

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIGGLESWADE JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING AT
BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, THE OLD COURT HOUSE
4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE, SG18 8DL
ON THURSDAY, 20TH JANUARY 2022 at 14:30 PM**

Present:	BTC: Cllr M North, Cllr M Russell (Deputy Chairman), Cllr M Knight CBC: Cllr I Bond, Cllr T Stock, Cllr M Foster (Chairman) (via Zoom) BTC Town Clerk & Chief Executive: Peter Tarrant BTC Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships: Karim Hosseini BTC Head of Place Shaping & Town Centre Management: Philip Truppinn BTC Head of Finance & Planning: Wilhelmina Solomon BTC Administrator Karen Saunders
In Attendance (via Zoom):	CBC Community Engagement Manager: Sarah Hughes CBC Head of Place Delivery: Ingrid Hooley CBC Highways Asset Manager: Mark Eaton CBC Programme Enabling Manager – Delivery: Sarah Morgan CBC Strategic Plan Partnership Manager – Lynsey Hillman-Gamble
Members of the public:	None

Following a reminder to Meeting attendees that this is a formal meeting, the Deputy Chair 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 Deputy Chair advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Deputy Chair asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

PART A: ADMINISTRATION

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Whittaker, Cllr S Dixon, Cllr Ramsay.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

None.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Cllr Russell who chaired the meeting, stated that from a Central Bedfordshire Council point of view, the meeting would not be quorate if any decisions had to be made.

GARDEN COMMUNITIES

Ms. Lynsey Hillman-Gamble, CBC Strategic Plan Partnership Manager, gave an update on the Garden Community Project and Stratton Business Park.

The Garden Community Project is progressing well and she wanted to give more information in relation to an energy strategy and biodiversity strategy. These strategies are being drafted and Ms. Hillman-Gamble would be happy to attend a future meeting to provide updates.

Regarding the engagement strategy in relation to the sustainable travel corridor, this has been postponed because of COVID restrictions as this is a 'festival' type event and people need to feel safe. This is now planned for March 2022 if the site promoters can attend.

In relation to Stratton Business Park there was a query on the future of the site and that CBC has no plans to extend the site, but they may have to re-visit this as part of the Local Plan review.

If there is a call for more sites, this would allow landowners and site promoters to submit planning applications in the future.

PLACE DELIVERY UPDATE

Ingrid Hooley, CBC Head of Place Delivery, gave an update on the sub-station and stated that the planning application has been submitted and validated to CBC. Consultation is still on-going and comments are still being responded to.

The planned route for the transformers is being reviewed through the planning process as this requires a lot of land to accommodate the size of the transformers, they also require clear access and egress routes.

The planning consent has been received on Lindsells Bridge and there is a next stage agreement with Network Rail. Contracts for the design have been awarded to a company called Story and the Certificate of Title is being progressed by Network Rail.

Education projects from the 'have your say' consultation on education has been concluded and it will be discussed with Members to agree a final model and feasibility study for this school to conclude at the end of February 2022.

Cllr M Knight asked if subsequent documentation on the sub-station has been received as the original application on Central Beds portal was incomplete and if that meant that it would need to go through the consultation process again, or if the subsequent paperwork could be submitted mid consultation.

Ingrid Hooley, CBC Head of Place Delivery, confirmed that she would check the status of the paperwork and report back.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 14TH OCTOBER 2021 AND RECONVENED TO 18TH NOVEMBER 2021

Cllr M North – page 7 states that Cllr Bond commented that where CBC will be issuing a TRO for the bus layby on Church Street, CBC may wish to consider adding some additional parking spaces because it will become a one-way street – this already is a one-way street.

Cllr M North – page 8 references ‘Steppingley’ Hospital this should say ‘Biggleswade’ Hospital.

Subject to these amendments being made, the Minutes of the Biggleswade Joint Committee Meeting of the 14th October 2021 and 18th November 2021 were **APPROVED**.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the Biggleswade Joint Committee Meeting of 14th October 2021 and 18th November 2021.

BIGGLESWADE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Karim Hosseini, Head of Governance and Strategic Partnerships, gave an update and stated that the collation of the feedback during the Regulation 14 Consultation exercise had gone smoothly. The Town Council is at a stage where detailed changes from the feedback is being worked on.

Helen Calvert, Administration and HR Manager, confirmed that a draft Consultation Statement and Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 document would be presented to the Town Council meeting of 25th January 2022 for approval.

DOCTOR'S SURGERIES

Karim Hosseini, Head of Governance and Strategic Partnerships, gave an update and stated that the two GP Surgeries in Biggleswade had been contacted (Ivel and Saffron Surgeries) to attend a meeting to establish if there is any assistance the Town Council can provide to alleviate the shortage of GP appointments which is causing problems for patients. Only one surgery has replied to date, meeting with them was delayed due to the recent government COVID restrictions and no response from either GP has been forthcoming. The Town Council will continue to engage with those surgeries to progress with this issue.

MARKETPLACE WORKSHOP

Karim Hosseini, Head of Governance and Strategic Partnerships, said that a Place Shaping Workshop is being held on the 25th February 2022 with Ingrid Hooley and other CBC colleagues attending. Attendees will walk around the Market Square and align our vision and bring the plans up to date. This workshop will be open to all Town and Board Councillors and an invite will be sent to David Edwards from Place Make in Hitchin.

Discussions will take place on the highways issue around Century House and Hitchin Street as part of the Place Shaping Workshop.

ECONOMY AND TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

Wilma Solomon, Head of Finance and Planning, gave an update on progress with the Welcome Back Fund.

All available funding has now been spent apart from £1,860.00 which will bring the total spend to £32,000.00.

Cllr Pullinger asked if there was an update on the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grants as many businesses in Biggleswade were awaiting this - many other councils across the country had already started the application process and CBC had not opened theirs yet. Sarah Morgan, CBC Programme Enabling Manager – Delivery, said that they were still waiting on further guidance from Central Government but would keep us updated.

HIGHWAYS PROGRAMME FOR BIGGLESWADE

Mark Eaton - CBC Highways Asset Manager, gave a presentation (attached) which outlined what programme items have been completed and what programme items are yet to take place on the highways work programme in this financial year and finish at the end of March 2022. Improvements are being looked at around the road islands and resurfacing on various streets being funded by Section 106.

There is an integrated transport scheme forming a one-way cycle contraflow on Lawrence Road programmed for January 2023. Mark Eaton was asked to make sure that he feeds back that Biggleswade Town Council want to be involved with the design consultation.

Concern was also raised about the flooding under the underpass on the A1 bypass and the erosion of the riverbank.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Peter Tarrant, Town Clerk & Chief Executive, advised that the Town Council are still engaging with members of the community regarding local issues through its regular Community Engagement meetings.

Items discussed on 6th December 2021 meeting included:

- The Christmas Light Switch On was well received, as was the Remembrance Sunday parade.
- Encouraging Members to continue to attend our meetings.
- Electric vehicle charging points plans.
- Members submitted suggestions on how the community could use the open spaces.

The next Community Engagement meeting is scheduled for 7th February 2022, with agenda items which the Members have asked for will cover the following:

- Neighbourhood Plan
- Queen's Jubilee

An invite to the next meeting on 7th February 2022 will be extended to Sarah Hughes at Central Bedfordshire Council.