# Parish Council

Thursday 16-Jan-2025 @ 18:30
Dave Law Sports Pavilion, Park Crescent, Stewartby

## MINUTES

### 1: Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Fraser, Williams, and Tilly Bartens (Parish Clerk).

### 2: Declarations on Interest in items on the Agenda

None

### 3: To consider any applications for dispensation

None

### 4: Public Participation

None

### 5: The Parish Council heard a presentation from Bedford Healthwatch. Bedford

The Parish Council heard a presentation from Bedford Healthwatch. Bedford Healthwatch are independent advocates for people to access health and social care. They launch a survey every year, which is available online and takes about 20 minutes to complete, where you can put forward things that you would like them to look in to.
They have a coffee morning at the Church Hall, London Road, Bedford on the 6
th February 2025.

### 6: Minutes of the previous meeting

The Council RESOLVED that Cllr Melville should sign the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on the 19th December 2024 as a true and accurate record.

### 7: Matters arising from previous minutes

VAT for the 2023-24 financial year and the period April – December 2024 has not been reclaimed and £41.5k received. This is being held in reserves.
VAT reclaims for 2021 and 2022 remain outstanding and the Clerk is still unable to retrieve the files due o being denied access. This matter will be taken back to Court.
Cllr Spice to advise whether Ward funding has been approved for the two bins.
Cllrs Banks and Law will check whether the deflective lights that they reported have been repaired.
Cllr Fraser to update Cllr Melville on the damaged paths and also circulate relevant policies.

### 8: Chairman’s Report

Cllr Melville to continuing discussions about potential nursery provision in the village. The lack of outdoor space could be overcome by using the Sports Field. The Nursery would generate income of £1000 per week for the Village Hall. An email of intent should be received by the 20th January 2025 with a view to the nursery opening in September 2025. The Ofsted Inspection would be in August 2025.
Discussions continue with regard to having a Police Hub in the Village Hall however funding maybe an issue.
The Chair advised that One Group (a Groundswork Company) have asked if we have an ideas of projects that they could help us with. Cllrs were asked to bring back ideas to the February meeting.
The meeting was advised that Andy Muskett’s premises had been broken into on two separate occasions. He has advised that he will no longer be able to store the Christmas lights. The Council will need to look into a storage container that would be placed in the back corner of the car park.
Cllrs Melville and Spice attended a meting with Avis & Young, the principle

contractor for the brickworks site, which was productive. They will attend the Parish Council meeting in March 2025 to formally introduce themselves. The planning application will be as per Cloudwing and will include houses, schools and leisure. If they wish to make changes then this would need to go back to planning. It is envisaged that developers would start in 2027 however no one has been assigned yet. They are keen to work with the Council around the design of the housing and avoid some of the issues that have been identified with Hansons Reach. A provisional date of the 12th April has been set for community engagement. CCTV has been installed to stop the issues with the lorries and they intend to tidy up the outside area. The plans include aa Heritage Centre and a Chimney however there are some concerns about building a full-size chimney. The Heritage Centre maybe given to the Parish to run. Cllr Melville advised that the Parish Council would be open to managing the open spaces subject to funding.
Avis & Young advised that they maybe able to provide funding to rebuild the fountain for the 100 year celebrations. Cllr Melville has also met with the Lord Lieutenant about this event.
Cllr Melville, Banks and Law met with Bedford Borough Council to discuss funding for the 100 year celebrations. They agreed to fund metalwork and a celebration book.

## 9: Report from Bedford Borough Council

Cllr Spice advised that the Parish Council's response to the EWR Consultation needs to be submitted in January 2025.
There is still no update on Universal Studios.
Cllr Spice advised that she did not have an update in the Interchange Retail Park road markings.
She advised that progress was being made on the old Debenhams building.
Cllr Spice will chase the Council's grant submission.

## 10: Clerk's Financial Report

10.1 Authorise payments for BACS Transfer
The Council RESOLVED to authorise the BACS Reports for the Parish Council and the Sports Pavilion.
Cllr Burnage raised concerns about the amount of overtime for the caretakers and felt that this needed to be managed more effectively.
The Clerk is carefully monitoring the invoices that are coning through from ACE Fire & Security as they are not always in line with the new contracts that have been signed.
10.2 Balances of Accounts
Members were advised that as at the 31st December 2024, the balances of the Parish Council and Sports Fields accounts were as follows:
£14,307.76
£37,418.82
£35,362.60
£386,465.75
10.3 Precept 2025-26
The Council RESOLVED to set the precept at £131,450.
The Sports Pavilion budget was also approved although this does not form part of the precept.
10.4 Agree to pay invoices and VAT relating to any grants for the play area
It was RESOLVED that the Council would cover the £14,000 VAT initially as a condition of the Veolia Grant if successful (the Council will be able to reclaim this). The Council also RESOLVED to pay 10% £7,286. It maybe an option to reclaim this from Bedford Borough Council.
10.5 Internal Audit Bank Reconciliation Review Quarters 1, 2 & 3
This item s deferred to the next meeting.

## 11: Quotations for authorisation

11.1 Replacement Defibrillator Pads
The Council RESIOLVED to purchase replacement defibrillator pads. A new battery also had to be purchased as an emergency earlier this month at a cost

of between £300 - £400.
11.2 Repair of Village Hall Clock
The Council RESOLVED to accept the quote for the repair of the Village Hall clock.
11.3 Mobile Phones
The Council RESOLVED to accept the quote for two years at a cost of £70 per month.

## 12: 12.1 Planning Applications & Decisions

Cllr Melville discussed a planning application that he had become aware of through Central Bedfordshire Council. This had not been sent to the Council for consideration. The site by Lockheed Martin is not part of the Local Plan and is right by an historic monument. There are issues with the roads not being fit for purpose.
The Council RESOLVED to object to this application.

## 13: Amenities

13.1 Highways/Lighting
Cllrs Law and Banks to check that repairs have been carried out.
13.2 Recreation Area
The Council RESOLVED that the TPO should be asked to come and inspect all of the Council's trees.
13.3 Newsletter
Due to financial constraints, the Council RESOLVED that it would no longer be able to produce a newsletter.
13.4 Sports Field/Pavilion
None
13.5 Village Hall
None
13.6 Policing
None
13.7 Encyclis
Cllr Law advised that a miniature version of the carbon capture will be tested to see if it works. For the period July – December 2024 there were two shutdowns, two complaints and 551 lorry movements a day.

## 14: Community Events 2025

The Event Committee will meet on the 23rd January 2025.

## 15: Grants

Cllr Haley advised that National Lottery funding had been refused because the Council did not have the following policies:
• Safeguarding Policy
• Equal Rights Policy
• Reservation Policy
An application can be resubmitted
A grant has also been submitted to Grantscape (full funding) for the replacement roundabout and Bedford Borough have been approached for a contribution of £1,000.
Grants have also been submitted for the Village Hall floor and memorials.

## 16: Council Surgery / Community Engagement

A date for the next Council Surgery will be set in the Spring 2025

## 17: Safeguarding

Cllr Fraser to action.

## 18: Items of an urgent nature or for inclusion on the next agenda

Items of an urgent nature or for inclusion on the next agenda
None

## 19: Close of Meeting and items for the next Agenda.

Meeting closed at 9.01 pm.

## 20: Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 20th February 2025 @ 6.30 pm. Cllr Banks to Chair in Cllr Melville's absence.