

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 7th March 2023 in the Village Hall

PRESENT:

J Walker (Chair), J. Abbott, S. Fardon, P. Jones, S. Nicholas, P. Olney, R Saunders, the Clerk, Mrs. Paice and 7 members of the public

1. Public Open Session:

Resident was concerned that the bollards and H bars had yet to be installed in The Furlong. Cllr. Abbott confirmed that Highways had carried out a site visit and the bollard near the garage and H bars would be installed but Highways were concerned that the bollard further along the road might impede the refuse vehicle. Cllr. Abbott to arrange a meeting between Highways and the resident to discuss further.

Resident was also concerned about vehicles parking on the footway in Pavenham Road near Stafford Bridge forcing pedestrians into the road in a 60 mph zone. Chair noted that Council would forward vehicle information to police and resident to send to Clerk. Cllr. Abbott commented that a no verge parking scheme could be introduced but would need to be funded by the parish and enforced. Flexible poles were another alternative but could be considered urbanising. Resident noted that the damaged lamp column in Pavenham Road opposite The Furlong had been replaced but was not working. Cllr. Abbott noted that Bedford BC was waiting for UK Power Networks to connect this and the one at the Village Hall.

Four residents were attending as they were interested in standing for Council. Two representatives from Clapham Parish Council explained the reason why they were objecting to application 21/00332/EIA for 500 homes off Milton Road, Clapham – see item 19c and noted that BFARE was holding a protest walk against a northern EWR route on 26.03.23. meeting at 12 noon at the Horse & Groom, Clapham.

JA

2. Apologies: M. Frampton (personal), P. White (business)

3. Declarations of Interest: Chair & Cllr. Abbott for item 21 as members of the OSSC.

4. Minutes of Council Meeting held on 13th January 2023:

Resolved: to adopt the minutes.

5. Clerk's Report:

Highways – Clerk had reported the pothole and damaged carriageway opposite Lincroft School to Bedford BC.

Clerk had also asked the Borough to remove wet, slippery leaves on Ruffs Furze and Church Lane footways, clear the blocked drains in Station Road, remove metal spikes in the Lincroft verge and repair the damage to the Ruffs Furze verge caused by vehicles. A resident was concerned about branches falling from a tree in Ruffs Furze and Clerk had asked Bedford BC to inspect and trim if needed. Graffiti on signposts in Lovell Road had been removed by the Borough Council.

Highfield Road Water Leak - Clerk reported the water leak on again on 16.01.23, and Anglian Water inspected 16.01.23 and returned to site 17.01.23. to repair.

Highfield Road bridleway gate – gate was not closing. Contractor who fitted the gate repaired free of charge and Clerk has thanked him.

Parking – following complaints about parents/carers’ vehicles blocking Lovell Road footway, Lincroft School had reissued their safety for pedestrians and road users’ information making reference to the fact that the police had been contacted on the previous occasion.

Speed Cameras – no data was available for November and December. 8 notices of intended prosecution were issued in January, all for speeds up to 40mph

Speed Watch - nil returns for events 18.01.23. in Church Lane and 13.02.23. in Station Road. There was one speeding van in Highfield Road 31.01.23 and 5 speeding vehicles in Pavenham Road 23.02.23. Reported to police

Litter Bins – bin at the bus stop in Lovell Road adjacent to Parrott Close had broken and Cllr. White had repaired. Council thanked him.

Fly tipping - cardboard dumped at Church Lane bin and wheel trims in High Street, Lovell Road and Pavenham Road reported to Bedford BC and removed

Linch Furlong – noticeboard keys and photographs had been returned

Directory - 2023 Directory had been circulated and would raise £1897.00 this year, making a total of £24,535 over the 17 years it had been published. Clerk had thanked Old Road Securities for their continuing support for sponsoring the printing costs. Council thanked Cllr. Fardon and her team for producing the Directory.

6. **Matters Arising from the Minutes of 6th December 2022:** none

Action

7. **Reports:-**

Network Meeting 26.01.23.

Cllr. Olney reported that updates were given on the Local plan 2040 (see item 19), East West Rail (see item 8), A428 Black Cat/Caxton Gibbet works and Neighbourhood Plans. Parish elections were also discussed (see item 12). An application had been made for a Judicial Review (JR) on the A428 and a date for a High Court hearing had yet to be published. All the villages that accepted the chance in the 2030 Local Plan to allocate development through Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) had successfully done so and the 2040 Local Plan had not allocated any new development through the NDP process.

Adopted Neighbourhood Plans would need to be reviewed and updated to maintain their validity and Oakley had carried out a review.

Bedford BC had requested that Network Meeting representatives attend parish council meetings to discuss what the Network could offer to councils. Council agreed that as councillors regularly attended Network Meetings a visit was unnecessary.

Clerk

8. East West Rail (EWR):

a) Local Representatives' Meetings 07.02.23. and 03.03.23.

Cllr. Olney attended and traction and freight were discussed on 07.02.23. and the Code of Construction Practice to manage environmental impacts during construction on 03.03.23. Six diesel passenger trains would operate initially between Oxford and Milton Keynes. EWR was awaiting a decision from Government about whether there would be electrification and to what extent and was also considering hybrid hydrogen/electric and battery/overhead electric powered trains. Councillors emphasised that major retrospective works to put in overhead power lines should not be required. EWR noted that rail freight was expected to double in 20 years but they were primarily a passenger service. Councillors were concerned about the height of embankments/viaducts which would be greater for freight enabled lines.

Meeting 03.03.23. provided an overview of the Code of Construction Practice and Construction Environmental Management Plan, a project timeline for development of these documents and examples of the content. Mitigation measures on air quality, cultural heritage etc. were discussed and councillors were concerned about the visual impact of the proposed viaducts. Roads to support the railway were also considered and whether it would be necessary to purchase additional land. There was no further information on the business case for the project.

Clerk noted that the Chancellor had confirmed that EWR would be funded as promised and an update on the route was expected in May.

b) BFARE meeting with Mr. Fuller MP 21.02.23.

Chair reported that Mr. Fuller MP had reiterated objections to EWR to Government Ministers and was continuing to press for the project to be abandoned or an alternative to a northern route found. He suggested strategies for BFARE to pursue and they were considering.

Action

9. Police Report:

There were three reported crimes in January, 1 assault with injury in Station Road, 1 assault without injury in the High Street and 1 harassment and 2 in February, 1 race/religious aggravation/public fear and 1 robbery in Lovell Road. Clerk had requested community engagement in Oakley and police to attend a Methodist Church coffee morning.

Cllr. Olney suggested they attend a Youth Club meeting and Clerk to pursue.

Action

Clerk

<p>10. <u>Brockwell Meadow:</u> a) Kindergarten Licence Solicitors had forwarded a draft licence. Proposed by Cllr. Saunders, seconded by Cllr. Olney that it be accepted Resolved Bedford BC had confirmed that they would replace the fence between Brockwell and the Kindergarten in June/July and Clerk had advised solicitors.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>b) tree planting event Contractor had collected trees from Buckingham Nursery and fruit trees had been delivered at the end of January. As the planting season was coming to an end there was insufficient time to organise a community event and contractor had planted the trees. Brownies had mulched and fitted tree guards and Clerk had thanked contractor. Chair noted that residents were interested in helping with planting and Clerk to ask contractor if he could offer a wild flower planting event. Clerk had retrieved Linch Furlong information and key from former Cllr. Sansom. Cllr. Olney to provide a backboard for the notice board</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>PO</p>
<p>11. <u>Repairs to Fences:</u> a) path to weir in Church Lane Fence had been damaged by a vehicle and Clerk had requested quotations to repair. Three quotations had been received for £1,442.30 + VAT, £634.00 + VAT and £556.00 + VAT Proposed by Cllr. Saunders, seconded by Cllr. Abbott that quotation for £556.00 + VAT be accepted Resolved Council agreed not to make an insurance claim.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>b) The Furlong Part of the wooden fence adjacent to the bund at the rear of The Furlong was leaning and Clerk had requested quotations to repair but none had been received. Clerk to seek further quotations and Council to discuss again at May meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>12. <u>Parish Council Elections:-</u> Clerk had circulated nomination papers to be returned to her by 24.03.23.for delivery to Bedford BC. Five residents had expressed an interest in standing but one had subsequently decided not to proceed. Clerk noted that the May meeting was scheduled for 09.05.23. but if the election was contested, Council would be unable to hold the meeting until 11.05.23. at the earliest. Cllr. Nicholas noted that he was standing down and Council thanked him for his work as a councillor.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p>

<p>13. <u>Play Equipment:-</u> a) repair to zip wire The sleeve on the zip wire chain had been cut again leaving a sharp edge and contractor had repaired whilst on site as it was a safety issue. Council ratified the expenditure of at a cost of £95 + VAT.</p>	<u>Action</u>
<p>b) replacement roundabout Clerk had met representatives of play equipment manufacturers on site to discuss a replacement roundabout. Sovereign had advised that their smallest roundabout would not fit the site of the current unit because of the need to extend the surfacing but they could fit a rotating spinner at a cost of £7,241.59 + VAT if 25% paid on return and balance paid by return on completion of installation. Wicksteed had advised that new roundabout surfacing would need to extend into the tarmac path to meet current specifications and had quoted £7,232.05 + VAT for a bowl roundabout that would encroach less into the path. Kompan had quoted £7,931.21 + VAT for a small carousel roundabout. Proposed by Cllr. Saunders, seconded by Cllr. Jones that quotation for £7,931.21 + VAT be accepted as the unit was the closest to a traditional roundabout</p>	<u>Action</u>
<p>Resolved Clerk noted that CIL receipts of £9,906 need to be spent by May 2023 and Council had agreed to use them for play equipment</p>	Clerk
<p>Proposed by Cllr. Olney, seconded by Cllr. Nicholas that the CIL monies be used for the roundabout and the balance be allocated to the slide which had been installed at a cost of £2,968 + VAT</p>	Clerk
<p>Resolved</p>	Clerk
<p>c) 2023 playground inspections A new contract was needed for playground inspections in 2023. Clerk had received three quotations for £204.00 + VAT, £269.00 + VAT and £274.00 + VAT Proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Abbott that quotation for £204 + VAT be accepted</p>	<u>Action</u>
<p>Resolved</p>	Clerk
<p>14. <u>Average Speed Cameras:-</u> Bedford BC had advised that new lenses would be needed on two of the cameras and had asked if Council would contribute to the cost. Council agreed that Bedford BC should continue to maintain as Council had contributed a large capital sum when the cameras were installed and the Borough was maintaining cameras in other villages. Clerk to confirm to Bedford BC.</p>	<u>Action</u> Clerk

<p>15. <u>Litter Pick 2023:-</u> Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean would be held 17.03.23. – 02.04.23. School Easter holidays were 03.04.23. – 13.04.23. and Council agreed 15.04.23. or 22.04.23. Last year the event was hosted by the Scouts who sold refreshments to raise funds. OSSC had offered to host the event, if the date was suitable and provide free bacon rolls to participants. Cllr. Abbott noted that Scouts were unlikely to be in a position to host this year but Clerk to ask if they and the ATC were interested in participating and which date they preferred. Cllr. Olney to ask Post Office for a donation of chocolate for young people taking part.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p>Clerk/ PO</p>
<p>16. <u>King's Coronation:-</u> Clerk noted that the Coronation Big Lunch would be held on 07.05.23. and the Big Help Out on 08.05.23. There was no mention of beacons. 500 Coronation Champions Awards would also be given to volunteers who had made an exceptional difference in their communities. Nominations were being sought for volunteers over the age of 14 and the closing date was 02.04.23. Details at https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/volunteering/coronation-champions-awards/ A street party was being organised by Cameo Group on Ruffs Furze green on 08.05.23. and all were welcome. Churches were holding a celebratory service on 07.05.23. and OSSC were also planning an event. Council agreed that no other formal events were needed.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p>
<p>17. <u>Highway Matters:</u> Church Lane footway Clerk had asked Bedford BC to clear debris and cut back edges on path to Church and clear leaves from Church Lane footways. Cllr. Fardon had been advised by the Mayor that footways would not be cleared due to lack of funds and suggested employing a contractor to carry out the work. Footways were Bedford BC's responsibility and had now been cleared but Council was concerned they were not cleared during the winter months despite repeated requests. Cllr. Abbott noted that there was a rolling programme of maintenance but there had been issues with some vehicles and a lack of staff. Councillors were concerned that if one road was cleared residents would expect all roads to be but Council agreed that Clerk to obtain quotations to clear once a month between October and January and Council to discuss again at May meeting.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>e) consideration of a path along Highfield Road to Judges Spinney The path was one of the CIL priorities in the Neighbourhood Plan. Clerk had asked Bedford BC if the deadline for using the money could be extended if it was ring fenced for this purpose and awaiting a response. In the meantime, Clapham PC had requested a path from the developers of the 500 homes off Milton Road, Clapham. See item 19c.</p>	

18. Borough Councillor's Report:

Cllr. Abbott reported that the Local Plan had been submitted for examination. Planning permission had been granted for Wixams station but funding was still to be resolved and an appeal had been lodged against refusal of application 21/02394/MAO for 40 homes off Station Road. Bedford BC would begin food waste collections in 2024/25 but kerbside glass would not be collected. Rural skips would be visiting villages again in 2023 but dates had yet to be published. Residents would require photographic ID to vote in the May elections and if they had none they could apply for a postal vote or a Voter Authority Certificate at www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate. More EV charging sites were being installed in Brickhill, Putnoe, Kingsbrook, Harpur and Kempston wards and the villages of Great Denham, Harrold, Bromham and Sharnbrook. The Borough was seeking sites for further installations and Council agreed Clerk to ask Village Hall, Bedford Arms and Old Station site if they would be interested. An open day was being held at Brunel Road Highway Depot on 11.03.23.

Action

Clerk

19. Planning Applications and Decisions and other planning matters:**Decisions notified since Council meeting – 13th January 2023**

Application No. **22/02547/FUL** - first floor side/rear extension over existing ground floor, single storey rear extension replacing conservatory & associated alterations at 43 High Street

Parish No objection

Comments:

Decision/Date: Permission 12.01.23.

Application No. **22/00796/S73** - variation of approved plan 20/02658/FUL condition 2 to allow for changes to the appearance/design on single storey front extension with garage conversion & lanterns to flat roof over existing rear extension at 84 Lincroft

Parish No objection

Comments:

Decision/Date: Permission 31.01.23.

Application No. **22/02243/FUL** - extension to existing kitchen & dining hall, new activity space at first floor level and new extension adjacent to the existing hall refectory at Lincroft Academy.

Parish No objection

Comments:

Decision/Date: Permission 13.02.23.

Application No. **23/00012/TPO** – reduce oak tree in back garden to approximately 2m below previous points on the top & north east & south side and reduce the west side by 3m at 55B High Street

Parish No objection

Comments:

Decision/Date: Permission 20.02.23.

Application No. **22/02104/FUL** - erection of solar panels and air source heat pump units at Oakley Primary Academy

Parish No objection

Comments:

Decision/Date: Permission 22.02.23.

Applications received since last Council meeting – 13th January 2023

Application No. **a) 23/00269/TPO** - reduce willow tree in rear garden to previous points at Shires Fold, 55A High Street

Parish No objection

Comments

Application No. **b) 23/00301/FUL** - Two storey rear extension & loft conversion with concealed dormer at 1 Parrott Close

Parish No objection

Comments

Application No. **c) Clapham PC – request for support to their objection to 21/00332/EIA for new development of up to 500 homes off Milton Road, Clapham**

Parish

Comments Clerk had asked Bedford BC if the deadline for using CIL money could be extended if it was ring fenced for a path along Highfield Road and awaiting a response. In the meantime, Clapham PC had requested support for their objection to 21/00332/EIA for a new development of up to 500 homes off Milton Road, Clapham because no path along Highfield Road was included. Clapham PC representatives advised that they were objecting as students would walk to Lincroft School along Highfield Road which currently had no footway or lights and pedestrians would need to cross the bypass slip road or cross Highfield Road twice. Developers would be putting traffic calming measures and a 20mph speed limit in Clapham High Street to encourage bypass traffic to use Highfield Road. Construction traffic would also access the site from Highfield Road therefore the potential danger to students and pedestrians would increase. Cllr, Fardon was concerned that a path and lights would foster coalescence of the two villages.

Clerk noted that developers had agreed to provide a dual purpose walking/cycling path along Lovell Road and Council should reiterate that that path should still be provided.

Proposed by Cllr. Olney, seconded by Cllr. Jones that Council would support Clapham PC's objection and their request for a footway along Highfield Road but that the Highfield Road footway should be in addition to, not instead of, a dual cycling/walking path along Lovell Road

Resolved

Bedford BC would be discussing with Clapham PC on 22.03.23. and Clapham PC invited Council to attend. Chair & Cllr. Olney to attend.

Clerk

PO/JW

Cllr. Olney suggested that Council and Neighbourhood Plan Group should attend the public inquiry for 21/02394/MAO - 40 homes off Station Road. Appeal was expected to be heard in June and Council to discuss at May meeting.

Clerk

20. Planning Policy:-

Bedford BC Local Plan 2040 Examination

The Local Plan 2040 had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination within the deadline, therefore the Borough's five year land supply was maintained. Independent Inspectors had been appointed and public hearings were expected to take place in June and July.

21. Correspondence:

a) Bedford BC - ORA Tennis Court Fence

Council was concerned that a facility paid for from public monies had been converted to a car park without any consultation. Council had not received a response from ORA to concerns expressed and Bedford BC had advised that the S. 106 had been satisfied concerning the tennis court and as it did not contain obligations regarding future maintenance of the sports facilities, Bedford BC did not have any control over the maintenance in planning terms.

Council required a second representative to attend ORA meetings and Cllr. Jones volunteered. Clerk noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 21.03.23.

Action

PJ

b) Bedford BC – topics for Overview & Scrutiny Committees to consider

Bedford BC had requested suggestions for issues to be investigated. In 2022/23 they had investigated highway works, planning services, education performance and the attainment gap, Bedford Borough bus services, Bedford Hospital A&E and Urgent Treatment Centre provision and safe discharge of hospital patients into home environments. Council had previously asked them to investigate provision of palliative care services for end of life patients and to suggest again plus investigation into rural road and footway maintenance and safety.

Clerk

22. Finance Matters:Action**a) accounts for period up to 28th February 2023****Income and balances:**

NatWest Bank - Current account balance at 28.02.23.	£23,236.01
NatWest Bank – Business Reserve account balance at 28.02.23.	£7,282.43
Nationwide - Savings Bond	£59,999.74
Hampshire Trust - Savings Bond	£84,377.01

Received since last meeting:

ORA	Newsletter advertising	432.00
David Russell		
Builders	Newsletter advertising	240.00
Tudor Rose	Newsletter advertising	72.00
Young	Allotment rent	30.00
Devlin	Allotment rent	21.30
Spoor	Allotment rent	15.00
NatWest	Interest	5.10
Brown	Allotment rent	21.30
Wild Earth Yoga	Newsletter advertising	60.00
Blunham Angling	Directory advertising	15.00
Bedford Arms	Directory advertising	70.00
Oakley Day Centre	Directory advertising	35.00
Power Academy of Dance	Directory advertising	70.00
Oakley Youth Club	Directory advertising	35.00
EMC Design	Directory advertising	40.00
Priory Medical	Directory advertising	70.00
V C Property	Directory advertising	70.00
ORA	Directory advertising	35.00
Hair for All		
Occasions	Directory advertising	70.00
Old School	Directory advertising	35.00
Oakley Ringers	Directory advertising	20.00
Bedford Rentals	Directory advertising	120.00
Oakley Angels	Directory advertising	40.00
Forestry Fuels	Directory advertising	30.00
Meridian Trust	Directory advertising	35.00
Old Road Securities	Directory printing costs	1085.00
NatWest	Interest	5.02
	Total	£2,776.72

Payments Already Made:			Chq. No.
	Rent for upper rooms January and February	307.66	s/o
Old School	Salaries January and February payment	2524.98	s/o
Bedford BC	Quarterly grass cutting payment	2,617.75	1830
	Playground repairs and installation of slide	2,598.00	1831
CPM Playgrounds	Fruit trees for Brockwell Meadow	160.00	1832
EEAOP	Payroll provision - second payment	96.00	1833
DM Payroll Services	Expenses October - December 2022	46.39	1834
Paice	Bedfordshire Pension Fund February payment	495.13	1835
Payments Made:			
	Printing Winter & Spring Newsletters, Directory and sheet for Linch Furlong notice board	2823.00	1836
White Hart Press	Information		
Commissioner	Data protection renewal	40.00	1837
Village Hall	Hire of room 07.03.23.	18.00	1838
Oakley Properties	Cricket Field rent 2023/24	906.77	1839
	Total	£12,633.68	

Resolved: to approve the accounts for payment

Clerk

b) 2023 Christmas lights contract

A new contract was required for 2023 onwards. Current contractor had quoted £2,820 + VAT for 3 years, which was the same price as the previous contract and included drying, stock checking and storing the lights. Bedford BC had yet to quote. (Bedford BC subsequently advised that they had insufficient manpower to take on an additional contract).

Proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Fardon that quotation for £2,820 + VAT for 3 years 2023 – 2025 be accepted

Resolved

Cllr. Olney noted that Church was concerned about the safety of the box in the churchyard and Clerk to ask contractor/Bedford BC to investigate.

Clerk

Clerk

c) charges for delivering brochures with Newsletter

Newsletter advertiser had enquired whether Council would deliver advertising brochures with the Newsletter. Newsletter advertising policy included a charge for loose A4 sheets to be delivered with Newsletters at a cost of £100 per delivery but not brochures.

Proposed by Cllr. Fardon, seconded by Cllr. Saunders that A5 only brochures would be delivered for village businesses and advertisers in the Newsletter at a cost of £250 per delivery.

Resolved

Clerk

d) investment bond

Council's Hampshire Trust Bank investment bond would mature on 13.03.23. and the amount on maturity would be £85,011.57 including £634.56 interest. A new one year bond was available at 3.7%. Nationwide offered an instant access account at 0.35% with an 18 week lead time, Starling a one year online account at 2.5%, NatWest a 95 day notice account at 1.97%. NatWest and Barclays Treasury Deposit accounts required a minimum investment of £100K. Clerk noted that the FSCS guarantee only covered £85,000 but

Proposed by Cllr. Abbott, seconded by Cllr. Nicholas that £85,011.57 be invested for one year in Hampshire Bank as interest rate was much higher than for a current account and Council held only £11.57 over the guarantee limit

Resolved

Clerk

23. Date of Next Meeting: 4th April 2023 – Annual Parish Meeting