



MINUTES OF THE TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15TH FEBRUARY AT 7.00PM AT
BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD,
BIGGLESWADE, SG18 8DL



PRESENT:

Cllr M Knight – Chairman
Cllr G Fage – Vice Chairman
Cllr F Foster (via Zoom)
Cllr M North
Cllr M Russell
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr C Thomas

Mr Karim Hosseini, Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships, Biggleswade Town Council
Mr Philip Truppin, Head of Place Shaping & Town Centre Management
Miss Helen Calvert, Administration & HR Manager (meeting administrator)
Miss Sue Jolly, Administrator (meeting administrator)

Members of the public: 1 (via Zoom)

Meeting Formalities:

Following a reminder to meeting attendees, both panel and public, that this is a formal meeting, the Chairman 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 to be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Chairman advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Chairman asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr D Albone
Cllr I Bond
Cllr R Pullinger
Mr P Tarrant
Cllr J Woodhead

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

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

Item 9b - Cllr Fage

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

None.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

The Chairman advised members of the public wishing to speak to either raise their hand (for in-person attendees) or to use the electronic "raise hand" function on screen (for Zoom attendees).

None.

5. INVITED SPEAKER

None.

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

None.

7. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received and **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Town Centre Management meeting of **Tuesday 16th November 2021**.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. From the Minutes of the Town Centre Management meeting of **Tuesday 16th November 2021**.

None.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

Members considered a written report from the Head of Governance and Strategic Partnerships outlining current planning activity for the Platinum Jubilee.

Cllr Knight pointed to a matter of correction in the report. On Page 9, under the heading Market Square, the date should read Thursday 2nd June.

Mr Hosseini outlined the report covering Council events and activities between the dates of Thursday 2nd June and Sunday 5th June 2022. Proposals included:

- Beacon lighting ceremony on Thursday 2nd June at event opening.
- Beacon lighting ceremony on Sunday 5th June at event closure.
- Support for events run by various voluntary organisations between the dates of 2nd and 5th June.
- Support for street parties in the Biggleswade area, including decorations.

Members invited clarification on the Town Council's responsibility, to include the level of staff time and resources, specific liabilities, and levels of support offered to other organising groups.

Cllr Strachan asked about the Community Engagement Group's findings arising from their recent meeting, and where the Town Council's banners would be displayed. Mr Hosseini confirmed that display material for the Biggleswade Carnival (14th - 18th June) would be in place throughout June and banners would be located on prominent CBC lamp posts at entrances to the town.

There was insufficient clarity surrounding the Council's offer. It was suggested the Town Council concentrate on the beacon lighting ceremonies on Thursday 2nd June and Sunday 5th June, involving the procurement of a reusable temporary structure to house the beacon. Other organisers would be offered advice only.

Mr Hosseini said a video media package would be produced in conjunction with the History Society to cover other historic Jubilee celebrations and connected local history.

Cllr Fage felt more guidance and support was needed from Councillors and, in view of timescales, suggested the delegation of authority to specific Councillors in order to continue the planning process.

It was **RESOLVED** that authority is delegated to Cllrs Knight, Russell and G Fage to work with Officers to plan Jubilee events and report outcomes to Town Council meetings.

b. **Car Park Permit Charges for 2022/2023**

Members considered a written report from the Head of Finance & Planning considering car permit charges for residents and workers, which were last increased on 1st August 2018.

Cllr Fage wished for the introduction to the report to be **amended** to remove the suggestion that the Chair and Deputy of the Committee had recommended changes therein, **to read:** the Chair and Deputy of the Committee had provided background information to the report. This was **NOTED**.

Cllr Fage asked Members to consider the number of residents who buy each type of permit and that prices had been fixed since 2018. Cllr Fage then left the chamber for reasons of pecuniary interest.

Cllr North believed the proposed increases to be fair and justified.

Cllr Knight pointed out that, historically, records suggested the premium included in shorter-term Business permits encouraged the purchase of longer-term permits. The proposed imposition of a premium for Residents would have a similar effect and would offset the greater amount of administration involved in the issue of short-term permits. Cllr Knight stated that, despite this, he was a little nervous of the scale of the increase for short-term resident permits.

Members believed the proposed increases to be reasonable in comparison with other Local Authorities and in light of the length of time since the last increase.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the revised pricing contained within the report with effect from 1st April 2022.

Cllr Fage re-entered the chamber.

c. **Community Toilet Scheme**

Members received an oral update on the Community Toilet Scheme.

The matter had been raised previously, in April 2021, and deferred. Members were asked to consider whether this was an initiative to investigate, or to defer to a later date.

The scheme was outlined in which members of the public would be offered the use of local businesses' toilet facilities in return for a Council contribution towards running costs.

Members were encouraged to look at the feasibility of the scheme, including consideration of the costs of running and repairing the Market Square toilet facilities and the Council's obligation to provide facilities.

It was **RESOLVED** that Council Officers provide a full written report in order to consider the feasibility of the Community Toilet Scheme as part of a strategic offer and within a 6-9 month timeframe.

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **TCM Budget 2022/2023**

Mr P Tarrant was unable to attend to deliver an oral update.

This item to be **DEFERRED** to the Town Council Meeting on Tuesday 21st February 2022.

b. **Staffing**

Mr Hosseini delivered an oral update on the arrival of the Place Shaping Manager.

The new Place Shaping Manager would be joining on 1st March 2022.

This was **NOTED** and an introductory email would be sent to Members regarding details of the new Place Shaping Manager.

c. **Flag Policy and Procurement**

Members received an oral update from Mr Hosseini on the refreshed flag flying policy and procurement options.

It was **RESOLVED** that the flying of the Union Flag on 19th February and 10th June should be discontinued.

The report was **NOTED** and members were asked to provide written feedback to officers on the draft policy in order to present a revised Flag Flying Policy to the Town Council within a 6-9 month timeframe.

It was **RESOLVED** that sufficient flags be procured to meet the needs of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee year.

d. **War Memorial**

Mr Hosseini delivered an oral update on renovation of the War Memorial.

Quotes had been submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council ('CBC') for corrective work to the typeface on the Memorial. CBC had responded with thanks and requested further quotes for the Victorian drinking fountain.

Flower beds would be in place by April, plantings by June, and the painting of railings in time for November Remembrance events. The council will continue to work closely with the Royal British Legion.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council would concentrate exclusively on the area of the War Memorial.

e. **Christmas 2022 Preparations**

Mr Hosseini reported that a tender package was under construction for the Christmas 2022 offer, which would be shared.

f. **Pigeons**

Mr Hosseini delivered an oral update on measures being taken to address the pigeon infestation.

It was **RESOLVED** that pest-controlling activities would commence shortly.

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

None.

12. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

The resolution was **moved** that it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be excluded whilst the following exempt items were discussed.

13a. CCTV

13. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

a. **CCTV**

Members received a written report from Mr Hosseini outlining the situation regarding CCTV cameras in the town.

It was **RESOLVED** that a further report to be prepared by Officers by the end of March 2022, to include additional information as outlined by Cllr Knight:

- recommendations for the optimal number of cameras;
- arcs of coverage;
- best positions;
- prioritisation of cameras;

- and a clear understanding of installation and operational costs and funding for the next five years.

Cllr Knight was asked and agreed to circulate an email outlining the detailed topics that the further CCTV report should cover.

It was **RESOLVED** to present a report to the Town Council meeting at a later date.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:15pm