



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021**

**HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM**

Parish Council Chairman Mark Russell chaired the meeting.

Present: Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillor K Collins, Clerk M Whiting and 19 members of public.

**1. MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 were an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

**2. REPORT FROM THE CADDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN**

Dear Residents,

No-one could have predicted the events of the last year, and to state it has be unprecedented, would be both obvious and a massive understatement.

However, being ever the optimist, after all the pain, problems, inconvenience, and at times boredom not to mention the exasperation for those of us trying make sense of home schooling. It would appear all the indicators currently point to the fact that we are over the worst of the pandemic, and things will slowly return to a facsimile of normal. As this happens, my hope it that we will have all taken a glimpse at a world where we don't need everything we want, and that when I comes to it, it is the simpler things that we take for granted that we should appreciate the most.

What has been clear to me from the start of the first lockdown is that when tested to the extreme, the resolve and caring nature of the residents of Caddington and the surrounding areas pushes past everything in its way and looks after not only its own, but all those in need of help.

Caddington Care as you would expect have been at the forefront, caring for our sick and elderly. The doctor's surgery have worked tirelessly to provide the upmost medical care possible. I could try to name all that have stepped up but will not try as I fear my inevitable forgetful omission would serve to take away from all the good that has been dispensed over the last twelve months. I must however shine a light on the work of Medigreen pharmacy and Stephen Quinn, manager of the CO-OP, who have been awarded Organisation of the year, and Villager of the year respectively. Congratulations to both and a massive thank you from the community.

A brief respite from all things covid, came only to be replaced by rain, and lots of it. Our newly formed emergency response group had its first test with severe flooding along Mancroft Road and into Aley green. If it is possible to have a baptism of fire with so much water around, the response team sprung into action clearing gullies, distributing sandbags, co-ordinating response, even organising overnight accommodation should the worst happen and residents need to be evacuated. I like to think due to their actions the flooding was dealt with, resulting in minimal damage.

Although at times it may not feel it, Caddington has always been, and continues to be, a warm caring community that pulls together when it is called upon, and to this end I would like to thank every resident for whatever part they have played, in even the smallest way, to make this extraordinary year a little easier for all.

**Summary of Accounts 2020 – 2021:** The Parish Council began the financial year with a balance of £121,914.28 ending on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 with a closing balance of £115,859.10. The precept for 2021-22 was set at £120,000 equating in an annual increase of £2.41 per Band D property, bring it to £72.90 per band D (£6.07 per month)

**3. REPORT FROM BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE**

PCSO Laura Tuck emailed below report:

Please find below three tables which indicate the recorded crimes for Caddington over the last three years.

The average crimes recorded in Caddington at the end of each financial year has decreased since 2018 where an average of 27.1 crimes were recorded compared to 2020/2021 current financial year which is standing at an average of 19.6.

Year to date crimes show:

2018/2019 – 325 crimes recorded

2019/2020 – 278 crimes recorded

2020/2021 – 235 crimes recorded

Current Financial Year 2020/2021

Month	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	Sept 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	March 2021	YTD	Avg
Crimes	20	19	24	20	23	13	18	22	22	14	17	23	235	19.6

Current Financial Year 2019/2020

Month	April 2019	May 2019	June 2019	July 2019	August 2019	Sept 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2019	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	March 2020	YTD	Avg
Crimes	26	16	27	21	20	23	40	24	21	10	22	28	278	23.2

Current Financial Year 2018/2019

Month	April 2018	May 2018	June 2018	July 2018	August 2018	Sept 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2018	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	March 2019	YTD	Avg
Crimes	13	25	33	24	34	32	37	39	28	17	21	22	325	27.1

**Monthly Recorded reports – OP METEOR**

Operation Meteor is Bedfordshire Polices response to the issue of anti-social riding, nuisance bikes and related criminality. The team is specially trained to identify and target offenders who use their vehicles in an anti-social or dangerous manner. The operation consists of regular ride outs of trained officers on off-road bikes, which allows them to crack down on bikers trespassing and causing a nuisance in our communities.

At Dunstable community team our Community PC'S and PCSO'S are fully aware of the issues that have been reported to us by concerned residents in Caddington regarding nuisance off road bikes. Patrols in the Village are being carried out to target this behaviour and action will be taken against both rider and vehicle if displaying unacceptable behaviour this is in means of speaking and educating persons involved and by issuing section 59's on both the rider and the vehicle or by seizing the vehicle.

Below are recorded reports in Caddington regarding the above which have been transferred for the attention of Op Meteor and the Community Team.

Month	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	Aug 2020	Sept 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	March 2021
Crimes	4	0	3	4	13	3	4	7	8	3	2	4	5	2	6

**Anti-Social Behaviour Caddington-Hot spot areas.**

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that causes harm to an individual, to their community or to their environment. This also includes fear of crime or concern for public safety, public disorder and public nuisance. Within Dunstable Community team is the Priority Anti-Social Behaviour team who review and grade anti-social behaviour reports for Caddington.

Reports by residents is vital and helps us identify hot spot areas to patrol to help tackle the anti-social behaviour that is happening in the village. We are aware of some of the concerns that have been brought to our attention over the last year by residents. Just some of the Anti-social behaviour that has been reported to us includes Criminal Damage, Drug dealing/Paraphernalia left, vehicle interference and gatherings of persons displaying anti-social behaviour.

These are some hot spot areas that our patrols have been focussed on, The park Elm Avenue, sports and social club, Folly lane, The green outside the shops on Manor Road, Millfield Lane, Caddington Allotments and Caddington Woods. Anti-social behaviour can cause a detrimental effect on a community and we are always looking to speak to and educate people who are displaying this behaviour and enforce action when necessary.

**Vehicle Crime in Caddington**

Dunstable Community Team is aware of the recent spike in Vehicle theft/attempted Vehicle Theft and Catalytic Convertor thefts that have been happening not only in Caddington but in the whole county. Pro-active patrols have been a priority into identifying suspects and vehicles involved relating to this activity. Dunstable community teams PCSO'S are ensuring patrols are carried out in the village and with our new extended shift to 00:00hours/midnight we are keen to speak to anyone who may be acting suspicious in the village and to help decrease this type of crime. We urge residents to report any suspected vehicles or persons to us with CCTV footage if available, this can help to build up our intelligence into who may be operating in the area.

I would like to thank the residents, business owners, street watch, speed watch and parish council for their help and support over the last year with reporting crimes and concerns, supplying intelligence and CCTV footage and for letting us know your concerns within the community. It is with this information we are able to build up a bigger picture into what is happening in the village and who may be operating. Our focus is to reassure its residents and decrease the crime that is happening within Caddington Village.

We urge the community of Caddington to continue to report any concerns they have to us and to feel free to stop and talk to us if you see us on patrol. You can report crimes in many ways and this can be done online via the Bedfordshire website, calling 101, crime stoppers and in an emergency 999. Your intelligence and information

can help us build a bigger picture into what is happening in our community and to help us with prioritising areas of interest.

#### **4. REPORT FROM CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

Ward Councillors K Collins and E Perry emailed below report:

The dominant theme for 2020/2021 has been the disruption and altered circumstances arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. Every resident and every local business have been affected and it has presented many challenges for the authority, both as an employer but more importantly as a supplier of services to our residents and others.

Notwithstanding that there will be many instances where people might feel performance could have been better, it would be churlish not to acknowledge that many, many Council employees have gone the extra mile in making things happen. Remote working has been adopted as far as possible, home-schooling and responsibilities as carers have been juggled around getting work done; many people have tackled tasks outside their normal jobs and, in many instances, working long-hours including evenings and weekends to handle grant schemes, healthcare roll-out and much more.

In the same vein, credit is due to Parish Councillors and their clerks who have reacted so well to changing circumstances and continued to deliver wherever possible for their residents.

This time last year, Cllr Eddie Perry was absent due to serious illness; we are glad to report that he is now well on the road to recovery and taking an ever more active role in the ward.

There are two significant leadership changes at Central Bedfordshire Council. Firstly, Chief Executive Richard Carr stepped down, having held local authority CE roles for 25 years and having taken the helm at Central Bedfordshire soon after its formation from the previous District and County councils. He remained in post beyond his original intended retirement date so as not to step out at the peak of an unfolding crisis but was able to hand over towards the end of 2020.

The new Chief Executive is Marcel Coiffait, previously CBC's Director of Place and Communities. There were many applicants for the position and the final shortlist offered a selection of very strong candidates; we have every confidence that Marcel is the right and strong choice to take Central Bedfordshire forward.

The other leadership change was in the position of Leader of the Council. Cllr James Jamieson remains a member of CBC and continues to represent his ward but has cut back on additional responsibilities to enable him to focus strongly on his other role as Chairman of the Local Government Association. This is a vital role in the liaison between central and local government, and Cllr Jamieson's work with council colleagues across the country and, crucially, with Government ministers delivers real benefits.

The Conservative group elected Cllr Richard Wenham as their new group leader, and he was subsequently elected at full Council to the position as leader. Richard is a strong leader, offering a good balance between providing direction but also consulting and listening to advice. Richard's cabinet retains the same portfolio holders as previously under Cllr Jamieson (save for the stepping back of Nigel Young) although there has been some realignment of responsibilities and some new deputies introduced to gain experience and offer assistance. Your ward Councillors look forward to working with the Parish through 2021/2022.

#### **5. REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS**

**Caddington Watch** has continued with StreetWatch throughout the pandemic.

There was short period during the strictest lockdown when we were asked to stop patrols.

Until very recently we were constrained to operating in pairs. We are now allowed up to six people per session.

Now that lockdown is easing, we plan to restart our SpeedWatch sessions.

We continue to produce the Crime Statistics for the whole of Bedfordshire and these are distributed widely – Town Councils, Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Watch teams.

We have helped with the COVID Vaccine roll-out.

A separate group of people within the village are setting up a DogWatch team. They go through the same vetting procedure as StreetWatch and are also covered by the same Police insurance. Once established, we hope to meet up with them

#### **Heathfield Friends:**

No customer sessions have taken place since the March 2020.

CBC continue to use the buildings

As a storage and distribution hub for cleaning materials.

For the storage of approx. 400 office chairs, which enables social distancing at their various offices.

The Parish Warden uses the site as a base for his activities.

Heathfield Friends continue to assist at the site.

Opening and closing the rear gates to allow overflow parking for Caddington Village School.

Accompanying CBC contractors as they go about the maintenance of various systems.

Visiting daily to make sure that the buildings are secure and that any new maintenance issues are identified.

The central heating system failed during the winter but has now been fully restored.

There have been many surveys completed, which will inform planning about the future layout of the five-acre site.

Both the Parish Council and Heathfield Friends await the outcome of these deliberations.

Current Government guidelines indicate that Community Centres will be able to get back to some sort of normality by 17<sup>th</sup> May. We are indebted to Simon Patterson of BRCC for keeping us up to date with the latest guidance for potential re-opening

**Caddington Care:** Jane Payton provided below report:

Our activities this year have been entirely defined by the Covid pandemic.

On 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 we met with representatives of the Parish Council, Doctor's surgery, school, churches, Youth Club, Heathfield Friends, Streetwatch to discuss our response to the impending situation. CaddingtonCobra Committee was created.

Following a Leaflet drop to every house, thanks to the Scouts, we recruited more than 70 new Cobra volunteers. We realised that many of our current volunteers would be in a vulnerable age bracket and although many could continue working from home would not be able to go out and about. Our Cobra volunteers were willing and able to do this.

Our priorities were shopping, collecting medication and mental health.

For the first few months the Office phone was incredibly busy up to 20 calls a day. We manned the phone over the weekends. A daily prescription rota and a cashless system of shopping were set up as was hot meal delivery service.

To try and mitigate against feelings of isolation and loneliness, we set up a network of befrienders, where volunteers phoned clients. Many of these connections are ongoing.

Our usual role of providing lifts to clients has been much reduced as medical appointments, hairdressing and shopping trips have in many cases not been happening. Fortunately, our small band of drivers have been able to meet any requests for transport to essential medical appointments and more recently for 'the job'.

At Christmas we assembled and personally delivered 223 'bundles' of goodies to clients. These were really appreciated!

Town and Country Estate Agents asked for donations for CaddingtonCare of tea, coffee and biscuits. With no prospect of our coffee mornings starting up the donations were distributed to 40 thirsty CaddingtonCare clients.

A group of volunteers have been regularly assisting with the vaccinations at the Priory gardens in Dunstable.

More recently, we have delivered 225 Lindt bunnies and an Easter greeting card to our clients as a reminder that we haven't forgotten them and, fingers tightly crossed, hope for better things to come.

As I write, we are maintaining the services that we have been providing for the last year but looking forward to the time when we can begin to resume some kind of normality. So many of our clients constantly say that they can't wait for Coffee mornings to start again at Heathfield.

None of what we have achieved would have been possible without the help of the volunteers and the tireless work of the Committee.

I cannot finish without acknowledging the support of the residents of Caddington to their friends and neighbours. I am constantly hearing of many thoughtful acts of kindness.

**Caddington Pre-School:** Niki Summers provided below report:

It has been a tough year for everyone living with Covid-19; staff, children and their families have been affected in many ways due to the virus, be it financially, mentally, physically or health wise.

Caddington Pre-School has continued to be open to children of Key Workers; many working for the NHS and emergency services who have continued working to keep our country running and saving lives during the pandemic.

As an early Years setting, we have suffered setbacks; financial losses, mentally challenging and last-minute guidelines to adhere to, employing new staff members then going into lockdown and logistical changes.

The team at Caddington Pre-School have continually strived to provide a clean and healthy environment to protect children and staff from contracting Covid-19. This has resulted in zero cases of Covid-19 at Caddington Pre-School and ensured we have remained open with no disruption to Key Workers.

With the introduction of Lateral Flow testing for Early Years staff we are able to ensure that staff are not infectious, safe to work with others and continue to offer our services to all children returning to pre-school.

Social distancing is difficult to maintain within an Early Years setting with young children. Staff plan and arrange activities to encourage distancing, promote 'no touching' and good hygiene rules. The children have been unable to partake in some favourite activities this year at pre-school however we have tried to introduce new activities to stimulate their interest.

With the support of Caddington Parish Council we have ordered a new 'Dress Up Trolley' for our home corner role play area. This trolley is easily movable as it is on wheels. It offers hanging and shelving areas, along with a built-in mirror. The trolley is wipe able so can be cleaned to ensure it is free from germs. We have a wide range of dress up items that can be cleaned, washed and rotated to ensure we provide safe activities for the children.

On behalf of the committee, staff and children at Caddington Pre-School, thank you very much for your support.

**Scout Group:** Rita Tims, Group Scout Leader, provided below report:

The Group has fared quite well due to Covid and has currently got 89 Young People, with 5 new members joining us in May.

We have run zoom Section meetings for the whole of last term, which has proved difficult at times. Thankfully, from now on we can meet in the Headquarter face to face with a limited number of 15 Children and 5 Adults. The good news is we can meet outdoor with an unlimited number of Children, so this term we are going to run mostly outdoor meetings and hope the weather is kind to us.

We currently have

- 22 Slip End Beavers - who meet on Tuesdays
- 19 Caddington Beavers - who meet on Fridays
- 14 Cubs - who meet early on Thursdays
- 19 Wolves - who meet later on Thursdays
- 14 Scouts - who meet on Mondays

We also have the 4<sup>th</sup> Dunstable Cub Pack using our Headquarter on Wednesdays as they are having their Headquarters re-built.

All Sections are running exciting programmes with lots of fun, doing things outside instead of being limited to inside only.

We are seeking extra Adult Help as several of our Leaders have resigned due to pressure of work. If anyone is interested in joining our Leadership Team, please contact me and join us to help the Children of Caddington and Slip End Villages.

Scouts will be cleaning all village road signs in May as part of their community service badge.

**Allotments:** John Dudley, Caddington Allotments and Leisure Gardens Management Secretary, provided below report:

The allotments now have 67 tenants and we are currently working our way through our waiting list. We expect almost full occupancy by summer.

Since the beginning of lockdown in March 2020, many tenants have reported how much they really value their plots and are grateful to have an outdoor space for both exercise and interest.

The Covid situation last year meant that we could not have any of our usual fund raising activities, such as the plant sale, open days, coffee mornings, etc. This has had an impact on our funds.

Unfortunately, we have to report that there was a spate of vandalism in the autumn. This culminated in our main allotment hut (used for meetings, social events and library) being broken into and seriously vandalised.

Volunteers have now restored some semblance of order.

Volunteers also helped restore the main allotment driveway, which had become dangerously potholed. The committee want to thank the Parish Council for maintenance work that included flood prevention by clearing the ditch at the back of the allotments, increasing security by installing CCTV cameras on our hut and maintaining the hedge in Folly Lane.

We all look forward to a return to normality in the summer of 2021.

## 6. GRANT AWARDS

The parish council awarded the following grants for 2021/22:

Group	Purpose	Awarded 2021/22
Caddington School PTA	Outdoor sports equipment	£ 519.20
Caddington Pre-School	Toddler Dress up trolley	£ 360.00
Caddington Recreation Assc	Club gent toilet drain repairs & refurb	£ 2,500.00
	Total given	<b>£ 3,379.20</b>

Representatives from the above groups thanked the parish council for their support and financial contributions.

## 7. QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Gardening Club will hold a plant sale on 22<sup>nd</sup> May at Heathfield Centre rear car park.

Concerns raised that Beds PCC elections are being held at Caddington Woods rather than Heathfield Centre.

Ward Cllr Collins explained that the monitoring officer had to make a quick change in venue as Heathfield heating wasn't working at the time a location needed to be decided and there was uncertainty if it could or would be repaired. There will however be a shuttle bus to Caddington Woods and residents have the option of postal voting.

All in attendance agreed community spirit had been outstanding during Covid and a special big thanks to Caddington Care and their volunteers for all their assistance to residents.

The meeting was closed at 8:25pm

Signed.....Dated.....

DRAFT