

Minutes of the Meeting of Brickhill Parish Council held in St Marks Church and Community Centre on Thursday 1st February 2024 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllrs Fitzpatrick, Green, Grant, Ward, Rani, Holloway, Blakeman, Lamswood, Borough Cllr Rider, one member of the public and the Clerk (Mrs S Bottoms).

Absent: Borough Cllrs Royden, Sawyer and Vann.

Summary of the meeting: -

Table 1 – The Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1.	Apologies for Absence: Borough Cllrs Royden, Sawyer and Vann.	
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 received.	
3.	To agree the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 4th January 2024: The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.	
4.	Public Open Session: None.	

Item	Description	Action
5.	<p>Attendance by Gloria Chukwuji of Healthwatch Bedford:</p> <p>It was noted that there had been a conference call the previous day between Cllr Fitzpatrick, the Clerk and Gloria Chukwuji to discuss how Brickhill Parish Council might support Healthwatch Bedford.</p> <p>Gloria Chukwuji again discussed the work of Healthwatch Bedford and current and recent activities and surveys being run by the organisation. It was agreed that Gloria would forward to the Clerk anything that Brickhill Parish Council could help support and promote.</p>	
6.	<p>Financial Matters:</p> <p>i) To agree the bank reconciliations and any accounts for payment: It was resolved to accept these.</p> <p>ii) To agree to change the signing mandate for the Co-operative Bank:</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed to remove all those signatories who are no longer involved with the Parish Council. The only remaining current signatories are the Clerk, Cllrs Fitzpatrick and Blakeman. Cllr Grant agreed to become a signatory. The Clerk passed the paperwork to Cllr Grant to complete and return.</p>	<p>Cllr Grant and the Clerk</p>
7.	<p>To receive reports from the Borough Councillors:</p> <p>Reports had been received from Borough Cllrs Rider and Royden and from Sawyer and Vann and circulated to members of the Parish Council. The Clerk has arranged for copies to go on the website. Borough Cllr Rider spoke to the report from herself and Borough Cllr Royden.</p>	

Item	Description	Action
8.	<p>To consider filling the new vacancy for litter picker on Waveney Green:</p> <p>The Clerk circulated the original advert which had been produced when the current litter picker had been employed. Give the fact that the Parish Council has since taken over the Mowsbury Walk Play Area, it might be sensible to consider adding this into the contract. The salary should be at the national living wage. Following some change in wording it was resolved that this should be advertised on the noticeboards and via social media.</p>	Clerk
9.	<p>To receive an update on the switching on of the Christmas lights on Waveney Green:</p> <p>All went well. Thanks had already been sent to All Nations who helped with the sound as well as Scott Primary and Brickhill Primary as well as to the Christmas Tree Decorators. A donation of £150 had been sent to The Lions towards the charities they support.</p>	
10.	<p>To receive an update on Woodlands Park:</p> <p>It was noted that the entrance barrier to the car park for the changing rooms had been dented and that the Borough Council are aware who did this.</p> <p>The Clerk will contact Borough Cllr Rider who had agreed to take up with Paul Pace the need for a replacement padlock on the gate to the car park, planting on the “diamond” on Ashmead Road and plans to replace any of the dead trees along Ashmead Road. In addition, the wish by residents of Nursery Gardens to plant on the verges.</p>	The Clerk and Borough Cllr Rider
11.	<p>To receive any update on the Brickhill Neighbourhood Development Plan:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick had circulated a number of supporting documents to all parish councillors. Following</p>	Cllr Fitzpatrick

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	discussion, it was resolved that once Cllr Fitzpatrick has tidied up the documents that the draft plan be progressed to the to pre-submission consultation and publicity in pursuance of Regulation 14.	
12.	<p>To consider and agree action acquiring a triangle of land at the rear of Curlew Crescent as part of the allotments:</p> <p>One of the strips at the rear of Curlew Crescent has been returned to Bedford Borough Council and its Estate Department has offered it to become part of the allotment land. It was resolved that the Parish Council would be willing to incorporate the land into the allotments. Prior to that, the Clerk would ask for a report from the Borough Council’s tree officer to confirm the condition of the large tree on the land and also the issue of the fence along the edge of the plot.</p>	The Clerk
13.	<p>To give further consideration to any options which might be available for Brickhill Parish from the Rural England Prosperity Fund:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick has not made any progress so it will be added to the agenda for March.</p>	Clerk
14.	<p>To confirm status and agree any action re: the cycle connection from Foster’s Brow to the industrial estate:</p> <p>Cllr Blakeman had circulated information about this and Cllr Fitzpatrick had also circulated a map. Cllr Fitzpatrick noted that there is a path but it has been blocked off at the entrance to the industrial estate. Access between Foster’s Brow and Murdock Road is currently now partly across grass. Monies were included in the planning permission granted for the nearby warehouse for work to be done to the path. It was resolved to contact Bedford Borough Council to establish if they have a plan to deal</p>	Cllr Blakeman

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	with this and to clarify the position regarding the monies awarded as part of the planning permission.	
15.	<p>To confirm the latest situation and agree any action re: Grant Palmer buses:</p> <p>Cllr Blakeman reported he had done an analysis of the number of return services per week. Before COVID, Stagecoach had 842 services per week coming to Brickhill. In the last year, this had fallen to 512 (a reduction of 40%). This is because it was originally a 15 minute service, but now is 20 minutes and on Saturdays 30 minutes. In the case of Grant Palmer, there were 70 return services and now there are 3 (a drop of 96%). There has been a survey carried out for the last 11 years. Between 2020 and 2023, in Luton, services are back up to 96% of post COVID levels, in Central Beds 99% and in Bedford only 50%. It was noted that there is a shortage of drivers which impacts on the regularity of service. The RTI is not very accurate and is the responsibility of Bedford Borough Council. But is understood that the operators do also have access. Cllr Fitzpatrick requested that Borough Cllr Rider liaise with the relevant officers at Bedford Borough Council with regards the RTI to rectify the inaccuracies in the information displayed. Cllr Blakeman also reported that Central Beds, Luton and Bedford Borough Council have formed a bus users group. There have been three meetings since last July. The first held in Central Bedfordshire, the second in Bedford Borough and the third in Luton. At the meeting in Luton, no one from the Borough area attended and no report was submitted by Bedford Borough Council nor any apologies submitted. Reports were submitted by Luton and Central Beds. The April meeting of the group is to be held at Bedford Borough and so hopefully someone from the Borough Council will attend. The Clerk will also chase up the previous letter sent to the Borough Council and copied into the Mayor.</p>	<p>Borough Cllr Rider and the Clerk.</p>

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16.	<p>To confirm the status of planning conditions that affect Brickhill parish re: the Graze Hill Development:</p> <p>Connectivity between the Graze Hill Development and Woodlands Park/Brickhill had already been agreed in the planning conditions for the development. It was resolved to establish with Bedford Borough Council exactly what those conditions are and where it is with regarding implementing them.</p>	Cllr Blakeman
17.	<p>To discuss the provision of play areas in Brickhill Parish:</p> <p>It was noted that the Borough Council under the new administration are putting money into play areas. But it is not clear whether the Borough Council have a strategy with regards the provision of play areas. Within Woodlands Park there are two large areas and 4 small ones. Within Brickhill there are two on Carron Road. In addition, there is the small sensory garden in Francis Grove. There is an absence of any sites at the Brickhill Drive area of the parish. There is no provision for older children/young teens. The Clerk to contact Paul Pace to initially establish if a strategy exists.</p>	Clerk
18.	<p>To receive any update on a date for the Annual Parish Meeting:</p> <p>It was resolved to see if the Brickhill Community Centre could accommodate a meeting. In future, attempts would be made to use different venues each year, including All Nations, Scott Primary and Brickhill Primary. The Clerk will try to book in the week beginning 22nd April.</p>	Clerk
19.	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p><u>Request for a fountain on one of the ponds on Woodlands Park:</u> It is understood that the pond on Rooksmead was installed to help aerate the water and to</p>	

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	<p>stop it getting stagnant and causing odour issues for the neighbouring residents. We have not heard of similar problems on Woodlands Park.</p> <p><u>Licence application</u>: Janice Howe trading as Howe and Co Fish and Chips operating across BBC. This was noted but should problems be identified in the future, the Parish Council should report it.</p> <p><u>BBC consultations</u>: Noted.</p> <p><u>Black Cat Funding</u>: Noted.</p> <p><u>Unsightly truck with pallets</u> – Avon Drive. The Clerk would forward the information received to Bedford Borough Council.</p> <p><u>E-mail from resident re: mini scooters</u>: Cllr Blakeman noted that all e-scooters except for around 30 authorised rental schemes (Bedford not included) are currently illegal and can only be used on private land but due to a lack of government regulations are readily available from a number of outlets including Halfords. Many models are not up to the safety standards of the rental ones and there have been a number of fires associated with them. As a result they are banned on Thameslink and EMR trains.</p> <p>Illegal users if caught by the police can be fined and have the scooters squashed. It is thought that Bedfordshire police only did this in the early days squashing some 30 machines.</p> <p>Even for rental e-scooters all users must be at least 16 years old, have as a minimum a provisional driving licence while insurance is currently provided by the rental company. The machines are restricted to a maximum speed of 15.5mph. and can only be used on roads and cycle tracks.</p> <p>Many of the illegal scooters have been modified to run</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

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	<p>faster (up to 50mph has been reported), are used by two people some less than 16 years old and many are seen on the pavements all over the town. As they are silent pedestrians including the elderly and children are being continuously affected by these machines.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was resolved that the Clerk should send a letter from the Parish Council to the police (Chief Constable and Police Commissioner) and Bedford Borough Council (to Borough Cllr Jim Weir and Mayor Tom Wootton) asking what can be done to stop this illegal unsafe practice. The Clerk will respond to the resident who had written in to inform them of the action being taken.</p> <p><u>Licence application: Eatgelato</u>: This was noted but should problems be identified in the future, the Parish Council should report it.</p>	
20.	<p>Date of the next meeting:</p> <p>Thursday 7th March 2024 at 7.30pm at St Marks Church and Community Centre, Calder Rise.</p>	

Approved by

Chairman
7th March 2024

Table 2 Payments for Approval

Payee	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Details
Bedford Lions	BACS 146	£ 150.00	Christmas Switch on
Otis Ltd	BACS 147	£ 720.83	Lift Servicing
British Telecom	DD	£ 168.24	Broadband
David Britton	BACS 148	£ 145.60	Salary WG
HMRC	BACS 149	£ 943.23	PAYE
Bedfordshire Pension Fund	BACS 150	£ 962.12	Pensions
S Bottoms	BACS 151	£ 2,088.73	Salaries
Associated Telecom Solutions	DD	£ 22.62	Telephone
David Britton	BACS 152	£ 62.00	Plot and Key Refund 96
The Tree People	BACS 154	£ 540.00	Tree Work at Allotment
Brickhill Community Centre	BACS 155	£ 9.50	Room Hire
Pigeon Proofing Solar Panels	BACS 153	£ 2,527.20	Pigeon Proofing BCC
Bedford Borough Council	BACS 156	£ 371.91	Grass and Litter MW
Bedford Borough Council	BACS 157	£ 1,115.23	Grass and Litter WG
	Total Payments	£ 10,752.21	