

19.04.22.

Minutes of the Meeting of **CLAPHAM PARISH COUNCIL** held on **Tuesday 19th April 2022** in the Methodist Hall

PRESENT: Parish Councillors, Mrs. Simms, (Chair), Mr. Cooper, Mrs. Fraser, Mr. Keech, Mr. Langley, Mrs. Palmer, Mr. Prudham, Mr. Sparrow, Mr. Tomkins, Borough Councillor Walker the Clerk, Mrs. Paice and 0 members of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:- Ms. Dove, Mr. Gaskin, Mr. Reid, Ms. Walker

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:- Cllr. Prudham for item 18 as resident of Highbury Grove

3. OPEN FORUM:-

Cllr. Sparrow was very concerned about the condition of Green Lane. Potholes were being filled on a temporary basis every month by Bedford BC, wasting money and causing frustration to residents. During the recent drainage works, potholes were filled again but water was now seeping from them and a new leak had appeared by the traffic calming. Bedford BC should either resolve or force Anglian Water to do so. Bedford BC had previously agreed that Green Lane should be in the programme for resurfacing but the work had yet to be programmed. Clerk noted that she had reported to the officer overseeing the drainage works and had asked for the potholes to be inspected again as a matter of urgency. Cllr. Sparrow noted that if action was not taken he would pursue personally with the Mayor.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:-

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2022, which had been circulated, were approved by those present and signed by the Chair.

5. CLERK'S REPORT:

Maintenance - Green Lane drainage repairs had been extended to 14.04.22. and Clerk had asked for inspectors to examine the pothole repairs as soon as possible as water was again leaking from them. Clerk had also reported the leak by the traffic calming. The ditch along The Ford still only partly cleared & rubbish was accumulating. Clerk had chased Highways to clear or pursue with the landowner responsible. Persimmon had advised that broken tarmac around the drain in Summers Close was the residents' responsibility

Bedford Road Cycle Path - Borough Cllr. Walker & Clerk had received complaints about the condition of the footway following the works to the cycle path and had asked Bedford BC to revisit

Twinwood Road - residents were concerned about a Theobalds coach regularly parking opposite their properties and starting early on Sunday mornings. They had contacted the company to no avail so Clerk had asked police to speak to the driver

Grass cutting - a resident had complained about damage to headstones in the cemetery and was pursuing with Bedford BC. Another resident was upset about plastic pots on plots being destroyed and Clerk had asked contractors to be more respectful and take more care. Councillors added that grass cutting in the cemetery and Riverside Gardens was poor and verges in Highbury Grove and Bridle Drive were only partially cut so Bedford BC should carry out an extra cut to compensate

Shopping Parade - Bedford BC had replaced the dead tree that had been removed

Village Hall railings – railings had been jet washed and volunteers to paint

Community Litter Pick – Clerk had received no response from Scouts or Guides

6. MATTERS ARISING:- none

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7. EAST WEST RAIL (EWR):-

a) BFARE meeting 12.04.22.

BFARE met 12.04.22. and agreed to send a letter to Mr. Fuller MP requesting an update meeting to discuss the provisional EWR public event on 18.05.22, the Ombudsman query and the invitation for Beth West, the new CEO of EWR to meet the Group; to chase Ms. West to meet BFARE and to contact Cambridge Approaches about the 18.05.22. event. BFARE had advertised the 18.05.22. event.

Cllr. Cooper noted that Network Rail's Strategic Statement considered how EWR would fit with the wider rail network and could not be ignored by EWR. It noted that north/south routes out of London were at capacity so 6 tracks would be needed to accommodate EWR. One of BFARE's members was reviewing the Strategy. EWR had funds for 2022 and 2023 but needed a business case for further funding and this should be available by the end of May. Cllr. Cooper noted that BFARE had attended at the Mayor's climate change event on 25/26.03.22. and he had been invited to the Poets Area meeting 22.04.22.

b) EWR Representatives' meetings

BFARE had challenged the minutes of the EWR Local Representatives' Meeting 02.03.22. as they considered that they did not accurately reflect the discussion and had suggested that other parishes might want to challenge. The recording had been deleted by EWR and BFARE was pressing for it to be restored and made available.

EWR had scheduled the next Representatives' Meeting on 20.04.22. and Cllr. Walker to attend.

EWR had provisionally booked Wyboston Lakes for a public meeting on 18.05.22. and awaiting confirmation.

Clerk had requested a response from EWR to the issues raised by Cllr. Reid but none received to date.

8. POLICE MATTERS:-

There were 17 crimes reported in March, 4 assaults, 4 sexual offences, 2 stalking offences, 2 harassments, 2 public fear offences, 1 arson endangering life, 1 threat to kill and 1 criminal damage.

Cllr. Sparrow suggested that Council raise the serious nature of the offences with the PCC at the next parishes' meeting.

Cllr. Prudham noted that residents had reported drug paraphernalia at Cody Road garages. Clerk to report to police and resident to be asked to do so too.

9. BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT:-

Borough Cllr. Walker reported that Bedford BC would be refunding a proportion of business rates via the Covid Additional Relief Fund to companies which had not previously received grants. Companies which paid under £200K would receive a 25% refund up to a maximum of £25K. She noted that the Methodist Church had received funding under the previous scheme.

115 visas had been granted for Ukrainian refugees in the Borough area. 289 guests had registered to come and 105 hosts had been checked by Children's Services so there were no delays.

The draft Local Plan 2040 which contained only minor changes from the previous version, would be considered by the Executive on 27.04.22. and issued for consultation in May.

Great Denham was looking to employ a youth worker through Bedford BC and had asked if any other villages were interested. Four 2 hour sessions would be held each week some in the office and some on the streets. Cllr. Walker noted that she had £14K of Ward Fund monies remaining and some could be used to fund youth work.

An online petition had been submitted asking for the verges on Highbury Grove to be removed and parking put in but had not gained support.

Cllr. Walker confirmed that A6 works had been delayed again to mid-June. Cllr. Sparrow suggested a FOI request asking about a penalty clause as Council had been assured that work would be finished by the end of March and then mid-April. Council agreed.

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10. ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE:-

Environment Committee met on the allotments to discuss tenants concerns.

Tenants were concerned about public access, damage to plots and the condition of the track. They suggested that Bents Close gate be welded shut to prevent access and Committee noted that the gate was not Council property and it would be for Bents Close residents to close permanently. Tenants also requested measures so only allotment holders could use the track as it was not a public footpath and more cameras. They asked why the Millennium Park had been created as it attracted anti-social behaviour and Committee noted that residents had requested it. A camera had been installed to cover the area where there was most anti-social behaviour.

Meeting discussed whether the gates at footpath 14 could be kept locked at all times and only allotment holders given keys. Clerk noted that keys could easily be cut and passed to other residents.

Committee commented that cameras had been installed and emphasized that plot holders should report all incidents to the police and pass crime numbers to the Clerk. Council met police regularly and the allotments were reported as a hotspot. Cllr. Hurley confirmed that PC Hancock regularly visited the site in the evenings. Cllr. Tomkins volunteered to supply thorny plants to improve the hedging along footpath 14 and Clerk noted that it would need to be kept away from the footpath to prevent injury to pedestrians.

Meeting discussed security gates each side of footpath 14 and councillors noted that these had been considered but the cost was too great and if the gaps at the sides of the gates were not fenced they would be ineffective.

Clerk noted that a balance was needed between improving the track and discouraging speeding. Cllr. Hurley asked for the section from the Trading Hut to footpath 14 to be scraped as the sides had sunk.

Committee confirmed that hosepipes were banned in the tenancy agreement and tenants could not pay for taps on their plots.

Meeting also discussed the Allotment Committee which was in abeyance and 5 plot holders put their names forward to form a new Committee. It was agreed that a request for volunteers would be included in the September rent renewal letters. Council would also include an article in the next Village News and Cllr. Cooper offered to walk round the site and ask plot holders who were interested in joining a Committee to contact the Clerk.

Cllr. Sparrow noted that the Committee also visited the Millennium Park and that the grass cutting was poor there too. Volunteers would shortly be working in the Millennium Park as well as Riverside Gardens.

11. PLANNING COMMITTEE:-

Applications Decided:

21/03348/FUL - extension of the dropped kerb at 158 High Street. Refused 14.03.22. because of insufficient information provided by the applicant especially as there is parking to the side and rear and parking standards required on-site turning for access onto classified roads which this proposal could not achieve

22/00115/FUL - one and two storey front and side extensions at 81 Knights Avenue. Granted 16.03.22.

22/00020/FUL - demolition of carport & timber sheds/outbuildings and construction of single storey side extension at 87 George Street. Granted 11.04.22.

Planning Enforcement had advised that driveways to park homes off The Baulk were permissible under the planning consent and were still investigating the shed in the front garden in Duke Drive.

Applications Received:

a) 22/00616/TPO – various works to trees at Woodland Manor, Green Lane. Council supported provided works were approved by the Tree Officer for safety reasons

b) 22/00620/FUL - single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory at 3 Dennis Close. No objections

c) 22/00570/LDE - confirmation of lawful commencement of permission 17/01534/FUL (10.01.18.) & listed building consent 17/01535/LBC (16.01.18.) at Park Farm, Green Lane. Council had no comments

d) 22/00652/FUL - Single storey side/front extension at 172 Highbury Grove. No objections

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- e) 22/00624/FUL** - erection of detached garage with hobby room over following demolition of existing garage at 201 High Street. No objection provided the garage remains part of the main dwelling.
- f) 22/00761/FUL** - single storey rear & side extension, single storey front extension & part conversion of garage at 39 Highbury Grove. No objections
- g) 22/00782/FUL** - single storey rear & side extensions at 84 Milton Road. No objections

12. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP):-

a) independent examiner's report

Consultant was concerned that the Examiner's proposed modification to ED1 weakened the policy slightly but Bedford BC considered that the Examiner's modification set a higher standard and they intended to accept it. NDP Group was content. Clerk had completed the end of grant report.

b) referendum

Awaiting a date from Bedford BC.

13. PUBLICITY REPORT:-

Jubilee Events

Bouncy castle had been booked for 05.06.22. and litter pickers and hoops purchased. Scouts had offered to run the bouncy castle and use for fund raising. Clerk noted that they should not be using to fund raise for an individual's trip to the World Scout Jamboree. School would send correspondence out to parents/carers but it would be for Council/Events Group to organise a Jubilee competition. PAD and Mike's Line Dancing had confirmed that they would perform at the event but Fitsteps had insufficient members available. Munch Munch Bus would be unable to bring the bus because of tax problems but could operate from the kitchen. Resident had planted 4 new trees at their property in The Warren for the Jubilee. Next Events Meeting was 27.04.22. Clerk confirmed that no streets had expressed an interest in a street party on the Field.

14. RIVERSIDE GARDENS: -

a) railings for Jubilee Tree

Clerk had received additional quotations for 1m black, galvanised and powder coated railings in a circle to match those at the front and including a gate for £3995.00 + VAT and 900mm black bow top railings to make a 2.5m square including a hand gate for £1,800.00 +VAT. Company noted that a square would be cheaper as it as a standard size whereas circular railings would be bespoke. Clerk noted that four 950mm hoop top metal fence panels and four posts without a gate could be purchased online for £609.40 + VAT Cllr. Tomkins suggested a metal tree guard and offered to purchase one and loan to Council. Cllr. Langley suggested making out the area with pigtails and tape to agree a size and shape. Council agreed Clerk to ask for the cost of a smaller square and pictures of the railings and Environment Committee to discuss.

b) new litter bin

New litter bin purchased for the High Street had not been used as the original bin had reappeared. Contractor had quoted £120.00 to install a base and the bin in Riverside Gardens. Council agreed that bin should be sited by the wall at the top of the path.

Proposed by Cllr. Keech, seconded by Cllr. Prudham that quotation for £120.00 be accepted

Agreed

15. TREE PLANTING:-

Cllr. Sparrow & Clerk had met Bedford BC at Browns Wood on 05.04.22. to discuss tree planting schemes. Bedford BC had already identified the field adjacent to the Burial Ground for tree planting and were intending to plant from Browns Wood down the hill. A sizeable gap would need to be left around the electric pylons and any pipes across the field. Areas of open space would be left between the trees and the view from the bench retained. Bedford BC would prepare a planting plan with a mix similar to Browns Wood and forward to Council for comment. Bedford BC would be looking to Council to fund additional benches and an interpretation board.

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Bedford BC noted that they had many projects in 2022 and limited resources so work would need to be carried out mid-week and large events would be more cost effective. Cllr. Sparrow had noted that Council volunteers would help plant trees.

Bedford BC would review the verge sites suggested but advised that street trees were more difficult to obtain. Trees needed to be large saplings not whips and granting bodies had strict conditions. A scheme whereby residents sponsored trees in their own streets and Bedford BC contributed to the cost might be possible. Cllr. Tomkins suggested a planting event in October half term.

16. CEMETERY:-

a) repointing wall

The top of the wall needed repointing and cracks repairing. Clerk had received two quotations, one for £920 + VAT for repointing plus £674 + VAT to repair the cracks (£1,954) and one for £360 + VAT to repoint plus £130 + VAT to repair the crack (£490 + VAT). Other stone masons had not responded.

Proposed by Cllr. Sparrow, seconded by Cllr. Prudham that quotation for £490 + VAT be accepted

Agreed

b) sale of reserved plot

Resident had asked to sell a reserved plot in the cemetery back to Council as he no longer wanted to use it. Plot was purchased for £120.00

Proposed by Cllr. Langley, seconded by Cllr. Sparrow that plot be purchased for £120.00

Agreed

17. CCTV REPAIRS:-

Contractor had advised that CCTV cables had been damaged (by storms not vandalism) and would need to be replaced. He had quoted £175 + VAT if it was only necessary to change the cables or £275 + VAT if the cameras also needed to be replaced.

Proposed by Cllr. Langley, seconded by Cllr. Prudham that quotation for £175 + VAT or £275 + VAT, if new cameras were needed, be accepted

Agreed

18. HIGHWAYS:-

Bedford BC proposal for a bus box in Highbury Grove

Concerns had been raised that elderly and disabled bus users were struggling to get on and off buses in Highbury Grove near The Slade as parked cars were preventing buses pulling up to the kerb. Bedford BC had proposed marking a bus box outside nos. 52 & 54 Highbury Grove. They had noted that adjacent residents might not support

Proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Cooper that proposal for a bus box be supported to assist elderly and disabled residents

Agreed

19. FINANCE:-

a) accounts to pay

Proposed by Cllr. Sparrow, seconded by Cllr. Fraser that the April accounts listed below be paid.

Agreed

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<u>Payee</u>	<u>Work Carried Out</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Inc. VAT</u>
J. Burnage	Riverside Security & Allotment		
	Caretaker April	121.92	
Urban Vison	NDP consultant work	1,890.00	315.00
Bedford BC	Quarterly grass cutting 2021/22	2,668.90	444.82
Npower	Unmetered streetlight supply	731.09	34.81
Wildman	New locks for Cody Road garages	620.00	
Methodist Church	Hire of hall 15.02.22, 15.03.22, 19.04.22 & 27.04.22.	130.00	
A. E. Paice	Litter pickers & hoops	172.98	28.83
A. E. Paice	Dell warranty renewal	111.60	18.60
Keech	Jeyes fluid & gloss paint	13.49	
A. E. Paice	Salary April	1,838.21	
	TOTAL	8,298.19	842.06

Accounts already paid

HSBC	Account maintenance charge	8.76	
Nest	Employer & employee pension contributions April	130.76	
	TOTAL	8,437.71	842.06

Statement of Account at 31.03.22.

Current Account £6,000.00 Business Reserve £110,656.54 Hampshire Bank £10,229.87

Balance Brought Forward at 31.03.21.	£124,481.05
Add Income	£109,465.76
	£ 1,200.00 garage rent
	£ 435.00 burial grounds
	£ 234.26 interest
	£ 50.00 Village News
Less Expenditure	£109,533.21
Balance at 31.03.22.	£124,413.60

Neighbourhood Plan monies held by Parish Council

Statement of Account at 31.03.22.

Balance at 28.02.22.	£2,792.54
Income	£ NIL
Expenditure	£ NIL
Balance at 31.03.22.	£2,792.54

Urban Vision would charge £35 for cheques and Council therefore agreed that Clerk to make a bacs payment

b) VAT payment

VAT sales were £180.59 greater than receipts for the period January – March 2022.

Proposed by Cllr. Langley, seconded by Cllr. Prudham that Clerk be authorised to make an online payment of £180.59 to HMRC.

Agreed

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20. CORRESPONDENCE:-

Bedford BC – bids requested for social value projects

Bedford BC had requested bids for social value projects e.g. pothole filling or fixing fences up to a value of 3K so resurfacing Green Lane would not qualify. Councillors suggested clearing Cody Road garages, replacing the edging on the Millennium Park path and repairing the fence along footpath 14. Clerk to submit.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:- Tuesday 17th May 2022 – Annual Parish Meeting 7.00pm
AGM approximately 7.45pm