being too narrow for modern vehicles. To date there appears to have been no community consultation unlike that which took place with the garages on Brickhill Drive opposite Fosters Brow.</p> <p>The BPHA proposals were discussed at the Borough Council's recent Housing Committee meeting. BPHA have a large project to review all their garage stock and decide future action.</p> <p>It was resolved that the Clerk should write to BPHA to request more formal community consultation on its proposals for these two sites ahead of the submission of any planning applications.</p>	Clerk
14.	<p>Correspondence: List circulated separately.</p> <p>Letter from BATPC regarding extending remote meeting regulations:</p> <p>It was resolved that the Clerk should write to both MP's covering the Brickhill Parish to seek their support in lobbying the Government to extend the remote meeting regulations to beyond the 7th May 2021. The letter makes it clear that NALC and other local government bodies are also pressing the Government for this. BATPC has written to all 6 MPs covering the Bedfordshire region.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick will also raise this at the Town and Parish Councils Network meeting on the 11th February.</p>	Clerk Cllr Fitzpatrick

Item	Description	Action by
15.	<p>To review the list of outstanding matters and agree any further action:</p> <p>i) Installation of sleepers on Ashmead Road:</p> <p>It was resolved that Cllrs Fitzpatrick, Holloway and Jarman-Webb will try to arrange a site meeting.</p> <p>ii) Attendance by Police at future Parish Council meetings:</p> <p>The Clerk will continue to press to get them to attend.</p>	<p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p> <p>Clerk</p>
16.	<p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>Thursday 4th March 2021, at 7.30pm on Zoom. Joining details will be attached to the February agenda and available on the Parish Council website.</p>	

Table 2 - Bank Reconciliations for Approval (see Point 6 above)

Payee	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Details
Bedford Borough Council	DD	£ 3,598.03	Salaries January
Bedford Daycare Hospice	BACS 72	£ 500.00	Grant
Urban Vision	BACS 73	£ 1,890.00	NDP Consultancy
NPower	BACS 74	£ 53.52	Electricity for the Fountain
Bedford Borough Council	BACS 75	£ 1,073.70	WG litter and grass
	Total Payments	£ 7,115.25	

Approved by

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 Chairman
 4th March 2021