

Minutes of the Meeting of Brickhill Parish Council held in St Marks Church and Community Centre on Thursday 6th March 2025 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllrs Fitzpatrick, Green, Grant, Holloway, Blakeman, Testa, the Clerk (Mrs S Bottoms) and Borough Cllrs Sawyer and Royden.

Absent: Cllrs Lamswood, Rani, Ward and Borough Cllrs Vann and Rider.

Summary of the meeting: -

Table 1 – The Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1.	Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Lamswood, Rani, Ward and Borough Cllrs Vann and Rider.	
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 6th February 2025 The Minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.	
4.	Public Open Session: None.	

Item	Description	Action
5.	<p>To consider and agree action re: filling the vacancies on the Parish Council by co-option:</p> <p>It was noted that unfortunately, Jack Harrison, who was co-opted on to the parish council in January, had resigned. The Clerk has notified the Borough Council who have started the formal process to fill the vacancy.</p>	
6.	<p>Financial Matters:</p> <p>i) To agree the bank reconciliations and any accounts for payment:</p> <p>It was resolved to accept these.</p> <p>ii) To review the Financial Regulations:</p> <p>It was resolved to accept these. The Clerk to make the agreed changes and put the revised version on the website.</p> <p>iii) To review the Asset Register:</p> <p>It was resolved to accept this. The Clerk to make the agreed changes and put the revised version on the website.</p> <p>iv) To review the Risk Assessment:</p> <p>It was resolved to accept this. The Clerk to make the agreed changes and put the revised version on the website.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

Item	Description	Action
7.	<p>To receive any update re: NDP:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick reported that the Regulation 14 statutory consultation with the public and statutory bodies has been completed.</p> <p>All the comments have been received and the plan has been updated in light of these and responses have been made within a consultation statement. This is ready to be used in the next stage of the process.</p> <p>Conversations have taken place with Dave Chetwyn of Urban Vision and with Jon Shortland and Sonia Gallagher of Bedford Borough Council linked to the lack of housing provision in the Borough due to changes in the NPPF.</p> <p>Following those discussions, there is now nothing in the plan referring to recent completions in Brickhill over the past seven years. The plan is as consulted with in regards to policies and rational and evidence.</p> <p>The parish council resolved to approve that this version of the plan goes forward to the next stage in the consultation, which is submission.</p> <p>It now goes to the Borough Council who send it out to an independent examiner. If it gets through that stage it goes out to a referendum with the public of Brickhill. This could take place some time in Autumn 2025.</p> <p>The primary aim of the plan is to designate seven areas as local green space. Currently only parts of the North Brickhill Country Park and Waveney Green are designated.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick will send across to the Clerk all relevant documents to go on the website.</p>	<p>Cllr Fitzpatrick and the Clerk.</p>

Item	Description	Action
8.	<p>To receive a report on the recent Borough Council Flood Forum:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick attended the recent flood forum on the 12th February at Bedford Borough Council. The context for Brickhill is that our main risk is from surface water flooding. There is concern that much of this is due to poor maintenance on behalf of the relevant authorities.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick will put together a summary for consideration at the April parish council meeting.</p>	<p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p>
9.	<p>To receive reports from the Borough Councillors:</p> <p>Reports had been received from the Borough Councillors for Brickhill and De Parys.</p> <p>The Clerk would arrange for the reports to go on the website.</p> <p>Cllrs Royden and Cllr Sawyer spoke to their reports.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick raised the problem with the traffic lights outside The Park pub/Polhill Avenue junction with vehicles turning right from Polhill Avenue. Also at the junction of Kimbolton Road and Putnoe Lane. Both sets are confusing to vehicles. Cllr Fitzpatrick will be having discussions with Andrew Prigmore of Bedford Borough Council in the near future.</p> <p>Cllr Blakeman referred to a similar problem with the lights at Brickhill Drive/Kimbolton Road which he reported two years ago. He had asked for this to be addressed as the junction lacks advanced stop lines. The same applies to the Polhill Avenue junction. The officer had agreed to do the work in this financial year which ends in a couple of weeks. Cllr Blakeman asked Borough Cllr Sawyer to chase this up.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p>

Item	Description	Action
10.	<p>To consider and agree any action re: a plan to upgrade some play equipment on Waveney Green and Mowsbury Walk:</p> <p>Cllr Testa has started work on this. He has looked through the play inspection reports and tried to highlight where repairs and replacement was most needed. He has also looked at equipment located elsewhere. He is hoping to make what is available more inclusive to all. He has obtained some catalogues on equipment and has been given some company contacts from the Clerk and he will arrange some site visits.</p>	<p>Cllrs Testa</p> <p>Clerk</p>
11.	<p>To receive an update re: VAS on Waveney Avenue and agree any action:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick reported that the VAR was originally purchased by the Brickhill Ward Borough Councillors. It is not known what is wrong with it. It has showed itself to be an effective device at reducing speeds and these are a proven addition to road safety across the country. The Clerk had forwarded information to Cllr Fitzpatrick from another parish council which had recently purchased one. It was noted that the VAS is old and there is no company information on it. A new one would cost approximately £3,000.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was resolved to investigate replacing it and to establish if there are any maintenance contracts attached for servicing etc.</p>	<p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p>
12.	<p>To receive any update re: North Bedford Pinetum:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick reported that he and Cllr Grant had met the officer on Waveney Green and looked at what was being suggested and made some comments. The officer then sent an updated specific proposal for Waveney Green</p>	<p>Cllrs Fitzpatrick and Grant</p>

Item	Description	Action
	<p>which seemed to fail to take note of what had been suggested at the meeting.</p> <p>The Borough Council say it will maintain the trees in the first three years after which they will become the responsibility of the parish council. The plan would not be to thin them out but allow to grow.</p> <p>The proposal being put forward by Cllrs Fitzpatrick and Grant was for 20 specimen trees with some being located to replace existing ones and avoiding any being locating where road visibility might be adversely affected. The aim being to ensure that in 100 years the Green does not lose its open aspect.</p> <p>Looking at Merlin Gardens, Robin and Mallard Hill, the concern is also that the proposals would take away the open aspect of these open spaces. Cllrs Fitzpatrick and Grant were also concerned about the proposed species.</p> <p>It was resolved to leave the matter to Cllrs Fitzpatrick and Grant to move forward.</p>	
13.	<p>To receive an update on the Foster's Brow to Murdock Road connection:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick has thanked the Borough Council for getting this connection built but has informed the Borough that it needs a dropped kerb at 'H' bar at the Murdock Road end. Jon Shortland from Bedford Borough Council has responded by saying that there would be no objection to this but we are out of time to fund from the REPF. He will ask colleagues to consider funding it from other budgets in 25/26 and will keep the parish council informed.</p> <p>The Clerk will put this item on the April agenda.</p>	Clerk

Item	Description	Action
14.	<p>To consider and agree action re: a Parish Council work plan:</p> <p>The Clerk had circulated the last active plan to all parish councillors. Parish Councillors are asked to propose what the Parish Council could aim to achieve over the coming year.</p>	Clerk and all Parish Councillors
15.	<p>To discuss and agree action re:Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) implemented by the Borough Council and consultation with the Parish Council:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick was concerned that the parish council is not consulted on TRO's.</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick has taken this up with Bedford Borough Council but has not received any response to date.</p>	
16.	<p>To discuss and agree any action re: restrictions imposed on street trading licenses and impact of restrictions on Brickhill:</p> <p>Cllr Fitzpatrick has contacted licensing about the condition: 'No trading is authorised within 250m of the entrance to any Council park or open space'.</p> <p>Which appears to suggest that street trading is not authorised from the vast majority of Brickhill parish. Is that correct?</p> <p>He has also sent a map of the parish. He is awaiting a formal response.</p>	
17.	<p>To review the Code of Conduct:</p> <p>This was reviewed and the Clerk will put the revised version on the website.</p>	Clerk

Item	Description	Action
18.	<p>To review the Standing Orders:</p> <p>This was reviewed and the Clerk will put the revised version on the website.</p>	Clerk
19.	<p>To receive any update on outstanding matters from previous meetings:</p> <p>RTI accuracy and QR codes: No response back. The Clerk will email again.</p> <p>Transfer of land rear of 97 Curlew Crescent: The Borough will arrange removal of rubbish – a key access to the allotments is being organised. No progress. Clerk to check if the key has been collected.</p> <p>Altering timing of fountain on Rooksmead – need to monitor charges. Chasing information from Npower. The Clerk will try to speak to the company.</p> <p>Dug- Outs on Woodlands – Borough response forwarded to Cllr Rider.</p> <p>EWR: re: footpaths and bridleways. Cllr Fitzpatrick will attend the Bedford Borough Council Access Forum meeting on the 18th March to discuss the responses sent in by the parish council to both EWR and the Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>Rural England Prosperity Fund: Cllr Fitzpatrick reported that there is no monies available from this Fund this year for benches to go into the North Brickhill Country Park. It is likely that there will be more monies available next year.</p> <p>Graze Hill/Woodlands Park: Cllr Fitzpatrick stressed that the parish council needs to be consulted with about connections between the two. It would like to be kept involved/informed about the connection across</p>	Clerk Clerk Clerk

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	<p>Freeman's Common from the new development to Kimbolton Road which is due to funded out of S106 funding.</p>	
20.	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p>Emails re VAS sign on Waveney Avenue: The VAS sign was discussed under 11. above.</p> <p>Speed data: Noted.</p> <p>Renewal application for Street Trading Consent: Discussed under 16 above.</p> <p>Bedford BC (Prohibition of Driving) (Kennet Rise) Order 2025: Discussed under 15 above.</p> <p>Road Traffic Reg Act 1984 (Section 14(2)). Emergency temporary prohibition of traffic on Brickhill Bridleway 23 and Bedford Bridleway 35 3-7th March. Noted.</p> <p>Email re: benches: The resident is pleased that a bench has been installed on Mallard Hill but suggests that it is not in a suitable location. Could it be moved to the junction of the footpaths leading to the Park and the Cemetery. Borough Cllr Sawyer to take the matter up.</p> <p>Email re: NDP: Noted. Cllr Fitzpatrick will forward to the Borough Council as the issues raised are matters for it to deal with.</p> <p>Email: Parking on Avon Drive: Problem is that if the vehicles are licenced and taxed they can park in this location. Parking restrictions will push the vehicles elsewhere. Cllr Fitzpatrick will speak to Borough Cllr Royden. The parish council will start noting when vehicles are parked and registration numbers to establish when and which are parked there.</p>	<p>Cllr Fitzpatrick</p> <p>Cllrs Fitzpatrick and Testa</p>

Item	Description	Action
	Business – Curlew Crescent: The Clerk has suggested that the resident contact the Borough Councillors for advice.	
21.	Employment matter. Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), press and public are excluded from this item of the agenda.	
22.	Date of the Next Meeting: Thursday 3rd April 2025 at 7.30pm in St Marks Church and Community Centre, Calder Rise.	

Approved by

Chairman
3rd April 2025

Table 2 Payments for Approval

Payee	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Details
S Reilly	BACS 192	£451.00	Allotments
Bedfordshire Pension Fund	BACS 187	£944.29	Pensions February
S Bottoms	BACS 188	£1,451.12	Salaries February
C Tyrrell	BACS 189	£872.59	Salaries February
R Benjamin	BACS 190	£208.00	Salaries WG
HMRC	BACS 191	£559.06	PAYE Feb
Associated Telecom Solutions	DD	£19.80	Telephone Feb
Bedford Borough Council	BACS 182	£3,484.65	New Bins on WG
St Marks Church Community Centre	BACS 193	£19.76	Hall Hire Feb
St Marks Church Community Centre	BACS 194	£188.33	Office Rent
St Marks Church Community Centre	BACS 195	£9.88	Hall Hire
S Bottoms	BACS 196	£27.65	Microsoft License
Scott Primary School	BACS 197	£2,160.00	Support for Children
Chris Horne Gardens Ltd	BACS 198	£236.40	Allotment Mow
NPower	BACS 199	£53.61	Electricity for Fountain
NPower	BACS 200	£131.05	Electricity for Fountain
St Marks Church Community Centre	BACS 201	£19.76	Hall Hire
	Total Payments	£10,836.95	