

Meeting: Pavenham Parish Council
18th September 2024 at 7.30pm

Council Members in attendance: Cllr. Thomas Beazley (TB)
Cllr. Caroline O'Neill (CO)
Cllr. David Smith (DS)
Cllr. Sara Darlow (SD)
Cllr. Jon Abbott (JA)

Apologies Received: Cllr. Doug McMurdo (DM)
Cllr. Gareth D'Cruze (GDC)
Cllr. Katie Sharpe (KS)

Borough Council Member: Not present

Clerk to the Council: Rosemary Plum (RP)

Public Attendance: 1 Resident

MINUTES OF MEETING

Welcome

1. Apologies for Absence

- a) Apologies were received from:
 - Cllr. Doug McMurdo (DM)
 - Cllr. Gareth D'Cruze (GDC)
 - Cllr. Katie Sharpe (KS)
- b) Resignation Tendered
 - Cllr. Gareth D'Cruze tendered resignation from the position of Parish Councillor prior to the meeting with immediate effect.
 - The Parish Council will advertise a casual vacancy for the position of Parish Councillor.

2. Declarations of Interest

The following declarations were received:

- Cllr. Thomas Beazley for matters relating to the NDP
- Cllr. David Smith as Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee
- Cllr. Sara Darlow as Secretary of the Good Neighbours Scheme
- Cllr. Caroline O'Neill as Chair of the Good Neighbours Scheme

3. Open Forum *(limited to 15 mins)*

- Continued apologies since November 2023 from DMM noted.
- Resident in attendance thanked the Parish Council for moving to recruit a new Parish

Councillor as soon as possible.

- Request from Villager Magazine for rescheduling of Parish Meetings noted. Confirmed that the Parish Council cannot change dates to align with their editorial deadlines. Parish meetings are established at the beginning of each year in accordance with regulatory governance.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Sara Darlow

SECONDED: Cllr. Jon Abbott

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes *(for information only)*

Covered on this evening's Agenda.

6. Clerk's Report *(for information only)*

- Bedford Borough Council Flood Forum Thursday 3rd October from 18.00-20.30pm hosted by the Mayor and Council partners. Opportunity for local communities to find out more about flooding and flood risk management across Bedford Borough. JA will be in attendance as Borough Cllr. And SD will attend as our Parish Councillor.

7. Borough Council Matters

a) Update – Cllr. Doug McMurdo

Following report provided by DMM:

- Still progressing with officers on the Holiday Park, but we all know now the residents have been ordered to vacate.
- Privately assisted 3 residents requiring houses as they will be homeless.
- Re highways, just found out, Highways Department Officer has been out the business for 3 months, so need to follow up with Manager to see what is being done.

The following additional items were reported by JA as Ward Cllr for our neighbouring Parish:

- Debenhams – work started at least 1 unit let by Christmas. A lot of empty shops if owned by private landlords are not keen to reduce rents and keeping them for investment.
- Vacancy rate of Borough owned premises around 1%.
- Crazy golf opened in Russell Park with Bedfordshire landmarks.
- SEND school due to open in November for staff and children in January.
- Lincroft planning approval to extend school and will cater for new MR development.
- Footway on station road will have to be widened as part of planning conditions and implement greater speed control.

- Work started on Wixams station, currently 2 platforms, high chance it will become 4 if Universal goes ahead.
- Universal works moving forward rapidly and significant financial investment. One of the largest private investments in the country. Going through Government Special Development Order and not Bedford Planning. Decision being made before the end of the year.
- Work being done on A421 and Borough pressing them to work on J13.
- Bottle banks no longer separated by colour coded – still in pilot phase but appears to be going well.
- Food waste collections may be introduced in due course.
- Concern about the regeneration programme within Bedford – apart from Debenhams, lot of properties empty. Nothing to attract people to go into Bedford. What is the future programme? Spending lot of money on Midland Road on cosmetic improvements. Working on new Town Centre plan possibly opening up areas to reveal listed buildings. Big department stores will not come to Bedford, they're even pulling out of MK. Need to change the purpose of Town Centres but Borough has very little control over the privately owned buildings.
- Mandatory target for planning dropping to approx.1300 units. Need to progress NDP, we are potentially at risk.
- Bedford-MK canal route, walking/cycling route – work started.
- Buses – ongoing issue. GP suing Council and SC haven't worked out how they're going to fund it going forward. Hoping SC are more reliable than GP previously and GP less routes and hopefully services are better. SD meeting with GP on Friday and will check on 25 route. Pavenham is still very lacking buses especially in the afternoon.
- Bedford Borough going to vote no for the next Bedford Improvement District on the next and 5th BID. Provide security and shoplifting IT support, town promotion and voucher scheme.
- Road investment – budget has been reduced considerably and only 12 roads on schemes across the Borough.

8. Neighbourhood Development Plan

a) Update – Cllr. Sara Darlow

- The group reconvened on the 29th August with a positive session. Survey results reviewed and discussion about required steps to form a full plan ensued. Aiming for early 2025 for the presentation to the village.

Next steps include:

- Extend invite to join the committee to a villager who has expressed an interest in supporting us through the final stages
- Get quotes for Flora & Fauna survey, we have two potential collaborators.
- Review the current NDP and highlight any changes to be made.
- Review emails received and respond with holding note or answers.
- Collate additional information following survey for the presentation.

- Reach out to previous NDP member for support on some areas of the plan
- Review potential date options for presentation in January for Village Hall booking.
- Next meeting to be scheduled for end of October
- Apply for up to £10,000 in Basic Grant funding as well as possibly Technical Support subject to eligibility criteria. Any monies received must be spent within this financial year.

9. Planning Matters

a) Validations:

Nothing to report

b) Decisions

- I. Hill Farm House High Street Pavenham Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 7NJ - G1 - Group of Leylandii, reduce height by 4.5-5m - Decided – Permitted - No Tree Preservation Order Served
- II. 6 East End Pavenham Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 7PR - Certificate to confirm lawful existing residential occupation of an annex flat. - Decided - Certificate Refused

10. Highways Maintenance

a) Updates

- I. RP has written to a number of residents in Church Lane and The Bury reminding of their responsibility to maintain footpaths and highways clear of tress, hedges and other vegetation. They have been asked to complete required works by the 1st November 2024.
- II. Church Lane Drains – blocked again after last storm. TB has reported to Borough.
- III. A parishioner at East End has requested a curved mirror at the end of East End Lane. Even when hedges are cut it's very dangerous turning from the main road coming from Oakley side.
- IV. RP to write to resident advising Borough no longer installs mirrors as it implies liability in the event of an accident.
- V. Committee acknowledge it's a very blind corner and dangerous even at low speeds. TB will clear post and rail fence and we need speed enforcement. Signs have been cleaned. Ask highways for chevrons marked on road and additional signage options on the bend.
- VI. No update or list of actions from DMM walk-about with Borough Highways. RP to follow up as very limited work has been completed in the village.

11. Traffic Management & Speedwatch Group

a) Update – Cllr Smith

- I. DS circulated report prior to meeting which will be added to website.
- II. Speeding is seen as a priority by the police. Copy of report forwarded to police responsible for traffic.
- III. Consideration being given to a flashing sign on corner at East End.
- IV. DS has accessed data from speed signs.
- V. DS has discussed value of restarting the group with former lead of Speedwatch.
- VI. Further discussion about updating of current speed indicator devices to improve traffic and speed control.
- VII. Problem with scheduled bus service speeding through the village – SD meeting with Grant Palmer and will raise concerns.

12. Crime Report

a) Updates from John Stamford

- I. Nothing to report.
- II. CON advised 3 out of 4 burglars involved in the Church Lane break-in this summer at her home have been identified and brought to Court. CON received very good support from the Police.

b) Cricket Club theft

- I. Good police and forensics support.
- II. Discussions ongoing around need to increase security in future.

13. Environment

a) Spinney & Trees – Update Cllr D’Cruze

- I. GDC not in attendance following resignation.
- II. War Memorial maintenance person has purchased battery operated tools and would like Parish Council to consider making financial contribution as equipment is used mainly for benefit of the parish. Since this request, DS written application for funding for the battery powered blower and the Village Charity has bought it.
- I. A parishioner has a disagreement relating to the maintenance of a tree on his neighbours’ property. This needs to be referred to the Borough Tree Warden for resolution of conflict. The Parish Council cannot be the arbiter of neighbour disputes and the resident should notify the tree office directly. Civil matter to be taken up privately.

b) Footpaths update – Cllr O’Neill

- I. Excessive rain in June and July followed by warm August created a problem with the footpaths. Many were overgrown especially North of the village towards Harrold and towards Stevington.
- II. PC is aware of many complaints from residents.

- III. Overgrown paths towards Stevington are in that parish.
- IV. Parish Council thanked landowners doing a great job overall in keeping footpaths accessible as they are not legally required to keep them accessible.
- V. The SSI along the river towards Stevington is a marsh with warning signs for very wet/ slippery conditions. People need to recognise this is a SSI route and it is used at their own risk.

c) Volunteer groups for footpath maintenance

- I. Consideration given to the Parish Council forming a residents' group of volunteers to keep the paths clear in consultation with the landowners.

14. Community Matters

a) Good Neighbour Scheme (GNS) – update Cllr O'Neill

- I. GNS very successful to date and going from strength to strength. Thanks given to the Committee and volunteers for their organisation and communication skills.
- II. Regular visits to villagers for tea and chats. Many lifts to and from vital appointments, support for pension advice and distribution of packs for keeping warm this winter.
- III. Funds are stable and now fundraising events required.
- IV. Hoping The Cock public house will support the efforts of the GNS group as they operate as a charity.
- V. Many people are very grateful for the help and support across the village from the Good Neighbours Scheme.
- VI. Several people on the committee are involved in other groups/ projects in our community and have done an amazing job to get this scheme up and running here.
- VII. Further volunteers to support the Committee will always be welcome
- VIII. July to Sept 12 jobs completed. From 1st Sept to date 44 jobs completed.

15. War Memorial

a) Hedge maintenance – update

- I. Box being removed as affected by Box Blight.
- II. Borough Tree Officer recommended Yew as a replacement and TB has sourced.
- III. Trying to get Yew planted and prepared for Remembrance Sunday.

b) Water supply to irrigate new hedge

- I. Parish Council to talk to local resident to ask if willing to provide water connection to irrigate new hedge if Parish Council covers costs.
- II. DS will approach residents in the vicinity and ask for support.

16. BPHA

c) Update

- I. Affordable rented housing is planned for the site in Close Road.
- II. BPHA awaiting programme from UKPN relating to the electrical mains relocation that currently runs through the BPHA garage site.
- III. When dates are known further updates will be provided by BPHA.

17. Financial Update

a) Financial report

Accounts to be ratified and financial statement circulated to members prior to the meeting.

b) Accounts presented for payment

Additional payment of £103.42 was agreed for inclusion.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Jon Abbott

SECONDED: Cllr. Sara Darlow

c) Support for Village Sports Organisations funding bid

DS make Parish Council aware that sports organisations e.g. tennis club in the Parish who need to change to energy saving could apply for grants through the Parish Council. This was agreed in principle by the committee.

d) Online banking update

RP still awaiting response from Unity Trust bank to online application several months ago.

18. Correspondence

- I. FOI enquiry received regarding amount billed to Parish Council by Borough Council for recent by-elections.
- II. List will be circulated to councillors in due course.

19. Date of Next Meeting

20th November 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Village Hall

2025 Schedule:

15th January 2025 at 7.30pm

19th March 2025 at 7.30pm

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 9.45pm

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	20 th November 2024

Chair