

### Minutes of the Meeting of Brickhill Parish Council held virtually on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 commencing at 7.30pm.

**Present:**

Cllrs Fitzpatrick, Green, Blakeman, Ward, Durham, Charles Royden, Rider, Corinne Royden, Grant, Jarman-Webb, Rani, Brazier, Borough Cllr Moon, 154 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.	<b>Apologies for Absence:</b> Cllrs Holloway and Johns and Borough Cllr Phillippa Martin-Moran-Bryant.	
2.	<p><b>Declarations of interest in items on the agenda:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) To receive written requests for a dispensation: None received.</li> <li>ii) To consider any requests for a dispensation: With regards item 7. Cllr Fitzpatrick declared that he is paid employee of Network Rail but had no financial interest in EWR. He did not take part in the voting at the extraordinary meeting but will vote under item 7 below in terms of how to progress the decision taken at that meeting.</li> </ul>	

Item	Description	Action by
3.	<p><b>To consider and agree action re: recording the parish council and committee meetings and making available on-line: It was resolved</b> to record this meeting and future Zoom Parish Council and committee meetings and make them available via social media. Once meetings become in person again, more thought will need to be given to how that could be managed. Anyone not wishing to have their identities made public would need to take appropriate steps to avoid this. Public chat was to remain open during the public open session then close to only the Clerk during the closed session after item 6.</p>	Clerk
4.	<p><b>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021:</b> The minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p><b>To consider action to fill the vacancy in the East Ward through co-option:</b> The Clerk reported that there had only been one application and she had circulated the resume to the parish councillors in advance of this meeting. Paula Brazier had the opportunity to address this meeting. Cllr Fitzpatrick proposed the co-option of Paula Brazier, this was seconded by Cllr Durham and <b>it was resolved</b> to co-opt her onto the Parish Council. The Clerk forwarded her the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which she duly signed and returned to the Clerk. The Clerk signed the Declaration and Cllr Brazier was now able to participate in the meeting as a parish councillor. Her fellow parish councillors welcomed her to the Parish Council and the Clerk agreed to forward any necessary paperwork to her after this meeting.</p>	Clerk

Item	Description	Action by
6.	<p><b>Public Open Session (15 mins):</b></p> <p>East-West Rail:</p> <p>Mike Barlow said that some Brickhill parish councillors are not listening to residents or worst are listening and ignoring them. At the 4<sup>th</sup> February and the 25<sup>th</sup> February meetings, residents made clear that it was not acceptable for Brickhill Parish Council to continue to support route E. The both those meetings and this has had the largest attendance of any previous Parish Council meeting. He was concerned that Brickhill Borough Councillors, Charles Royden and Wendy Rider had sent on the 1<sup>st</sup> March an open letter to EWR to continue to support route E. Reference in that letter to them also being parish councillors could imply they represent the Parish Council. In his opinion, the EWR consultation in 2019 was flawed and all parish councillors are expected to support the views of the residents and contest the outcome of that consultation. The economic benefits are just as possible from a Southern route with little re-engineering. With regards the environmental impact, the CPRE suggests the least environmental impact is from a Southern route taking a shorter more direct route, fewer tight curves etc. Both EWR and Bedford Borough Council have been evasive regarding freight. With regards noise, the Borough Council has provided its own engineering solution which involves the tightest allowed curve at Clapham, the steepest gradient which is steeper than the engineering rules EWR want using diesel trains which amounts to squealing wheels, revving engines and whining brakes. The dimensions of the corridor for route E as it passes through Brickhill and Clapham is so narrow that it is already as close as it can be to the Northern edge near Twinwoods. It will need to be on a high embankment to cross the valley and noise mitigation will be almost impossible to achieve for Woodlands Park residents. The proposed country park extension and new housing at Graze Hill will face the same scenario as for</p>	

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	<p>Woodlands Park. Any proposal by EWR to take the line any further North would take it outside the corridor in the current consultation and require a re-opening of the consultation. All this could be avoided by contesting the flawed consultation process and driving a process to change it. He is aware of correspondence with councillors since the 25<sup>th</sup> February extraordinary meeting. He is aware of some flawed information circulating e.g. a Southern route will affect the RSPB Reserve at Sandy. This is incorrect as it is South-East of Sandy and the proposed route goes North of Sandy. Brickhill Parish Council represents its residents and not those of Sandy. He believes that Bedford Borough Council has had a significant influence in the selection of route E and have seats on bodies linked to this project. EWR are not keen to share the postcodes where information about the consultation were sent. Few residents recall receiving one. Even so, is this appropriate communication? At its meeting of the EWR Consortium Board in March 2019, EWR says 3,500 attended events and 3,200 responded which they claim totals 7,000. There is likely to be a significant overlap in that some attended more than one event and responded. EWR have done nothing to deal with that double counting. He noted 1700 on the Facebook page, 1800 signed the petition, 330 respondents to the Fuller Zoom call and 8,000 on the Cambridge Approaches petition so well over 10,000. He asked again that the Parish Council vote again to withdraw support for route E and consult on how the Parish Council will fight against it. This issue is about residents lives, well being, homes and financial security. Please reconsider.</p> <p>Resident 2: Supported Mike Barlow. Residents are keen to work with the Parish Council and not against it. She has reflected on the 25<sup>th</sup> February meeting and has discussed with neighbours and other residents. Could the parish councillors confirm their plans and provide clear communication to residents of Brickhill for providing help, support and guidance. Following the last meeting and subsequent updates by parish councillors she is confused as to what is happening. At that meeting, the motion to rescind the decision of</p>	

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	<p>March 2019 was rejected. Parish councillors now seem split and it must be questioned if you can work together. Residents do not know where they stand. Suggestions to do more consultation seems disingenuous. Is it to gauge how angry everyone is? Can we trust you to give a honest view? The recent open letter to EWR by the Brickhill Borough Councillors is, in her opinion, half-hearted as it does not change the outcome of route E or raise the challenges provided by residents in that earlier meeting. There will be no urgency for EWR to respond. There is nothing substantial in it to make EWR review the position. Please consider your positions, look at the detailed evidence we have provided, perhaps apologise and provide reassurance that residents will be listened to and heard.</p> <p>Resident 3: Concerned with suggestions that the 25<sup>th</sup> February meeting had listened to residents and agreed to move forward with a consultation so there was no further need to discuss EWR again this evening. It is important to continue to discuss because consultations are ignored. There were a number with Woodlands Park residents which were generally ignored. Reference was made to the suggestion that Brickhill Parish Council did not consult with residents before agreeing to route E, so how was the decision reached? Residents were clearly not aware of the intention of the Parish Council to support this route. Do the Brickhill Borough Councillors really put Brickhill first? It is said that the Borough Council does not have influence over the decision but Borough Cllr Michael Headley is part of the consortium. Is he the most logical portfolio holder to have on this? The Brickhill Borough Councillors should consider their position, stand down and stand for re-election. In the open letter to EWR there is reference to a little re-engineering of Bedford Station but on the EWR website it says there will be major re-engineering works. So different opinions. Chris Pettifer has been representing Bedford Borough Council on the EWR Consortium Strategic Board in particular on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019 section 9.4 said that Bedford Borough Council are commissioned to identify the</p>	

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	<p>opportunities to develop the rail offer to businesses and residents. What has he done to do this? In the same meeting, section 4.5, Simon Blanchflower, from the EWR Company referred to the importance of providing clarity on the route for the central section at the earliest opportunity. This has not happened.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick thanked all those who participated and hoped that all parish councillors will take the points raised into consideration. He closed the meeting to further public participation although all the public were entitled to continue to listen in and observe the rest of the meeting. Residents are always welcome to attend future Parish Council meetings and raise matters under the public open session.</p>	
7.	<p><b>To note the decision taken at the extraordinary meeting of the parish council held on 25<sup>th</sup> February and to agree actions to be taken as a result:</b></p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick reiterated what he had said under 2ii above and that he would participate in the vote to progress the action agreed at the extraordinary meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> February. He had circulated a timetable to try to achieve a consultation. It is quite a tight timescale so urgent action would be needed to meet the 1<sup>st</sup> April deadline.</p> <p>Cllr Jarman-Webb felt that events have moved quickly since the extraordinary meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> February. He noted the large numbers of attendees at that meeting and this was of the view that a large number were residents of the parish of Brickhill. There have been approximately 20 letters of complaint about the Parish Council forwarded this week to parish councillors. No doubt parish councillors have received personal correspondence. It is disingenuous to suggest it is not clear what the feeling of residents is. The parishioners want the councillors to take action.</p>	

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	<p>Cllr Jarman-Webb proposed a new motion:</p> <p><i>To support the northern village parishes in their opposition to a train line through Clapham, Brickhill, Ravensden and Wilden.</i> This was seconded by Cllr Brazier.</p> <p>Cllr Charles Royden was unable to support this motion. We are currently at the first stage of the non-statutory consultation and we are awaiting the start of the second stage regarding the actual route of the line within the corridor and then there will be a third stage which is a statutory consultation which is when a case is formally made. Route E has cross party support at Borough Council level and by leaders of all political parties. They have all agreed because they do not wish to see the railway by pass Bedford as that is bad for all Bedford residents including Brickhill. We want to get a final route which gets the best for Brickhill residents in terms of preserving all the things they have said are important and both he and Wendy Rider have said are important.</p> <p>Their website was called “Putting Brickhill first” because they wanted to work hard for Brickhill and he believes that they have done that. Freemans Common would have been built on long ago. They want to keep Brickhill green, ensure the Country Park is not touched nor the ancient woodland. It is too early to join a coalition against route E whilst we are still awaiting to hear what the route actually is. It is important that everyone works together.</p> <p>It would be easy to just side with the majority but it is important to be honest and truthful even if that makes us unpopular. Brickhill parish councillors need to work together to get the best for Brickhill residents irrespective of personal views.</p>	

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	<p>Cllr Wendy said it was hurtful to hear suggestions that the Brickhill Borough Councillors do not care about Brickhill residents. She worked hard for the residents of Brickhill for the last nine years and will continue to do so even though there are a lot of people who are very angry at the moment. There are almost 170 on this Zoom meeting tonight, the majority from Brickhill, but we do not know the views of everyone as there are approximately 4,000 houses in the parish. So a consultation is needed to find out their views.</p> <p>Cllr Brazier wants to give leadership for East Ward. Those she has been in contact with are asking that the parish councillors listen so that should happen. The survey will only tell the parish council what is already known and will delay decision. What is wrong with rescinding support for route E given current strength of feeling? If the results of the consultation support route E and the Parish Council has made the wrong decision then route E should be allowed to happen. It may be that some who are involved in the recent meetings and the petition are not Brickhill residents, but we do not know. We need to form alliances with others to fight this. There are solutions which are better both for Bedford and certainly Brickhill.</p> <p>Cllr Green said that the majority who contact him appreciate they live closer to Bedford Station than route E and they appreciate it is better to have the railway come to Bedford than by pass it.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick noted that the new motion presented by Cllr Jarmon-Webb supersedes part of the motion agreed on the 25<sup>th</sup> February. He was unclear if the Parish Council was continuing with a consultation which had been agreed and he was supportive of which is why he circulated a timetable to achieve this ahead of the 1<sup>st</sup> April Parish Council meeting.</p>	

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	<p>Cllr Grant said that the motion agreed at the 25<sup>th</sup> February meeting remains valid and should stay in place. The point was to deal with the complaint that there had been a lack of consultation in 2019 and remove the issue of whether those raising concerns now are Brickhill residents or not. That does not delay matters because that motion requires a vote at the 1<sup>st</sup> April Parish Council meeting as to whether or not to rescind the vote in March 2019. That is irrespective of the consultation results or any appearance by EWR or the Transport Minister.</p> <p>He supported a vote on Cllr Jarman-Webb's proposal because it involves a small amount of preparatory work with other councils in the area to find out what action they are taking. This is also time limited depending on what is decided on the 1<sup>st</sup> April.</p> <p>Cllr Ward supporting voting on the motion proposed by Cllr Jarman-Webb then looking how to put her motion of the 25<sup>th</sup> February into action. This will strengthen any future action taken by the Parish Council.</p> <p>Voting took place on the motion by Cllr Jarman-Webb and the Parish Council <b>resolved</b> to support the motion.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick proposed a timescale to carry out the consultation agreed on the 25<sup>th</sup> February. He proposed using Survey Monkey and asking residents a number of closed questions but also include an area for general comments. Participants would need to provide name, address and e-mail addresses. Confidentiality would be respected. A small subcommittee would then be formed to agree the questions for the questionnaire which would be available in paper form if required. The Parish Council would publicise widely via those present at this meeting as well as social media. We could work with the housing associations and residential homes as well as the shops and school.</p>	

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	<p>The questionnaire would close on the 28<sup>th</sup> March and data would be analysed and a report drawn up for the Parish Council meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> April. It was felt that it was achievable.</p> <p><b>It was resolved</b> to agree to the proposal by Cllr Fitzpatrick. He proposed an initial Zoom meeting for the following evening.</p>	Cllr Fitzpatrick
8.	<p><b>21/00219/MAR Land At Graze Hill Ravensden. Major Reserved Matters Application:</b> Reserved Matters application with the details of Access (part of access road) for the residential development of up to 165 dwellings and an extension to the Country Park, pursuant to Outline permission 19/00593/MAO</p> <p>Cllr Blakeman and members of the Planning Committee had discussed this application. He expressed concern that this additional U-shaped insert into the entrance road to the development site with steep sides will encroach into a significant area of the extended country park and will be readily visible. It is however understood that this is necessary to reduce the gradient of the road and it is difficult to see any other solution. As such the Parish Council should ask that its presence is mitigated as much as possible, possibly with trees and/or shrubs. The extra length of road will also require additional lighting which will increase light pollution. The Parish Council will ask that this is also mitigated as much as possible. Even with this reduction of the road's gradient it will still require significant gritting during certain winter periods and the road at the bottom must enable gritting vehicles and any other large vehicles, including refuse lorries and emergency vehicles visiting the site to be able to turn around easily. Discussion took place around the footpaths, cycleways and crossings, bridges, community safety issues etc into Woodlands Park etc, but it was</p>	

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	<p>agreed that these were not part of this application. Borough Cllr Moon said that the only matter for consideration here is part of the access road, the other matters discussed this evening will be for future consideration. A large chunk of land will need to be taken up to mitigate the slope. Once the orientation of the road is sorted then the estate can be laid out and the other factors referred to above and drainage and the impact on flooding in Woodlands Park will be in the next application which will follow in a number of months. He said that there needs to be a real emphasis on screening or shrouding of lighting because it will be very visible from Woodlands Park. <b>It was resolved</b> that Cllr Blakeman will construct a response and the Clerk will forward this response to the Planning Department.</p>	<p>Cllr Blakeman Clerk</p>
9.	<p><b>Financial Matters:</b> To consider and agree action on the following:</p> <p>i) To approve bank reconciliations and any accounts for payment</p> <p>The Clerk reported that due to technical issues the bank reconciliations will need to be circulated separately and she would do so as soon as possible. The accounts for payment were circulated and <b>it was resolved</b> to settle them.</p> <p>ii) To agree the asset register: The Clerk has added on the new equipment installed on Waveney Green. The asset register had been circulated and <b>it was resolved</b> to accept this. The Clerk will update the website.</p>	<p>Clerk  Clerk</p>

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	<p>iii) To agree the risk assessment: This had been circulated and <b>it was resolved</b> to accept it. The Clerk will implement the recommendation of the external audit agreed at an earlier meeting including formalising the meetings held with Cllr Ward. The Clerk will put a copy on the website.</p>	Clerk
10.	<p><b>To receive reports from the Borough Councillors:</b></p> <p>A report had been received from the Brickhill Borough Councillors and the Clerk had put a copy on the website. Cllr Moon asked that anything in his report not already included in the Brickhill Borough Councillors report to also be included on the website. He reported on his recent walkabout around Woodlands Park with Cllr Rani and he has noted a number of issues which require dealing with some of which are Bedford Borough Council issues and some requiring targeted ward funding. He has an appointment booked with an environmental officer from the Borough Council in a couple of weeks to have another walk around the area.</p> <p>There are problems with the play areas, maintenance issues and some clear failures with regards the green spaces so he will deal with those then.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick has still to meet with Cllrs Holloway, Jarman-Webb and Rani to look at installing sleepers on Ashmead Road.</p> <p>Cllr Rani felt that Woodlands Park has been neglected since Persimmon has left. There is a lack of dog waste bins, there are lighting issues, drainage around the estate keeps blocking, tree damage. Cllr Moon will be following up the issues addressed on the walkabout.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p> <p>Cllr Rani</p>

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11.	<p><b>To receive an update for the upgrade of the Mowsbury Walk play area:</b></p> <p>The Clerk reported that she has already accepted the quote for three replacement pieces of equipment (£10,018 from Proludic). She has received three quotations for installation and surfacing: £18,673, £14,836 and £10,153. There is a considerable discrepancy between lowest quote and the others and the Clerk noted that the company concerned quoted without visiting the site and did so purely on the specification provided. The Clerk will meet the company on site next week. Once the quote is confirmed then she can meet on site with Cllrs Fitzpatrick and Rani to agree a way forward.</p>	Clerk
12.	<p><b>To discuss BPHA plans to replace garage blocks in Mallard Hill and Rooksmead with houses:</b></p> <p>Following the last meeting, the Clerk contacted BPHA for an update on plans to consult with the community ahead of any planning application. She received a response from the Project Delivery Manager dealing with the two sites. He apologised for not being in contact with Brickhill Parish Council before about the proposed plans for the garage sites on Mallard Hill and Rooksmead, BPHA would have normally been in contact but with the current working from home arrangements it was not picked up as an action. BPHA have spoken to a number of residents who live close to the sites over the last 18 months, about the proposed plan to use the garage sites to build some much needed affordable housing and had no negative comments.</p> <p>BPHA will be sending out letters this week to residents for them to give any comments they may have now that BPHA are looking at applying for planning. He forwarded copies of the proposed plans for the garage</p>	

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	<p>sites of Mallard Hill and Rooksmead, which show the plan to build two 3 bedroom family homes on each site as well as retaining a number of the garages. They have been advised by the Housing Needs Team at Bedford Borough Council that 3 bedroom houses are required within Bedford to meet the housing needs, which is why it is proposing building these. They are also in keeping with the properties in the area.</p> <p>BPHA are anticipating applying for planning in early March and would welcome any comments the Parish Council have on the proposed plans. Cllr Royden said it was important that this Parish Council is allowed to represent its residents and strong representations must be made to BPHA to ensure proper consultation. Cllr Fitzpatrick said that the Clerk can follow that up and find out what else it could do to support the communication.</p>	Clerk
13.	<p><b>To discuss the power cuts in the Moriston Road, Rede Close, Tyne Crescent area and agree any action:</b></p> <p>The Clerk had received a response from UK Power Network apologising for the power cuts in the area. They say that they fully understand the problems these are causing, especially in the current climate.</p> <p>The power cuts are being caused by an intermittent underground cable fault causing a fuse in the local substation to operate. These are called repeat fuse operations. The utility companies have a lot of plant installed underneath our pavements and roads, including gas and water pipes, electricity, telecommunication, cable television and street lighting cables and drains and sewers. All of this requires modification, extension and maintenance from time to time, which in turn means that the roads and pavements need to be dug up. During the course of this activity there is sometimes minor damage to the electricity cables, which does not cause them to flashover or fail but allows the ingress of water from the surrounding damp soil. The slow accumulation of water finally causes the cable to fail, which blows one or</p>	

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	<p>more fuses at the local substation. The fault within the cable generates heat, which temporarily dries out the cable. This means that when our staff go to the substation to investigate, the cable is once again healthy and the fuse can be replaced. After additional fuse operations, a permanent fault is created on the cable which can be located and repaired. When the cable is dug up for the repair, it is usually affected by the fault current to such an extent that the original cause of failure cannot be identified. Once the location of the fault is identified or the fault becomes permanent we will carry out a permanent repair.</p> <p>Due to the repeat fuse operations our engineers have arranged for the installation of a piece of equipment called Bidoyngs at the substation, the Bidoyngs can help us to narrow down the fault and sometimes gives us a better indication of where the fault on the cable lays. In addition to this it can also ensure we are able to restore the power quicker when the power does go off.</p> <p>Please be assured our engineers are aware of the outages which have been affecting the local residents and will do all they can to locate and repair the fault on our network as soon as possible.</p> <p>If we can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Correspondence:</b> List circulated separately. Documents received were noted.</p> <p>Retirement of BATPC County Officer:</p> <p>The Clerk had thanked her for all her help and support over the years and wished her well in her retirement.</p> <p>Correspondence received:</p>	

Item	Description	Action by
	<p>15 letters e-mails received by the Clerk were circulated to all councillors. Cllr Fitzpatrick noted that some are complaints, some are asking for information, others are comments. Those complaining about councillors have been directed to the Monitoring Officer. Cllr Fitzpatrick is answering them to the best of his ability. Cllr Fitzpatrick will provide a summary at the next meeting. Any correspondence directed to individual councillors need to be dealt with by them.</p>	Cllr Fitzpatrick
15.	<p><b>To review the list of outstanding matters and agree any further action:</b></p> <p>Police Attendance at Parish Council Meetings: The Clerk continues to try to arrange this. She will attempt to get more satisfaction by contacting a more senior police officer.</p> <p>Request for a general waste bin at Ashmead Road: The Clerk had requested action via James Lynch. If Cllr Rani suggests any additional locations, then the Clerk will follow this one up along with the new locations.</p> <p>Large Pond: Still needs cutting back and clearing. The Clerk had raised this with Bedford Borough Council in the past. Cllr Jarman-Webb said that there had been an incident on the smaller pond nearer the post box/bridleway. The “no fishing” and “danger” signage needs replacing.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
16.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, at 7.30pm on Zoom. Joining details will be attached to the April agenda and available on the Parish Council website.</p>	

Table 2 - Bank Reconciliations for Approval (see item above)

Payee	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Details
Bedford Borough Council	DD	£ 3,598.03	Salaries February
St Marks	BACS 76	£ 564.99	Office Hire Nov, Dec, January
N Power	BACS 77	£ 53.24	Electricity for the Fountain
Shaun Reilly	BACS 78	£ 360.00	Allotment Works
Viking	BACS 79	£ 55.28	Stationery
S Bottoms	BACS 80	£ 130.85	Expenses
	<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>£ 4,762.39</b>	

*Approved by*

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 Chairman  
 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021