Parish Council
Thursday 15-May-2025 @ 18:30
Dave Law Sports Pavilion, Park Crescent, Stewartby

MINUTES

1: Apologies
Apologies were received from Cllrs Fraser and Williams.

2: Declarations on Interest in items on the Agenda
None

3: To consider any applications for dispensation
None

4: Public Participation
Cllr Melville welcomed Donna to the meeting who has expressed an interest in becoming a Parish Councillor.

5: 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 17th April 2025 as a true and accurate record.

6: Matters arising from previous minutes
Cllr Melville talked about the damage that is being caused at the Village Hall by the tree. The Clerk advised that the planning application was being completed and further evidence had just been received from the Village Hall Clerk.

7: Chairman's Report
The Chair advised that the Stewartby Bowls Club had, to date, failed to meet their health and safety obligations. They have been given until week commencing the 19th May 2025 to complete. A further audit will be carried out and action will need to be taken if works are still outstanding.

It was RESOLVED that the statue from Bedford Borough Council should be sited at the top of The Green or on land in front of Stewartby Club (subject to permission from the landowner).

Harworth have started to look at the fountain and have consulted a heritage specialist. Once the costs of refurbishment are known, they will determine whether they are able to financially support this.

Cllr Melville advised that himself and Cllr Banks met with representatives from Universal Studios last week. The site has been given the green light subject to planning permission. The application will be out for consultation for a period of 30 days and is likely to consist of 6,000 pages. Patrick from Bedford Borough Council will go through this with the Parish Council at a separate meeting (date to be confirmed).

The development of Wixams Station has been delayed as it now needs to be four platforms. It is unlikely to be completed until 2030.

Cllr Melville advised that The Guardian had done a piece about Manor Road which had caused confusion. All of the businesses are remaining.

It is too early to say that support and contributions local villages will receive from Universal however assurance has been given that they look after communities. They will also be hosting job fairs to seek employees from the local area. Construction will start next year.

Cllr Haley that EWR are struggling to get any interaction with Universal regarding Kempston Hardwick Station.

Cllr Melville advised that there was some conflict with Bedford Borough Council regarding the issues at Montgomery. The Chair will be writing an open letter to the Chief Executive of the Council.

8: Report from Bedford Borough Council
None – Cllr Spice sent apologies.

9: Clerk's Financial Report
9.1 Authorise payments for BACS Transfer

The Council RESOLVED to authorise the BACS Reports for the Parish Council and the Sports Pavilion.

9.2 Balances of Accounts

Members were advised that as at the 30th April 2025, the balances of the Parish Council and Sports Fields accounts were as follows:

£57,276.34
£54,125.66
£15,202.13
£389,121.02

10: Quotations for authorisation

10.1 Legionella Works

Given the issues with the initial risk assessments that were carried out by Urisk, it was RESOLVED that that Council would not proceed with the quoted works at the present time.

The Council RESOLVED that further risk assessments would be commissioned from an alternative company in the first instance.

11: 11.1 Planning Applications & Decisions

Ref: 25/00242/FUL Proposed dropped kerb with raised flower bed and geogrid panel gravel drive/parking area @ 206 Stewartby Way Stewartby Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 9LN – Planning permission refused.

The Council RESOLVED to notify Bedford Borough Council that work had already commenced.

11.2 Planning Applications & Planning Decisions received after the despatch of the Agenda

Ref: 25/00815/S106A Modify/Discharge S106 Agreement Application proposal to request to Modify the S106 agreement relating to 11/01380/M73 affecting the following: (i) alterations to the location, size and nature of community buildings, (ii) Alterations to the outdoor sporting and leisure facilites proposed, (iii) the provision of a smaller number of larger, more centralized play areas @ Wixams Settlement Land Formerly At Elstow Storage Depot Bedford Road, Wixams, Bedfordshire

The Council RESOLVED to object on the same issues as before.

11.3 Update on Universal Studios

Please refer to comments under the Chairman’s Report.

12: Amenities

12.1 Highways/Lighting

Cllrs Law and Banks to carry out another review of the Village.

12.2 Recreation Area

None

12.3 Social Engagement

None

12.4 Sports Field/Pavilion

Cllr Banks advised that the pitches would be closed for the season so that reseeding could take place.
There will be no soccer camp during the May half-term and they have yet to book for the Summer holidays.

12.5 Village Hall

It was RESOLVED that the Caretaker will be offered overtime to repaint the Village Hall.

12.6 Policing

Cllr Melville advised that the crime statistics for Bedford where very concerning.

12.7 Encyclis

None

13: Community Events 2025

Cllr Melville to ask Cllr Fraser to design a poster for the event in 2026. Universal Studios has agreed to sponsor this event.

14: Grants

Cllr Melville asked Cllrs Law and Burnage for an update on the play area. The Council was advised that everything was in hand however no specifics were given.

The Council was assured that the play equipment would be in situ before the summer holidays.

15: Council Surgery / Community Engagement

A further Council Surgery will be planned for September 2025.

16: Policies

It was RESOLVED that these should be reviewed with the Caretaker prior to being adopted.

The Clerk will add this to the next Agenda.

17: Heritage Ideas

This matter is ongoing.

18: Contract Management – ACE Fire & Security

ACE has agreed that the works at the Village Hall will be free of charge.

Further information to be considered about changing to the P50 fire extinguishers.

19: Village Hall Flat

Cllr Melville that an agent had been out to view and it was a viable option to be used as an office. They have suggested it should achieve £7k per annum. Their fees would be £1k.

The Council RESOLVED to proceed on this basis.

The flat will need to be repainted when the tenants vacate at the end of the month.

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

None

21: Close of Meeting and items for the next Agenda.

Meeting closed at 8.03 pm.

22: Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on the 19th June 2025 @ 6.30 pm.