

Melchbourne and Yelden Parish Council

Chairman: Simon Paynter

Clerk: David Brough

MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 20th January 2021 at 8pm using Zoom video conference

- 1 **Present:** Cllrs Simon Paynter (Chairman), Peter Wilkinson (Vice Chairman), Craig Young, Paul Alexander, Robin Mackonochie, Sam Edwards, Frank Morgan, Sarah Croft, Borough Cllr Martin Towler.
Apologies: None
Three parishioners were in attendance.
- 2 **Declarations of interest in items on the agenda – None**
- 3 **Requests to grant dispensation for declared interests – None**
- 4 **Public Open Session (15 minutes):** Two parishioners spoke requesting assistance in relation to their property flooding. Clerk has connected them to Bedford BC's Resilience Team who provide support during and after flooding. Clerk has also chased the borough council to clear the gullies/drains along the High St. A third parishioner attended with an interest in flooding and requested assistance in reporting potholes on the road connecting to Three Shires Way. Clerk will report the potholes to Bedford BC Highways.
- 5 **Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting** held on 18th November 2020.
Resolved to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 6 **Matters Arising (Clerk's report on the Action List)**
 - All actions covered by individual agenda items below.
- 7 **Correspondence (requiring council attention):** (Names always withheld for Data Protection)
 - *Parishioner emailed requesting works are carried out to the River Til to reduce the risk of flooding to properties south of the river, by diverting more water north.* Clerk shared the email with the council – this has been added to the agenda at the request of Cllr Alexander.
- 8 **Crime report**
 - *Sanitised crime reports covering 28th October to 31st December showed no reported crime.*
 - *Community Priority: The North Rural Community Policing team have intimated that the current priority (focus) that targets "burglary" will be updated to another priority shortly, based on reduced burglary crime in comparison to 2019.*
- 9 **Streetlights upgrade**
 - *To compare three quotes for LED streetlight upgrades*
 - *To suggest a preferred LED lantern style*

Councillors indicated a preference towards the Zeta Group Telford lantern, which has a heritage style.

 - *To decide if any streetlights are to be removed and not replaced*

Melchbourne's P001 is to be removed and not replaced, along with Yelden's P007 and the lantern without a reference number on the corner of Church Lane/High St. An up-to-date proposal and schedule of lanterns can be provided on request.

 - *To approve approaching Chelveston Benefit Fund for a matched grant*

Resolved to approach Chelveston Benefit Fund for a matched grant of approximately £10k.
- 10 **Community Litterpick 2021**
Proposal from Cllr Young: To discuss/debate dates for a 2021 community litterpick.
Councillors decided it was not possible to set dates at this stage of national lockdown. Item to be rolled to the next meeting.

11 **Flood relief for the River Til**

Proposal by Cllr Alexander: To consider use of some of the River Til reserves to create an indentation of the river towards the floodplain to the north west, to relieve the risk of flooding to nearby properties south of the river.

It was agreed that Cllrs Paynter and Young would carry out a site meeting to investigate how much of an indentation would be required, and how effective this might be. Clerk will then need to acquire three quotes for the work.

12 **Budget/Precept setting for 2021/22**

To agree the budget and precept for 2021/22 following receipt of the tax base from Bedford BC Finance. Councillors reviewed the budget prepared by the clerk and resolved to retain the precept at £7,365. The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in an increase in unemployment levels, with further increases predicted. Therefore, the proposed tax base for this parish from Bedford BC reflects a higher estimate for the effect of "Council Tax Support discounts" in the forthcoming year. As such, despite retaining the precept at the same level, individual tax summaries will show a rise of 3.4% due to a reduction in the tax base – essentially a reduction in the number of tax-paying dwellings.

13 **Planning training**

To consider a quote for £275 for planning training for councillors from Norfolk Parish Training & Support, who have been recommended by other clerks. Schedule has been circulated. 2/2.5 hour session to be held over Zoom.

Resolved to accept this quote and look for a training date prior to the next council meeting. All councillors will be looking to attend since this price is for the whole council and not per individual.

14 **New payroll provider**

To agree a new payroll provider following the termination of services from the current provider. Red Shoes accounting: £15.50 per payroll run.

Resolved to accept this quote from Red Shoes.

15 **Planning:**

New applications

- *APPLICATION NO: 20/02891/FUL Full Planning Application*
PROPOSAL: Erection of new grain store and access to public highway
LOCATION : Crowfield Farm Melchbourne Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 1BH

Resolved not to object to this application but to provide a comment: the council suggests that visual screening (back and sides), either by trees or hedging, is provided as part of the application due to the prominent position of the proposed grain store.

Monitoring of applications and enforcement

- *Reference: 18/00949/FUL TYPE: Full Planning Application (Amended)*
Location: The Chequers Inn High Street Yelden Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 1AW
Proposal: Proposed extensions & alterations to Public House & residential development of 4 dwellings consisting of 2 three bed & 2 four bed dwellings with associated parking and access.
MYPC: Resolved not to object with a number of conditions (July 2019 & Nov 2020).
Bedford BC: Expected to be considered at the 22nd February 2021 Bedford BC Planning Committee meeting.
- *Reference: 18/00253/UNAUTU (Previously 14/00103/UNAUTU)*
Location: Lot 3 at Tall Oaks Farm, Melchbourne Road, Riseley, Beds.
Details: Unauthorised use investigation and Enforcement Notice served by Bedford BC.
Permanent County Court injunction is now in place to prohibit residential occupation and the stationing of caravans/motorhomes for non-agricultural purposes.
Entrance gates were required to be compliant by June 2020. Bedford BC require more time to follow this up. (Planning contact: Peter White) **No further update.**
- *Reference: 14/00392/UNAUTU. Location: Hill Farm, Melchbourne Road, Riseley.*
Details: Investigation regarding the right to live on the land. Planning Enforcement Notice served. Appeal to Planning Inspectorate dismissed & Enforcement Notice upheld.

Matter currently remains with Bedford BC Legal (Human Rights). (Planning contact: Peter White). **No further update.**

16 Councillors' Reports and Updates:

- Ward Councillor – Cllr Martin Towler
Report circulated to councillors and is available on request to the Clerk.
- Chelveston Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Trust – Cllrs Mackonochie & Young
No meetings have occurred.
- Highways – Cllrs Mackonochie & Paynter
- General update & Drains. Councillors have requested a drain/gullies clearout, which are silting up (**Action Clerk**).
- Install of a new drainage pipe in Knotting Road to resolve the blockage/flooding issue. To be funded by BBC's "2020/21 Capital Drainage Budget". Clerk has chased repeatedly for a timeline. Clerk to chase again and CC Cllrs Croft and Mackonochie.
- Streetlights. No further update beyond item 9.
- Report from meetings attended by councillors
None known.
- Report on Speeding (VAS) – Cllr Morgan
Cllrs noted the high levels of speeding at the Melchbourne Knotting Road speed sign (32% breaking the speed limit). Cllr Morgan will look for a new location further up the road in a westerly direction to encourage a reduction in speed much earlier.
- Report on River Til and drainage capacity
- Yelden Flood Group – Cllr Alexander
The Yelden Flood Group have been active in supporting residents during a time of repeated flooding. Cllr Alexander wished to remind residents that homeowners are ultimately responsible for protecting their property from flooding. The group will of course be on hand during flood emergencies, and whilst responsibility lies with the homeowner, they do have a very limited stock of aqua sacs (sand bags). Homeowners are therefore encouraged to make their own provisions for flood protection.

17 Finance

- The following payments were approved:

Date	Category	Payee	Description	Payments Gross	Receipts
23 December 2020	Allotment Income	Yelden Allotment	Annual Allotment Income		13.00
15 January 2021	Training: Councillors	BATPC	BATPC Councillor Induction Training	60.00	
20 January 2021	Membership BATPC	BATPC	Annual BATPC Membership fees	93.00	
20 January 2021	Website running cost	CloudNext	Annual Hosting fees	95.98	
20 January 2021	Website running cost	Eyelid	Website support	100.00	
20 January 2021	Website running cost	CloudNext	Domain for .gov website	108.00	
20 January 2021	Staff Costs	David Brough	Salary Dec/Jan	583.12	

- The following account balances were noted. The P&L variance to budget showed no material differences:

2020/21 - Balance Sheet - January 2021

	£
Lloyds Current Account	Current Balance (Forecast)
	31,481
TOTAL at Bank	31,481
Funds allocated	25,716
General Reserve (estimated)	5,765
TOTAL Funds	31,481

- 18 **Any Other Business** (For future agendas – no decisions can be taken)
No items were raised for a future agenda.
- 19 **Date of the next meeting:** Wednesday, 17th March 2021 at 8pm – Location TBC.