



**MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021**  
**AT 7PM VIA ZOOM WEBINAR FUNCTION**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr M. Russell (Chairman)  
Cllr G. Fage (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr I. Bond  
Cllr K. Brown  
Cllr F. Foster  
Cllr M. Foster (joined the meeting at 11e)  
Cllr L. Fage  
Cllr M. Knight  
Cllr M. North  
Cllr R. Pullinger  
Cllr H. Ramsay  
Cllr D. Strachan  
Cllr C. Thomas  
Cllr J. Woodhead

Mr P. Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Biggleswade Town Council  
Mr P. Truppin – Assistant Town Clerk, Biggleswade Town Council  
Mrs S. van der Merwe – Professional Assistant, Biggleswade Town Council  
Ms N. Villa – Assistant Town Clerk, Biggleswade Town Council (Exempt item only)

Members of Public – 8

**Meeting Formalities:**

Following a reminder to meeting attendees, both panel and public, that this is a formal meeting, the Mayor advised that members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak during public open session but not at other times. The meeting is being filmed and by being present attendees are deemed to have agreed be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Mayor advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Mayor asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr D Albone. Cllr L Fage issued apologies for the exempt item only.

**ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGIES**

None.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item**

Biggleswade Town Council – Planning Application for Unit 11, Eldon Way – this is the depot the Council intends to lease.

b. **Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item**

Cllr Woodhead – 11d – Public Notice A00089 The Baulk, Biggleswade - Off Street Parking.

**3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. As a result of the pandemic the Town Council's Annual Civic Service was unable to be held the previous Sunday. The service would have been an opportunity to celebrate with many organisations in the Town all the voluntary work that is carried out to support our residents. The Mayor therefore expressed her thanks on behalf of the Town Council to all those volunteers and voluntary organisations for their continued support to Biggleswade and its residents over what has been a challenging year.

**4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

The Chairman advised members of the public wishing to speak to use the "raise hand" function on screen.

a. **Cllr Caroline Maudlin, Central Bedfordshire Council, Ward Councillor for Sandy**

Cllr Maudlin thanked the Council for the opportunity to discuss Item 11e relating to the match funding request for a Mosaics Heritage Trail. A map would be produced to encourage people to discover the mosaics in Biggleswade, Sandy and Potton. There would be more visitors to support independent shops, pubs and restaurants within those towns. This trail map will be linked with the Greensand Country Festival for wider distribution and Central Bedfordshire Council will retain control over the document and its contents, rather than a designer. Any money left over would be used for professional photographs of the mosaics or the costs of some printed copies of the map.

**5. INVITED SPEAKER**

None.

**6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr G Fage had correspondence from a member of the public about reopening of the tennis courts. Government has a staged approach to the lifting of lockdown and he asked if the Council would be opening the tennis courts, with appropriate communications to the public.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive confirmed that Town Council facilities reopening was discussed at a management meeting, and appropriate communications will be added to social media platforms and the Town Council website. Two of the three tennis courts will be opened for use, with the middle court left open to facilitate social distancing.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

a. Members received the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021** via Zoom Webinar. The following amendments were requested:

- **Item 12 page 14:** The whole item should be “Items for Information”, not “Items for Consideration”.

Subject to this amendment being made, the Council **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Council Meeting of **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021**.

b. Members received the Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021** via Zoom Webinar.

It was **RESOLVED** to move this item to the Exempt meeting.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

a. **From the Minutes of Tuesday 9 February 2021**

**Item 10A:** Cllr Pullinger wished to note that he had received the information requested from the Professional Assistant regarding the £140 cash cheque, namely that those petty cash funds were used for the Santa’s Grotto presents for children. He also wished to note that the question about the £800 cash cheque was resolved in the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**Item 12c: Footpaths 30 and 33:** Cllr G Fage asked for an update on the letter sent to Central Bedfordshire Council requesting maintenance of the quality of existing footpaths. The Assistant Town Clerk confirmed the response had been sent to Central Bedfordshire Council they had given assurance that they would maintain the quality of the existing paths. The Professional Assistant advised the response would be sent to Members separately in an email.

b. **From the Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting of Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021:**

It was **RESOLVED** to move this matter to the Exempt meeting.

9. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/21/00481/FULL - 19 Elm Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8JJ**

Two storey side extension

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by Central Bedfordshire Council in their deliberations.

b. **CB/21/00240/FULL - Unit 9-11 Eldon Trading Estate Biggleswade SG18 8NH**

Sub-division of existing warehouse Unit 9-11 to form two independent warehouses at Unit 9-10 and Unit 11 respectively. Construction of new full-height internal division wall to separate warehouse Unit 9-10 and Unit 11.

The Town Council did not consider this planning application as the Town Council has a pecuniary interest.

c. **CB/21/00521/FULL - 9 Saffron Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8DJ**

Proposed loft conversion with rear dormer.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by Central Bedfordshire Council in their deliberations.

d. **CB/21/00352/FULL - 35 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8ED**

Demolition of existing conservatory and garage and construction of ground floor extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by Central Bedfordshire Council in their deliberations.

e. **CB/21/00608/FULL - 9 Parry Rise, Biggleswade, SG18 8FU**

Proposed rear conservatory.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by Central Bedfordshire Council in their deliberations.

f. **CB/21/00203/FULL - 9 Walton Grove, Biggleswade, SG18 8G**

Part conversion of double garage.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer this application as there is no information available on Central Bedfordshire Council website for Members to review. The Town Council will request paper copies of the application for it to be discussed at the next meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

g. **CB/21/00649/FULL - 22 Ripon Court, Biggleswade, SG18 8JE**

Two storey and first floor rear extension. Single storey side extension to garage.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by Central Bedfordshire Council in their deliberations.

h. **CB/21/00536/FULL - Holme Court, London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 9S**

Removal of covered lean-to and erection of new warehouse extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application.

i. **CB/20/04781/FULL - 9A Rowletts View, Biggleswade, SG18 0FD**

Single storey side extension.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer this application as there is no information available on Central Bedfordshire Council website for Members to review. The Town Council will request paper copies of the application for it to be discussed at the next meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

j. **CB/20/03885/ADV - 4 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EB**

Advertisement: Flat panel sign with gold wording "The Chic House" on front elevation, with down lights.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application. Biggleswade Town Council welcomes new businesses to the Town

k. **CB/21/00855/FULL - 31 Wensum Grove, Biggleswade, SG18 8NG**

Single storey rear extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by Central Bedfordshire Council in their deliberations.

10. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

Members received the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31/01/2021.
- ii. Summary Income and Expenditure by Committee 31/01/2021.
- iii. Detailed Income and Expenditure by Committee 31/01/2021.
- iv. Lloyds Bank Payment listing January 2021.

The Accounts as listed were **ADOPTED**.

11. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Standing Orders**

Cllr Pullinger thanked the Assistant Town Clerk for his report detailing the proposed changes to the Standing Orders. He felt that the Orders required a fuller review and that this should be deferred for a period of 6 months until the Head of Governance and Planning has been appointed so that he/she may conduct a full review.

The Assistant Town Clerk clarified that there is a governance requirement that Standing Orders be reviewed annually. Cllr Pullinger's proposal allowed the Town Council to discharge that requirement as long as the minute indicated that the Standing Orders are to remain as they are until the later review.

The Assistant Town Clerk said that the changes suggested in this report are the more urgent Orders for consideration. Members suggested having a dedicated Working Party to review the Standing Orders. Cllr Russell expressed a preference for an informal Council meeting that all Councillors can attend as standing orders are important and all Councillors should have their say.

It was **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** reviewing the Standing Orders until September 2021. The Standing Orders have been considered by the Council but they are to remain as they are until the Head of Governance and Planning conducts a full review.

b. **Tree Preservation Order: CB/TRE/21/00066 – Holme Lodge, London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 9SS**

Works to Trees Protected by Tree Preservation Order MB/75/00001: Reduce lateral spread of Beech Tree (235) to south by up to 4.5m, remove Beech Tree (237) to ground level, remove all significant deadwood of Beech Tree (238) and reduce height of both stems of Ash Tree (239) to 5-6m.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECTS** to the removal of Beech Tree (237) as specified in the scope of these works. (26.28)

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to the reduction of lateral spread of Beech Tree (235), remove all significant deadwood of Beech Tree (238) and reduce the height of both stems of Ash Tree (239).

c. **Tree Preservation Order: CB/TRE/21/00076 - Holme Woods, London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 9SS**

Works to Trees Protected by Tree Preservation Order MB/75/00001: Reduce crown of Copper Beech Tree (T1) by 20%.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to the reduction of this tree crown.

d. **Public Notice A00089 The Baulk, Biggleswade - Off Street Parking**

Members were asked to consider Central Bedfordshire Council's proposal to make an off-street parking places Variation Order to relieve and prevent traffic congestion. Parking facilities will be limited to 2 hours, with no return within 1 hour, from Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5.30pm. Outside of those hours parking in those spaces will be unrestricted.

Cllr G Fage noted that the resurfacing works would be welcome and that resident parking is under considerable pressure for the number of houses in the vicinity.

It was **RESOLVED** to write to Central Bedfordshire Council requesting that residents of The Baulk who have residents' permits be allowed to use the car park within restricted hours.

e. **Request for Match Funding - Mosaic Heritage Trail**

Cllr. Caroline Maudlin, CBC Sandy Ward, requested support for the creation of an electronic Mosaic Heritage Trail map for mosaics in Sandy, Potton and Biggleswade. She requested a match funding contribution to funding from her Ward Councillor allowance.

It was **RESOLVED** to contribute £250 to the Heritage Mosaic Trail Map and to request involvement with the design and creation of the map.

f. **Biggleswade Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Russell's report outlined progress with the Neighbourhood Plan and requested approval for the basis of some further public engagement during April.

Due to the pandemic, the engagement will be online through Survey Monkey. There will be banners, posters and information on the Town Council website and social media. The survey is being run by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity on behalf of the Council.

The survey will indicate what is being included in the Neighbourhood Plan, ask for feedback on the current content and ask whether other matters should be addressed. It will also highlight that there will be more formal consultation later in the year.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the public engagement as proposed.

g and h. **Biggleswade 10km Fun Run / Biggleswade 10km Run**

Members were asked to consider plans submitted by Chris and Gina from Fitness Fights Back and Aiden Jones to hold two separate 10km race events.

Cllr Knight expressed thanks to both parties for submitting the plans and proposed referring them to the Town Centre Events Working Group for detailed discussion. Cllr G Fage clarified that both parties should be invited to the working group meeting rather than individual meetings with those applicants.

It was **RESOLVED** for these requests to be deferred to the next Events Working Group Meeting.

i. **Langford Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr G Fage stated he had reviewed the paperwork and Langford have earmarked a green zone to their north to prevent coalescence with Biggleswade. This was to be welcomed and he did not see any points that would raise concerns for Biggleswade.

It was **RESOLVED** to thank Central Bedfordshire Council for allowing Biggleswade Town Council the opportunity to comment and to wish Langford well with its plan.

j. **Zebra Crossing in Potton Road**

Cllr Knight expressed thanks to Ward Councillors Watkins and Bond for championing this much-needed scheme. He pointed out that speed signs were previously promised by Central Bedfordshire Council for this crossing but these have not been included in the new paperwork.

Cllr Russell has received emails from a resident from Nursery Close requesting yellow lines be installed on the junctions of Nursery Close and Stratton Way with Potton Road. The resident has complained that yellow lines are needed now more than ever because of cars collecting children from Edward Peake school and causing significant congestion.

It was **RESOLVED** to write to Central Bedfordshire Council expressing the Town Council's support for the proposed scheme but requesting that solar powered speed signs be included in the scheme to ensure that vehicles approach the crossing at an appropriate speed.

It was further **RESOLVED** to write to Central Bedfordshire Council requesting that the Nursery Close and Stratton Way junctions with Potton Road be monitored with a view to installing yellow lines.

## 12. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### b. **Crime Statistics – January 2021**

Council considered a report analysing the Biggleswade crime statistics for January 2021. The Deputy Finance and HR Manager extended the Council's thanks to Amanda Cawthorn for her continued assistance with the presentation of the information in its current format.

Cllr Strachan asked Members to note that the majority of crime figures for January 2021 are significantly reduced compared to January 2019 and January 2020. He believes when lockdown ended in July 2020 crimes increased considerably and he believes the same will happen when the next phased relaxation of lockdown occurs. He would like to start analysing statistics for prosecutions.

Cllr Russell suggested reporting of these figures should be done quarterly in future and asked the Crime Working Group to discuss this.

### c. **Abbotsbury Care Home**

Members noted that the closure of the care home will go ahead.

Cllr G Fage reminded Members about the Council's request to be involved in the planning of future provision in Biggleswade and the decision about the future of the Abbotsbury site.

The report was **NOTED**.

### d. **Public Notice - Biggleswade Bridleway No 52 temporary closure**

Members **NOTED** the closure of Bridleway No 52, to enable works to be carried out on the railway track.

### e. **OPCC Newsletter – March 2021**

Members **NOTED** the newsletter from the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Cllr G Fage reminded Members that Police and Crime Commissioner elections are being held on 6 May 2021 and Kathryn Holloway will be stepping down from the role. It would be fitting for the Council to write a letter of appreciation to Ms. Holloway.

It was **RESOLVED** for Council to write to Kathryn Holloway, to thank her for her hard work and service, particularly in gaining increased funding for Bedfordshire Police and also for her efforts for Biggleswade.



**13. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, in respect of any other business of the Town Council.

**a. Ms Vanessa Hallybone**

Ms Hallybone is an independent mobile hairdresser. Mobile hairdressers and beauticians do not qualify for Covid business support through Central Bedfordshire Council because they do not pay business rates. She requested the support of the Town Council for such businesses.

Ms Hallybone has contacted Richard Fuller MP to discuss eligibility criteria at government level and Cllr Russell invited Ms Hallybone to contact the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.

**b. Cllr Hayley Whitaker, Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Councillor**

Cllr Whitaker clarified that the government scheme is not prescriptive to allow Central Bedfordshire Council to apply it in a more local way. Cllr Whitaker requested the Council to support these business owners.

Cllr Russell stated that the Town Council is unable to make decisions on matters that are not on the agenda and which are not within the Council's remit.

**14. EXEMPT ITEMS**

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council resolve to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

(15a – HR Update)

(15b – Churchill Retirement Living)

(15c – Play Area Adoption)

(15d - Review of Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021)

The following resolution was **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

15. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

a. **HR Update:**

The Council **APPROVED** the request for a termination date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and for the individual in question to access their pension early on health grounds.

b. **Churchill Retirement Living:**

The Council **RESOLVED** not to proceed with the proposal from Churchill Retirement Living.

c. **Play Area Adoption:**

The Council **RESOLVED** to continue with the adoption of the play area and to contact Central Bedfordshire Council for further information.

d. **Review of Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021:**

The Minutes of the Personnel Committee of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 were **NOTED** but with concern that Item 9e should be reviewed by the Committee because it is an inaccurate reflection of the decision of the Committee.

As the recommendation from the Committee is inaccurate, Council **RESOLVED** that the Chairman of the Committee be requested to prepare a report for the next Council meeting, as an exempt item.