FELMERSHAM & RADWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2023

Attendees:

Councillors: Peter Hartop (Chair), Marjorie Pipe (Vice Chair), Matilda Boswell and Maxine Boswell.

Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer: Trevor Roff

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

		Action
46/23	**Parishioners Talk Time**	
	A resident had reported that the Mobile Library Service was experiencing difficulty in finding a parking place in the usual location in Felmersham, near The Sun Public House, during its regular twice-monthly visits. On occasions the service could not be offered and the vehicle had to immediately travel to Radwell to continue the service.	Note
	It has been proposed that, in the future, the Library Van relocate outside Trinity Close, Felmersham and this proposal had received enthusiastic support. Bedford Borough Council had been requested to vary the location accordingly.	Note
	Risks associated with inconsiderate and dangerous parking adjacent to the Jubilee Lawn in Felmersham had been reported and the situation would be monitored.	Note
47/23	**Apologies for Absence**	
	Apologies for absence had been received from Borough Councillor McMurdo and Parish Councillors Courtney and Just. The meeting conveyed its congratulation to the Just family on the birth of their second baby, Samuel, on Monday 4 September 2023.	Note
48/23	**Declaration of Interests**	
	There were no disclosures of interest in relation to Parish Council business.	Note
49/23	**Approval of Minutes of Parish Council Meeting Held on 11 July 2023**	
	The meeting considered the draft minutes of the last meeting.	Note
	RESOLVED:	
	The minutes of the meeting, held on 11 July 2023, were approved and signed as a correct record.	PC
	(Proposed by: Cllr. Maxine Boswell, Seconded by: Cllr. Pipe, All in favour)	
50/23	**Matters Arising**	
	All matters arising were considered and updates provided as part of agenda items.	Note

51/23	**Reports**		
	(a)	**Borough Councillor**	
		Doug McMurdo, Borough Councillor, had provided a detailed update on the following key issues: (i) **Bedford Town Centre – Free Parking:** Bedford Borough Council had launched a trial scheme to support local businesses and cultural venues in Bedford Town Centre by offering up to four hours of free parking at Allhallows car park. Shoppers visiting Allhallows multi-storey car park can enjoy up to four hours free parking until Thursday 1 February 2024. (ii) **Paula Radcliffe Way:** The resurfacing is being carried out in two phases. The southbound carriageway, leading towards Bedford, was closed from 24 July 2023 but has now reopened. The northbound carriageway from the Great Ouse roundabout to the Oakley slip road will now be closed until the end of October 2023. Work is proceeding as planned. (iii) **Bedford Borough Parks - Green Flag Awards:** Environmental charity, Keep Britain Tidy, recently announced the winners of the international quality mark for parks and green spaces, the Green Flag Award 2023, the international quality mark for parks and green spaces. The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for their management across the United Kingdom and around the world. Addison Howard Park, Bedford Park, Harrold-Odell Country Park and Priory Country Park, have all been included in the winners list. Harrold-Odell Country Park did exceptionally well, scoring overall in the highest category this year, which reflects the hard work put into the management of the park from the Country Park Team and Friends of Harrold-Odell Country Park. The judges gave a special mention to the work undertaken by park volunteers.	Note Note Note Note
	(b)	**Felmersham Village Hall**	
		The following updates had been received: (i) **Play Area Annual Inspection:** The report following the ROSPA annual inspection of the play area and equipment had been received and is being carefully considered to identify priority maintenance needs. Cllr. Hartop confirmed that a suitable "keep clear" sign had been purchased to discourage cars from park in the gateway of the play area and thus restricting essential access (e.g. to the grasscutting contractor). (ii) **Utility Bills:** As the Village Hall have not received utility bills from the school for such a long time, despite many requests from the Village Hall Committee, the School has decided to write the sum off and recommence invoicing when the new Headmistress takes over. (iii) **Maintenance:** During the School holidays, the Hall has been painted (paid for by the Village Hall Committee).	Note Note Note

	(c)	**Bedfordshire Police Crime Statistics**	
		The Parish Council considered the crime statistics for July and August 2023, which identified the following incidents: **Reported Date** / **Offence** / **Location** 26 July 2023 / Malicious Communication / Swansholme, Felmersham 13 August 2023 / Stalking and Harassment * / Felmersham 16 August 2023 / Stalking and Harassment / Felmersham 26 August 2023 / Theft from Motor Vehicle / Radwell Road, Felmersham * this offence relates to an offence that started on 2 May 2023.	Note
52/23	**Update on Current Issues**		
	(a)	**Communications**	
		There were no issues to report to the meeting that were not otherwise covered in other agenda items.	Note
	(b)	**Environment**	
		The Portfolio Holder, Cllr. Hartop, reported on the following environment related issues: (i) **Daisybank Tree Plantation:** Recent strimming and treatment work by A R Worboys has had noticeable results. Burrs appear dead and many trees are now surrounded by a circular weed free area. A few trees have made substantial growth and stand well over 6' in height. Others remain in their protective sheath. A few appear to have failed.	Note
		(ii) **Overgrown Vegetation:** There are many instances, due to the exceptional growing season, where the growth of hedges, trees and bushes is invading the highway and footpaths. Residents need to be reminded to cut back excessive growth to their boundaries.	PC
		(iii) **Litter:** Litter throughout the Parish has generally been kept in check by volunteer litter pickers. One hotspot, however, continues to be the area where cars park by the Play Area and School.	Note
		(iv) **Parish Burial Ground:** The hornbeam trees in the Parish Burial Ground require shaping and pruning to lower their height and maintain them within the site boundary. A contractor has visited the site to assess the extent of tree work required and quotations for this improvement work are being obtained, in line with minute 30/23(b) of the meeting held on 10 May 2023. The appointed contractor will need to seek permission to undertake this work from the Borough Council's Tree Officer.	Note
		(v) **Hedge cutting:** The beech hedge in the Parish Burial Ground and the mixed thorn hedge on the north side of the Village Play Area will require cutting during the winter dormant season.	Note

		RESOLVED: **(1) That the update in respect of a range of environmental issues be acknowledged and that the actions taken or proposed be approved.** **(2) That quotations be obtained to (i) trim the beech hedge in the Parish Burial Ground and (ii) cut/trim the mixed thorn hedge on the north side of the Village Play Area during the winter dormant season.** *(Proposed by: Cllr. Pipe, Seconded by: Cllr. Matilda Boswell, All in favour)*	Note PC
	(c)	**Highway Issues**	
		The Portfolio Holder, Cllr. Pipe, reported on the following issues: (i) **Village Signs:** The road sign in Memorial Lane, Felmersham, had been damaged and fallen from its concrete support posts. This had been reported to Borough Highways for reinstatement. The sign attached to The Row in the High Road, Felmersham, which is pealing and hardly legible, has also been reported to Borough Highways for attention. (ii) **Kerb Stones:** The kerb stones in Church End, outside Corn Close, Felmersham have been displaced and need to be reinstated. The matter had been referred to Borough Highways for attention. (iii) **Felmersham Bridge Signage:** The 20mph sign on the approach to Felmersham bridge is now totally obscured by overgrown hedgerow. The sign is in Sharnbrook Parish and had, therefore, been reported to them for attention. (iv) **Raised Walkway on Radwell Road:** A resident has complained that the raised walkway on Radwell Road, at the end closest to Milton Ernest, required some maintenance due to there being a hole in the concrete. This caused an accident and a friend of the resident fell, but fortunately did not suffer serious injury. The matter is outside the area of Parish Council responsibility but had nevertheless been reported to Borough Highways for attention. **RESOLVED:** **That the update in respect of a range of highway issues be acknowledged and that the actions taken or proposed be approved.**	Note Note Note Note Note
	(d)	**Parish Assets**	
		The Portfolio Holder, Cllr. Maxine Boswell, reported on the following issues: (i) **Bench in Radwell:** The damage to the bricks and foundations to the base of the bench (former bus stop) in Radwell had been repaired at the end of July 2023.	Note

		(ii) **Bus Shelter in Felmersham:** The vandal damage to the Littlethorpe "Eaton" bus shelter, installed on The High Road, Felmersham in September 2021, has been repaired. Sadly, there has been more recent damage to the bus shelter which, judging by the force required to cause the sort of damage, looks to be a vehicle strike. Littlethorpe offer a repair service for their product and had submitted a quotation for replacing the damaged cantilever arm including setting up traffic management, removing the roof sheets, removing the roof boards, removing the front rail, swapping the damaged cantilever arm, reinstalling all components and making good. The sum of £1,963.00, excluding VAT, includes traffic management costs but excludes the cost of highway licenses that would be required for the works. **RESOLVED:** **(1) That the update in respect of parish assets be acknowledged and that the actions taken be approved.** **(2) That a quotation be obtained from a local handyman for the necessary repair to the bus shelter in Felmersham following the recent damage to the cantilever arm.** *(Proposed by: Cllr. Matilda Boswell, Seconded by: Cllr. Pipe, All in favour)*	Note Note Note PC
	(e)	**Radwell Matters**	
		There were no issues to report to the meeting.	Note
	(f)	**Rights of Way**	
		There were no issues to report to the meeting.	Note
	(g)	**Traffic Issues**	
		There were no issues to report to the meeting.	Note
	(h)	**Traffic Report**	
		There were no issues to report to the meeting.	Note
53/23	**Planning Matters**		
	(a)	**Planning Application: Stafford Farm Barns, Moor End Road, Radwell**	
		The Parish Clerk reported that, in respect of Planning Application Number 23/01512/FUL, relating to the proposed installation of three new rear facing obscure glazed dormer windows at Stafford Farm Barns, Moor End Road, Radwell, Bedford, MK43 7HY, the Local Planning Authority had been advised that the Parish Council had no objection to the proposed works.	Note

		RESOLVED: **That the decision to notify the Borough Council that the Parish Council had no objection to Planning Application 23/01512/FUL be ratified.** *(Proposed by: Cllr. Pipe, Seconded by: Cllr. Maxine Boswell, All in favour)*	PC
	(b)	**Planning Application: West Grange, Carlton Road, Felmersham**	
		The Parish Clerk reported that, in respect of Planning Application Number 23/01790/FUL, relating to the proposed conversion of the existing car port and workshop to form annexe accommodation with new attached car port at West Grange, Carlton Road, Felmersham, Bedford, the Local Planning Authority had been advised that the Parish Council objects to the development proposed, with the major change of extended use for the annexe accommodation outside of the Settlement Policy Area. The Parish Council considered a similar application in December 2022 (Planning Application Number 22/02681/FUL) and at that time objected to the proposed conversion of the existing car port and workshop to form annexe accommodation and to provide a new pitched roof to the boat house. **RESOLVED:** **That the decision to notify the Borough Council that the Parish Council objects to the development proposed in relation to Planning Application 23/01790/FUL be ratified, with the major change of extended use for the annexe accommodation outside of the Settlement Policy Area, be ratified.** *(Proposed by: Cllr. Pipe, Seconded by: Cllr. Hartop, All in favour)*	Note Note PC
	(c)	**Planning Application: Radwell Hall Farm, Bridge End, Radwell**	
		The Parish Council considered further information that had been submitted in respect of the planning application for the proposed erection of serviced livery stables and formation of parking area at Radwell Hall Farm, Bridge End, Radwell, MK43 7HU (Planning Application Number 23/01371/FUL). This represented the resubmission of planning application 23/00565/FUL that the Parish Council had considered at its meetings on 10 May 2023 and 11 July 2023 and resolved to object due to the scale of the operation proposed. **RESOLVED:** **That the Parish Council maintain its objection to the scale of operation proposed in respect of Planning Application 23/01371/FUL and Bedford Borough Council be notified accordingly.** *(Proposed by: Cllr. Hartop, Seconded by: Cllr. Matilda Boswell, All in favour)*	Note Note PC

54/23	**Finance & General Administration**		
	(a)	**Schedule of Receipts & Payments: 2023/2024**	
		The schedule of receipts and payments, covering the period 1 July 2023 to 31 August 2023 and attached at **Appendix A**, was considered. **RESOLVED:** **That the schedule of receipts and payments, attached at Appendix A to the minutes, be approved.** *(Proposed by: Cllr. Pipe, Seconded by: Cllr. Maxine Boswell, All in favour)*	Note PC
	(b)	**Financial Position – Account Balances**	
		The financial position of the Parish Council, as at 31 August 2023, was reported as follows: Current Account £31,557.82 Business Reserve Account £8,465.34 **TOTAL £40,023.16** This compares to a total balance, as at 30 June 2023, of £44,650.85. It would be appropriate, given improved interest rates, to transfer a balance to the Business Reserve Account and, initially, the sum of £9,357.48 Community Infrastructure Levy, received on 26 June 2023, would be transferred to the interest earning account pending determination of its use. **RESOLVED:** **That the financial position of the Parish Council, as at 31 August 2023, be acknowledged.** *(Proposed by: Cllr. Hartop, Seconded by: Cllr. Maxine Boswell, All in favour)*	Note Note PC
	(c)	**Budget Monitoring Report – 2023/2024**	
		The meeting considered and acknowledged the Budget Monitoring Report for the period to 31 August 2023 (circulated prior to the meeting). This identified expenditure incurred and income received against the approved 2023/2024 revenue budget with no specific areas of concern or significant variances at this stage. The meeting acknowledged the need to keep the financial position under review with regular budget monitoring reports. **RESOLVED:** **That the budget position statement, for the period ended 31 August 2023, be acknowledged and the financial position be kept under review.** *(Proposed by: Cllr. Pipe, Seconded by: Cllr. Matilda Boswell, All in favour)*	Note Note

	(d)	**Accounting Statements – 2022/2023: Post Inspection Approval**	
		The Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer reported that, in accordance with Regulation 15(2) of the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015, the financial statements and other documents had been made available for public inspection for a period of 30 working days from 5 June 2023 to 14 July 2023. There were no representations made and no matters have been identified that affect the financial statements reported to the Parish Council at its meeting on 10 May 2023 (minute 32/23(g) refers). The Accounting Statements represent Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) that must be completed and published by smaller authorities.	Note
		RESOLVED:	
		That, following the period of public inspection, the Accounting Statements (at Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return) for the year ended 31 March 2023 be approved.	PC
		(Proposed by: Cllr. Hartop, Seconded by: Cllr. Pipe, All in favour)	
55/23	**Correspondence**		
	Key items of correspondence received since the last meeting include:		
	(a)	Weekly lists from the Borough Council of applications received under the Licensing Act 2003 & Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act and the Gambling Act 2005. These can be found at the following web-site link: http://www.bedford.gov.uk/business/licences_and_street_trading/licensing_act_2003/applications.aspx.	All
	(b)	Regular press releases from Bedford Borough Council with details of local issues, service development proposals and organised events.	Note
	(c)	Regular listings from Bedford Borough Council of new planning applications and decisions issued at the link: https://publicaccess.bedford.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=weeklyList.	Note
	(d)	Regular news updates from Bedford Community Voluntary Service (CVS) with details of a range of events and courses organised by the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.	Note
	(e)	Product and contact details from a number of suppliers of street furniture and play equipment.	Note
	(f)	Crime statistics for the period from 1 July 2023 to 16 July 2023 covering the north rural area, listed in "Beat Code" order. There were no instances of crime recorded in Felmersham & Radwell Parish during this period.	Note
	(g)	The Summer 2023 newsletter from Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) Bedfordshire.	Note
	(h)	Details of the Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils (BATPC) 2023 Annual General Meeting taking place on Wednesday 18 October 2023 from 7.30 pm at The Rufus Centre, Flitwick.	Note

	(i) Correspondence from Bedfordshire Ramblers in respect of the Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks from 9 to 17 September 2023, involving a 9-day festival of walks across Bedfordshire.	Note
	(j) Further correspondence from the Community Engagement Team at Bedford Borough Council in respect of the meeting of the Parish & Town Council Network on Thursday 20 July 2023 at Borough Hall.	Note
	(k) Correspondence from BATPC, dated 29 July 2023 and 1 August 2023, detailing the Autumn/Winter 2023 training programme.	Note
	(l) Crime statistics for the period from 17 July to 31 July 2023 covering the north rural area, listed in "Beat Code" order. This identifies an incident of “Malicious Communication” at Swansholme, Felmersham reported on 26 July 2023.	Note
	(m) Invitation to the annual Parish Council Conference, hosted by the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner on 11 October 2023 at The Forest Centre, Marston Moretaine, Bedford, MK43 0PR.	Note
	(n) A copy of the Public Health “Workplace Health Newsletter” for August 2023.	Note
	(o) Crime statistics for the period from 1 August 2023 to 13 August 2023 covering the north rural area, listed in "Beat Code" order. This identifies an incident of “Stalking and Harassment” in Felmersham that was reported on 13 August 2023 and that relates to an offence that started on 2 May 2023.	Note
	(p) A copy of the September 2023 newsletter from CPRE Bedfordshire.	Note
	(q) Crime statistics for the period from 14 August to 31 August 2023 covering the north rural area, listed in "Beat Code" order. There were two reported crimes during this period, comprising (i) an incident of “Stalking and Harassment” in Felmersham reported on 16 August 2023 and (ii) the theft from a motor vehicle in Radwell Road, Felmersham reported on 26 August 2023.	Note
	(r) Details of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) 2023 Annual General Meeting taking place on Tuesday 10 October 2023 in the Paris Suite, Leonardo Hotel, Hinckley Island, Leicestershire.	Note
	(s) Nomination arrangements for the 2023 BATPC County Committee Elections. The County Committee is responsible for the management of the Association and appoints a number of representatives to outside bodies. The Committee meets quarterly in the evening, currently in Shefford. Nominations are invited by the deadline of noon on Tuesday 10 October 2023 and must be endorsed by a Parish or Town Council. Selection will be made by ballot at the AGM.	Note
56/23	**Date of Next Meeting**	
	The next meeting of will take place on **Tuesday 14 November 2023** at 7.30pm.	Note

APPENDIX A

FELMERSHAM & RADWELL PARISH COUNCIL
TRANSACTIONS: 1 JULY 2023 - 31 AUGUST 2023

SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS

TRANSACTION DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT RECEIVED £	VAT £
31 JULY 2023	BANK INTEREST	9.50	-
25 AUGUST 2023	BURIAL FEE	141.00	=
31 AUGUST 2023	BANK INTEREST	10.07	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS		**160.57**	**-**

SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

TRANSACTION DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT PAID £	VAT £
3 JULY 2023	PARISH CLERK: MILEAGE COSTS	22.50	-
5 JULY 2023	CAME & COMPANY: VILLAGE HALL INSURANCE	1,049.99	-
5 JULY 2023	A. MUSKETT LTD: QUARTERLY STREET LIGHT MTCE	50.40	8.40
14 JULY 2023	A R WORBOYS - GRASS CUTTING: 4 JULY 2023	373.17	62.19
14 JULY 2023	DM PAYROLL SERVICES: PAYROLL SERVICE	60.00	-
18 JULY 2023	PLAYSAFETY LIMITED: ANNUAL INSPECTION	136.20	22.70
18 JULY 2023	LITTLETHORPE: BUS SHELTER REPAIR	794.40	132.40
19 JULY 2023	N POWER: ELECTRICITY SUPPLY	23.01	1.10
26 JULY 2023	D. JONES: SEAT BASE REPAIR (RADWELL)	322.00	-
27 JULY 2023	A R WORBOYS - GRASS CUTTING: 21 JULY 2023	373.17	62.19
31 JULY 2023	HEWLETT-PACKARD INSTANT INK: JULY 2023	9.99	1.67
31 JULY 2023	PARISH CLERK PAYROLL: JULY 2023	310.60	-
31 JULY 2023	HMRC: INCOME TAX – JULY 2023	206.80	-
16 AUGUST 2023	A R WORBOYS - GRASS CUTTING: 9 AUGUST 2023	373.17	62.19
17 AUGUST 2023	N POWER: ELECTRICITY SUPPLY	23.47	1.12
29 AUGUST 2023	HEWLETT-PACKARD INSTANT INK: AUGUST 2023	9.99	1.67
30 AUGUST 2023	CLOUD NEXT LIMITED: WEB HOSTING	132.00	22.00
31 AUGUST 2023	PARISH CLERK PAYROLL: AUGUST 2023	310.20	-
31 AUGUST 2023	HMRC: INCOME TAX – AUGUST 2023	207.20	-
TOTAL PAYMENTS		**4,788.26**	**377.63**