

Borough Councillor Report to Kempston Rural Parish Council April 2022

Estate Management Charge – The fiasco continues!

This last few weeks has seen the ridiculous attempt by one of the Estate management companies trying to levy a charge of £8,800 to residents for the supply of electricity and maintenance of seven lampposts! I have pushed back on this with the management company and asked the Mayor and Environment Directorate at the Borough to move swiftly to adopt these lampposts and avoid this scandalous charge to residents. The Bedford Independent will be reporting on this next week. I have also been contacted from Wootton and Cardington residents who are also experiencing poor service and high charges and will soon be forming a group to find a way to address all the issues raised.

Tom4change – New Mayoral



I would like to introduce Tom Wootton who will be a Mayoral candidate for the 2023 May elections. Tom visited me last week to see round one of the parishes in my ward and talk about the issues facing residents. He also asked about the best way to meet residents and hear their concerns. Tom will be setting up several visits where he will hold meetings to hear views on issues. I have collaborated with Tom on the

Council for the last 4 years and he is fully aware of the Open space management and Estate management failures residents are suffering from.

Minutes from Meeting: Kempston Rural Residents and Cross Keys General Manager

Attendees: Wes Castleman (Spokesperson for Residents): Simone Licciardi (General Manager Cross Keys): Cllr Ian Farrow (KRPC): Cllr Laura Hutton (KRPC) Jim Weir (Ward Cllr): 9 Other residents.

Date: 19TH April 2022

Time: 18:30

Venue: Village Hall Church End

Chairs Statement and Introductions

Jim Weir set out how the meeting should be conducted with calm and respectful debate. Residents should put their case going through the chair so that all could be heard. He also asked that both sides of this issue be prepared to compromise and that at the end of the meeting we should finish with proposals to enable both sides to move forward.

Residents' Concerns

- a. Noise
 - i. Music
 - ii. People leaving premises.
 - iii. Hours of operation
- b. Parking

- i. On pavements
- ii. Blocking access
- iii. Dangerous parking/obscuring sightlines (see attached)

The above points were articulated with details of the impact on residents and the disturbance and stress caused. It was pointed out that this was a small rural hamlet with local horse-riding activities and the type of events being held destroyed that peace and tranquillity expected. Many voiced their concerns regarding safety, and the dangerous and inconsiderate parking was a real worry to residents. Parking on pavements was also an issue and compromised both safety and access to drives and people with mobility issues and parents with prams etc. It was pointed out by Cllr's that the proposed traffic order for double yellows (see attached) would largely tackle this issue along with the proposed speed limit reduction on Wood End Lane. It was also suggested by Cllr's that no verge or pavement parking could be introduced by the Parish Council which would be enforceable. Residents accepted that the Cross Keys was a business and of course had to do its best in these challenging times to remain profitable. Following a period of points made by residents and more detailed instances – some of which could not be controlled by the Cross Keys – the General Manager of the Cross Keys was asked to respond.

Cross Keys Actions to date

- c. Additional Staff to advise patrons about noise.
- d. Cones bought and placed to help parking situation.
- e. Attempting to buy land adjacent to premises.
- f. Future plans.

To date the Cross Keys GM had tried to respond to the various complaints made by residents by taking the actions above. It was agreed that the cones were not helping the situation although the intent behind this action was to try to avoid parking and blocking drives and pavement parking. Simone explained that these would now be removed and that whilst it would cause issue for the business, he understood that the traffic order for double yellows would ensure a safer environment. He also added that whilst every effort had been made to keep the music noise levels to an acceptable decibel count that the use of the Marquee in the former parking area would make sound travel and be more penetrative for the closer residential properties.

His businesses attempt to buy some adjoining land from Marston Vale Forest to enable the extension of the existing car park had not been successful. He also pointed out that the business had decided to scrap the function room in its present form and extend the restaurant offering – so thus changing the way any live music would be presented on the premisses. Any music then would be at the far end of the restaurant area and thus at the furthest point from residential properties.

Simone then outlined to the meeting that the Marquee would be removed in September when the extension of the restaurant was ready, and this would enable a further eight parking spaces being returned to use. More discussion took place on the number of events

planned with particular emphasis on the proposed “Gin Fest.” Simone informed those present that additional parking at a nearby farm had been secured – although residents were disappointed that this event was extended to two days from the original one-day event.

Decisions and Timescales

1. Marquee will be removed in September following completion of building works in premises.
2. Between now and September the Cross Keys would limit the number of live music events to four including the “Gin Fest” events proposed to finish at 5pm on the days they are held.
3. Simone to explore systems for ensuring decibel levels are kept to an acceptable level
4. The Parish Council to look at introducing a “no verge or pavement parking” order (enforceable)
5. A representative from residents and Simone to meet once a month starting in May with the purpose of both parties feeding back on issues.
6. The issues brought up by one resident regarding bridle ways and road signage to be brought to a PC meeting at a future date.

The meeting ended in a spirit of hope that future relationships had the promise of change and that each side would work to finish with an acceptable compromise. The chair and Cllr’s thanked all for attending – meeting closed 19:45.

Draft 2040 Local Plan

The draft 2040 Local Plan is going to the executive next week for approval prior to the next consultation process. Please see attached Fig. and narrative below which is extracted from the plan.

“Gibraltar Corner 4.72 An allocation for residential development is made at Gibraltar Corner. As well as being adjacent to the urban area, Gibraltar Corner also falls within the South of Bedford policy area and the allocation policy is contained in the policies dealing with that area (see Policy HOU13 below). The dual status of the site has no strategic significance. A new settlement policy area has been defined which maintains the area’s separate character and prevents coalescence with other settlement including the urban area. Development here benefits from good links with Bedford and the opportunity to access rail stations. It also delivers significant green and blue infrastructure improvements including a section of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park and additional planting areas contributing to the Forest of Marston Vale.”

“**Policy HOU13** Land at Gibraltar Corner, Kempston Rural Land at Gibraltar Corner, Kempston Rural will be developed for a mix of residential uses and open space including the delivery of strategic green infrastructure improvements. Key principles of development include:

- i. A masterplan and design code to be prepared and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document prior to the submission of any planning application for the site. The preparation of the

Supplementary Planning Document will be led by the Council in partnership with landowners / developers, stakeholders and the local community. This document will accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework and will be prepared in advance of the submission of a planning application and will pay particular regard to ensuring that the development is designed to preserve the setting of heritage assets;

ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes;

iii. Submission of a Transport Assessment;

iv. Measures to facilitate access by bus services across the site including a shuttle bus connecting the site with Kempston Hardwick and Wixams railway stations and the provision of a mobility hub;

v. Provision of a pedestrian cycleway between the site, Kempston and surrounding green infrastructure and NCN 51;

vi. Provision of a 2.4ha serviced site to accommodate a 2FE Primary school to include early years' provision;

vii. Financial contribution towards secondary school provision;

viii. Delivery of improvements to the green infrastructure network;

ix. Masterplan to ensure development is designed to preserve and, where opportunities arise, enhance the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by setting including for:

- Grade II listed The Cottage,
- Grade II Kempston House, 57
- Grade II Ramsay Cottage,
- Grade II 157 Bedford Road, and
- Listed buildings in and around Keeley Green;

x. Include appropriate mitigation measures where necessary for heritage assets listed under

ix; xi. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation for the parts of the site to be developed; xii. Areas of ridge and furrow earthworks to be protected during construction;

xiii. The developable area shall be located within Flood Zone 1;

xiv. Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site with appropriate public access and may include areas of wet woodland;

xv. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;

xvi. Provision of land to facilitate the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park to the east of Gibraltar Corner;

xvii. Provision of a public car parking area to provide parking for local residents and visitors, including those to the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park, Forest of Marston Vale, walking and cycling routes. The proposed car park shall be designed and located to minimise disturbance to the best preserved sections of ridge and furrow earthworks in this area;

xviii. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified and could consider the ability of the Waterway Park to assist with flood mitigation;

xix. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;

xx. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure”.

Businesses can still apply for a new Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant

Applications for the new Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant, which has been funded by the Government, are now open on Bedford Borough Council’s website.

The Government announced that further support will be provided to businesses in the hospitality, accommodation and leisure business sectors affected by the Omicron wave through the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant.

The amount eligible local businesses will receive are:

- Qualifying businesses with a rateable value of £15,000 or less on 30 December 2021, will receive a one-off grant of £2,667.
- Qualifying businesses with a rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000 on 30 December 2021, will receive a one-off grant of £4,000.
- Qualifying businesses with a rateable value of £51,000 or above on 30 December 2021, will receive a one-off grant of £6,000.

Visit www.bedford.gov.uk/BSG to find out more about eligibility, and to apply for this grant.

You can find out which type of businesses are excluded at: [Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant Guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/omc-grant)

Omicron discretionary additional restrictions grant scheme The Government have also provided funds for Bedford Borough to implement a discretionary grant scheme to assist qualifying businesses in the hospitality, leisure, indoor facilities, and non-essential retail sectors with further assistance.

The Omicron discretionary grant scheme will pay eligible businesses a one-off grant. You may be eligible if your business:

- Is located in the Bedford Borough Council area.
- Did not receive funding under the main Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant scheme.
- Operates within the sectors in the table below.

Sector	Type of business
Hospitality and Leisure	Restaurants, Cafes, Bars, Shisha Cafes, Conference centres, Pubs, Nightclubs, Bingo Halls, Bowling Alleys, Hairdressers, Beauty, Businesses that cater to the events sector and mobile caterers at events
Indoor facilities	Businesses that normally provide group activities – i.e. art & crafts workshops, community centres/public halls/church or religious halls, fitness studios, squash clubs, sports clubs, boxing clubs, wellness studios, gyms, dance studios, escape rooms, health & fitness centres, soft play centres, riding centres and swimming pools
Non-essential retail	Travel businesses including travel agents and tour operators

Visit www.bedford.gov.uk/BSG to find out more about eligibility, and to apply for this grant.

Latest Covid -19 stats – please see attached.