

Minutes of the Informal Meeting of Brickhill Parish Council held virtually on Thursday 3rd June 2021 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllrs Fitzpatrick, Blakeman, Grant, Jarman-Webb, Brazier, Barlow, Lamswood, 33 members of the public and the Clerk (Mrs S Bottoms) were in attendance.

Absent: Cllrs Rani, Green, Johns, Ward, Charles Royden, Rider, Corinne Royden, Holloway, Borough Cllr Moon.

Summary of the meeting: -

Table 1 – The Minutes

Item	Description	Action by
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Rani, Green, Ward, Charles Royden, Rider, Corinne Royden, Holloway, Johns, Borough Cllr Moon.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick welcomed everyone and reminded them that the meeting was being recorded. Early in May, the Government legislation which had allowed parish council meetings to take place virtually had ended. However it was still possible to meet informally and then have a smaller group of councillors (a quorate) safely get together and quickly but formally make decisions based on the earlier informal meeting. He had suggested to his fellow parish councillors via e-mail on the 26th May to have this informal meeting followed by a formal meeting on the 7th June. This seemed sensible given the current COVID situation and the also</p>	

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	<p>the fact that many, including some parish councillors remain unvaccinated. One parish councillor has suggested that he will not be attending this evening as he does not enjoy Zoom meetings, but will attend on the 7th June and potentially query some of the recommendations reached this evening. Cllr Fitzpatrick asked all parish councillors, present or not, that if they want to attend the meeting on the 7th June and be part of the quorate of parish councillors, they agree to endorse what recommendations are reached this evening. Cllr Grant, Brazier, Barlow and Jarman-Webb said that it would be unacceptable for councillors not taking part this evening to fail to support the recommendations from this meeting on the 7th June. Cllrs Fitzpatrick, Brazier, Grant and Jarman-Webb agreed to be part of the quorate on the 7th June. Cllr Fitzpatrick agreed to seek an additional parish councillor. The meeting, which is taking place on the 7th June will be a hybrid meeting via Zoom, thus allowing residents the opportunity to take part as well as simply observe.</p>	Cllr Fitzpatrick
2.	<p>Declarations of interest in items on the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To receive written requests for a dispensation: None received. ii) To consider any requests for a dispensation: <p>With regards item 5, Cllr Fitzpatrick declared that he is a paid employee of Network Rail but has no financial interest in EWR. He will be contributing to the discussion on the item but will not be taking part in any voting on any motions raised.</p>	

Item	Description	Action by
3.	<p>To consider the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6th May 2021:</p> <p>The minutes were seen as a true record of the meeting. The recommendation was that they should be agreed and signed on the 7th June.</p>	
4.	<p>Public Open Session (15 mins):</p> <p>A resident had e-mailed in correspondence, but as the Parish Councillors that it was addressed to were not present, the Clerk agreed to forward it directly to those concerned and ask that they reply.</p> <p>Another resident also referred to correspondence he had sent in. The Clerk noted that this had already been circulated this to the parish councillors. He asked how the Parish Council could agree to strongly support the Northern parishes against Route E but then vote not to provide funding to Bfare. How could those parish councillors who abstained or voted against justify their actions. Cllr Fitzpatrick replied that every time a decision is reached it is up to the individual councillors how they choose to vote on each of those decisions.</p>	
5.	<p>East West Rail:</p> <p>i) To consider the outcome of the on-line survey and to agree a response by Brickhill Parish Council to the latest EWR consultation:</p>	

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	<p>Cllr Fitzpatrick noted that the results of the survey had been circulated around all the parish councillors with the summary placed on the website. There were 350 responses, 9 of which were from outside Brickhill and a few were duplicates, so the response was approximately 330 from Brickhill which was considered a good response. Cllr Fitzpatrick discussed the results from the survey. He noted that under the questions relating to the possible construction, he had included the statement that Hawk Drive should not be used to access the work site. He felt that may have confused those taking part but made it clear that the Parish Council have no knowledge that EWR are proposing to use Hawk Drive. Cllr Fitzpatrick had included it in order to ensure that if EWR do go ahead, the Parish Council had made it clear in advance that Hawk Drive should not be identified as a site access point. He noted that when respondents were asked to comment, there was clearly a lot of anger being expressed towards EWR but also the Parish Council, the Borough Council as well as individual Borough Councillors.</p> <p>Cllr Brazier asked why the survey results had been shared with residents via the website but not question 7 (the narrative comments) and whether this was an oversight or deliberate. Cllr Fitzpatrick said that one of the comments was potentially legally challenging and should be removed from circulation. If parish councillors felt that any other comments were of a similar nature, then to let him know and he would remove them. He would then arrange for the amended version of the comments to go on the website.</p> <p>The meeting recommended that a letter should be sent as the submission to the latest EWR consultation rather than attempt to complete the on-line form.</p>	Cllr Fitzpatrick

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	<p>That letter should start by recognising the strength of opinion revealed by the survey by saying that 90% of those taking part supported the decision of the Parish Council in agreeing to rescind its support for Routes D and E. 92% objected to the route selection as they believe that it was based on a non-transparent consultation. 89% also did respond negatively to the statement: <i>EWR has stated that only Route E will deliver a railway which come through Bedford Midland Station, is it important to you that this happens.</i> In essence, no northern route is acceptable.</p> <p>It should continue by saying that if a Northern route is forced on the parish then Brickhill Parish Council's view is that alignment 1 is preferred because it is further away from residential areas and is less visually intrusive, less noise, less of everything. 97% support compared to 2.88% for alignments 8 or 9. EWR ask for the alignments to be ranked so scale 1,2,6 at the top then 8 and 9 at the bottom. The ones the Parish Council would want to avoid would be alignments 8 or 9 because they would be hugely disruptive for this parish. Reasons can be included to support these from the survey. The letter should address the particular concerns around alignment 9 namely the embankment and the cutting. Access to the countryside should also be included as this was of particular concern to residents (91%) and once the 100m track has been laid those on the Brickhill side will be cut off from accessing the countryside on the other side. That applies to either alignment 1 or 9 and with 9 giving even less access. Access to open countryside has been invaluable during lockdown and COVID. If either of those alignments are put in place then the parish will end up with the only options for public access being either Hawk Drive to Carriage Drive, which is only a public footpath but a private road at the Carriage Drive end and Graze Hill itself. The bridleway situation is very poor with only two bridleways which do not actually connect with each other, one from the Clapham</p>	

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	<p>side and the other from Brickhill. Included in the response should be that Hawk Drive is not acceptable for work access.</p> <p>It was very important that all parish councillors and all residents are encouraged to send in their own responses to the consultation. It is unclear how much weight EWR give to a response from parish councils alone.</p> <p>The issue of financially supporting the work of the Northern parishes was rated at 86% but is not part of the submission to EWR.</p> <p>Cllr Brazier said that the recommendations regarding the contents of the letter as produced by the parish councillors present this evening should be endorsed without change at the meeting on the 7th June. Cllr Fitzpatrick referred again to his statement at the start of this meeting. He expects a quorate of the Parish Council to turn up and vote for it and he trusts that all parish councillors will follow this. He hoped that the recommendations from this evening would be moved possibly en bloc.</p> <p>The Clerk will create a draft letter based on the points raised in the meeting and circulate it initially to those councillors present and then to all parish councillors. This will be formally agreed on Monday and submitted before the consultation closes. No significant amendments will be expected.</p> <p>ii) To consider any other action: Nothing further recommended for consideration on the 7th June.</p>	Clerk

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6.	<p>Financial Matters: To consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To approve bank reconciliations and any accounts for payment: It was recommended that the meeting on the 7th June should approve the bank reconciliations and the accounts for payment. See Table 2 below. i) To consider allowing the Clerk to process payroll, PAYE and pension contributions on the 27th of each month: It was recommended that the meeting on the 7th June should approve this. ii) The report from the internal auditor: It was recommended that the meeting on the 7th June should approve this. iii) The Annual Governance Statement for 2020-21: It was recommended that the meeting on the 7th June should approve this. iv) The Accounting Statements for 2020-21: It was recommended that the meeting on the 7th June should approve this. 	

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7.	<p>To note the existence of the Bedford Freight Strategy document and to receive any update on the actions taken and the progress of the new version:</p> <p>Cllr Grant introduced the topic and thanked Cllr Blakeman for locating the Borough Freight Strategy Document 2011 to 2021. He was concerned to ensure that the Parish Council are ahead of things happening rather than reacting to events. The document sets out a range of actions concerning freight movements around the borough as a whole within which there are defined freight corridors for primary and secondary freight. In the case of Brickhill parish the only one is Kimbolton Road which is considered to be a secondary freight corridor. In the process of having this document re-written, Cllr Grant is keen that the Parish Council engage in that process to ensure that nothing appears in the next ten years which could adversely impact on Brickhill. There is concern that there are heavy vehicle movements passing through Brickhill with no planned stops within the parish e.g. the facility at Sunderland Hill which has a steady stream of traffic associated with it.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Parish Council agree at its meeting on the 7th June that Cllr Grant takes the lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Follow up with Mr Prigmore regarding positive signing for HGVs exiting Manton Lane ii) Engage with the process of updating the Freight Strategy Document iii) Propose a night time ban on HGV movements through Brickhill. This is not currently a problem however it could become so 	

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	iv) Obtain information from the Freight Monitoring System (Appendix A Action 3.1) for relevance to Brickhill	
8.	<p>To receive reports from the Borough Councillors:</p> <p>No reports had been received from the Brickhill or the Great Barford Borough Councillors.</p>	
9.	<p>To consider the recording and transmission of Parish Council meetings following the ending of virtual meetings:</p> <p>Cllr Jarman-Webb said that Chris Bailes, who is the ex parish councillor who used to organise recordings, is initially willing to come over and record some future meetings until we are sorted. It is understood that he has got new equipment with improved sound recording quality. The Clerk did confirm that despite her and many other Clerks writing to the Government with the support of their MPs extolling the benefits of virtual meetings, including in terms of participation by residents, the Government has refused to allow the continuation of virtual meetings. Consideration will be given to holding a hybrid meeting with parish councillors present in the room. The first step should be sorting account details for Youtube followed by how to combine Zoom and Youtube transmission. We only have a July meeting scheduled beyond next Monday's meeting then a break for August. A decision will need to be made at what point all councillors are comfortable being back in the room together.</p>	

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10.	<p>To note the successful planting around the Brickhill signs and consider further action:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick was pleased that the flowers did appear and were not cut off by the Borough Council grass cutters. It was recommended to the meeting on 7th June that more are planted. If members of the public have other location for bulb planting, then let the Parish Council know.</p>	
11.	<p>Correspondence: This was noted or see action below:</p> <p>The Clerk circulated all correspondence. The Clerk said she responds to all those sending correspondence acknowledging receipt and informing them that she would forward copies to the parish councillors. She said that any councillors who feel that particular correspondence relate to their actions, they should write back directly to the resident. Many ask why councillors have voted the way that they have and of course those individual councillors are the only ones really placed to answer those questions.</p> <p>Discussion took place around the cut off date attached to co-option vacancies and it was recommended that in future the date of the next meeting should be the closing date for applications.</p>	
12.	<p>To review the list of outstanding matters and agree any further action:</p>	

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	<p><u>Mowsbury Walk Play Area:</u> The Clerk reported that the three pieces of new equipment had now been installed along with the new surfacing plus two new signs showing that the area was now maintained by Brickhill Parish Council. The invoice for the works is included under accounts for payment. Cllr Grant agreed that he would write a piece for inclusion on the Parish Council website and social media.</p> <p><u>Sleepers on Ashmead Road:</u> Cllr Fitzpatrick said that he has still to arrange a meeting with Cllr Holloway and others.</p> <p><u>Waste bins on Ashmead Road:</u> The Clerk was still chasing her contact at the Borough Council.</p> <p><u>Police Attendance:</u> It was agreed to try to get support for this higher up the police authority. It was noted that it is important to have concerns to discuss with the police should they attend.</p> <p><u>Meeting Document Storage:</u> The Clerk is investigating options.</p>	<p>Cllr Grant</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
13.	<p>Date of Next Meeting: Monday 7th June 2021, at 7.30pm in St Mark's Church and Community Centre, Calder Rise. Due to COVID restrictions, residents are asked to join the meeting via Zoom. A quorate of parish councillors will be present at St Mark's.</p>	

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

Payee	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Details
Reids Playground Maintenance	BACS 16	£348.00	Repair surface X Trainer WG
CCS Ltd	BACS 17	£540.00	Works linked to Legionella BCC
S Bottoms	BACS 19	£1,846.01	Salaries May
Associated Telecom Solutions	DD	£26.17	Telephone
D Britton	BACS 20	£121.36	Salary May
HMRC	BACS 21	£809.09	PAYE
Bedfordshire Pension Scheme	BACS 22	£820.73	Pensions
Bedford Borough Council	BACS 23	£4,200.00	CCTV Monitoring
Mark Fitzpatrick	BACS 24	£99.00	Refund Survey Monkey - EWR
John Caves	BACS 25	£135.00	Internal Audit
St Marks Church and Community Centre	BACS 26	£188.33	Rent for office
RPM	BACS 27	£18,523.20	Play surfacing Mowsbury Walk

	Total Payments	£27,656.89	
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Approved by

Chairman 7th June 2021