



BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2021 – 2022

CONTENTS

AGENDA	Page 3
REPORTS – 2021/2022	
Annual Report – Cllr M Russell	Page 4
Public Land and Open Spaces – Cllr F Foster	Page 7
Town Centre Management – Cllr M Knight	Page 10
Finance & General Purpose – Cllr Mr R Pullinger	Page 12
Personnel – Cllr J Woodhead	Page 14
COUNCIL INFORMATION	
Town Councillors' Details	Page 15
Town Councillors' Committee Membership	Page 16
Town Councillors' Attendance Records	Page 17
Meeting Dates 2022/23	Page 18
Council Staff, Contact Details	Page 21

AGENDA

Biggleswade Town Annual Assembly will take place on **Tuesday 19th April 2022** at the **Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade** commencing at **7.30 p.m.** in order to transact the undermentioned items of business.

Members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman. Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman, prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Pz6cdjJbRnW2wdyzXeSaiA



1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

3. **ANNUAL REPORT OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL**

The Annual Report will be presented by Cllr M Russell.

4. **REPORTS**

- a. Public Land and Open Spaces – Cllr F Foster.
- b. Town Centre Management – Cllr M Knight.
- c. Finance & General Purpose – Cllr R Pullinger.
- d. Personnel – Cllr J Woodhead.

5. **RESOLUTION AND QUESTIONS**

For the meeting to consider subjects and resolutions affecting the Town, from Local Government Electors.

6. **OPEN FORUM – MATTERS RELATING TO BIGGLESWADE**

- a. Ward Councillors
- b. Town Councillors

Annual Report of Council 2021-2022

It is a privilege to serve as the Mayor of Biggleswade and I was honoured to be appointed last May for a third term. I was also grateful given that Town Council business and civic duties had been hugely disrupted through the pandemic. However, my third year has continued to be challenging and civic life is only just getting back to normal.

Town and Parish Councils were required by law to meet in person from May 2021. The law also says that Councillors can continue to attend via Zoom and speak but may not vote. As required, Biggleswade Town Council meets in person but manages to offer hybrid meetings where Councillors and members of the public are able to attend via Zoom if necessary. It was also decided to continue live-streaming the meetings of both Council and formal Committees to YouTube. The technology has been challenging at times but we have coped.

Council staff have continued to work under changing rules and regulations and the Council is grateful for their adaptability. Admin staff have been able to work at home when having to isolate without being ill themselves. There is a gradual return to normality but we are not quite there yet. Meanwhile, the Public Realm team have settled into their new depot, which enables them to work more efficiently.

Civic events have only just returned to the calendar but I have been able to attend Ampthill, Stotfold, Dunstable and Sandy Civic Services. After no service for two years, this year was third time lucky and I was delighted to be able to host Biggleswade's Civic Service at St. Andrew's Church on 20th March. The service was an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the work of so many volunteers who, rather than complaining, take responsibility and do so much within our community, making Biggleswade such a good place in which to live. It was a very happy occasion.

There were not many opportunities to be out in the community as Mayor but I did enjoy a visit to the Air Cadets and to the new care home, Mantles Court, not to mention a sod-cutting ceremony for an extension to Stratton Business Park!

The work of the Council has continued despite everything. Not only business as usual but looking at every aspect of the Council's work and ensuring that it is effective and better able to provide all the services which our growing town needs. Council has also set out its aspirations for the next few years to support the town as it adapts to growth and a changing environment, particularly commercially. When asked, residents always say that their number one priority is our open spaces and we will continue to invest in their improvement.

To support the growth of the town and our aspirations, we have been developing a Neighbourhood Plan. The Steering Group was first formed in June 2018 and includes representatives of the community as well as four town councillors. Two public engagements were undertaken and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity updated the Green Infrastructure Plan and identified the local green spaces which are most important to residents and which can be given protection in the Neighbourhood Plan.

A draft of the Plan was produced and went to a formal six-week consultation last autumn. Some modifications were made to the Plan as a result of the consultation and our Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council (as the Local Planning Authority) in January and they are taking the Plan through the remainder of the statutory process.

There has been a further six-week consultation during February and March. The Plan, together with the results of both formal consultations and other documents which informed the Plan, is now with a planning inspector for review and we hope that he will recommend that the Plan goes forward to a referendum in which all those on the electoral roll in Biggleswade will be entitled to vote. For the Plan to become Supplementary Planning Guidance, there needs to be a majority in favour from those who vote.

If the Plan is approved and becomes SPG, it will be taken into consideration by the Planning Authority when they consider all planning applications for Biggleswade so it is a chance for us to have more of a say in the way our town develops.

As Chairman of the Steering Group, I would very much like to thank colleagues on that Group for all their hard work, meeting fortnightly for nearly four years and always maintaining a sense of humour! I am also very grateful to Dave Chetwyn and Jon Baldwin who provided expert external support and to our officers who did so much of the background hard work.

Responding to planning applications as a statutory consultee is an important part of the work that the Town Council undertakes and Council will also use the Neighbourhood Plan to support its responses.

The Neighbourhood Plan sits underneath the Local Plan produced by Central Bedfordshire Council and cannot contradict that plan. However, the Town Council has been against the proposed development of the land north of Furzenhall since it responded to a draft version of the Local Plan in February 2018.

There are several reasons why development on this site is unwise but the major one is the additional traffic on narrow roads in one of the oldest parts of town and also the impact on some key junctions, notably Sun Street/Shortmead Street and Drove Road/London Road. For the first time, the Town Council sought the help of transport consultants and their work has been key in delaying the planning application thus far. It was submitted on Christmas Eve 2019 and has still not been determined. Deputy Mayor, Cllr. Grant Fage is to be congratulated for his work in liaising with the transport consultants and drafting the Council's response to the planning application.

Through the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund, Central Bedfordshire Council has received nearly £70 million of funding for infrastructure in Biggleswade. £48 million of that funding is for a new electricity substation where the existing pylons cross Dunton Lane. An increased and more stable electricity supply is vital for the town for both housing and commercial use but the Council had concerns about the landscaping of the site. After meetings with UKPN and National Grid, improved landscaping was designed and the Council was pleased to support the planning application. Again, thanks to Cllr. Grant Fage for his detailed work on this.

The HIF funding is also providing a transport interchange at the station so that buses are focussed there instead of on the Market Square, although there will still be bus stops in the town centre. The interchange, which is being managed by Central Bedfordshire, is being developed alongside Access for All, which is a Network Rail project to enable full access to the station via a new bridge with lifts as well as steps. The existing bridge will also remain in place as it is used by so many people as a Right of Way. Both projects will come to fruition in 2023. Cllr. Ian Bond, for CBC, and I, for the Town Council, have been attending liaison meetings overseen by our MP, Richard Fuller, to provide local knowledge and ask relevant questions.

In addition, Govia Thameslink Railway are currently constructing new, more secure, cycle facilities at the station and will also provide toilet facilities to serve both station and interchange.

The past year has seen a larger volume than usual of planning applications for housing extensions. This is understandable with people being at home more and working from home, therefore needing more space.

There is a Joint Committee between Central Bedfordshire and the Town Council, with councillors from both councils as members and currently chaired by Cllr. Mark Foster, who is both a Ward and Town councillor. It is an opportunity to understand each other's work and appreciate each other's points of view on various projects affecting the town. Meetings this last year have either been on Zoom or hybrid, which is never so effective – and you miss all the informal conversations which go on before and after the meetings - but we have persevered. In addition to the Joint Committee, the Council gets consulted on issues such as the future of Abbotsbury, the CBC Housing Allocation policy and the Bus Strategy.

The Council has continued to support the twinning of Biggleswade with Erlensee, a town just outside Frankfurt in Germany. No exchange visits have been possible but we celebrated the link with the Council 2021 Christmas card, a clever design from an idea by a member of staff. We were pleased to exchange cards with both Stefan Erb, the directly-elected Mayor, and Uwe Laskowski, the Chairman of Erlensee Council.

In ending my report, I would like to reiterate my thanks to colleagues, both Councillors and Staff, for all the hard work of the past year which has not only seen significant progress but has laid the foundations for much which will be achieved in the coming years. I look forward to so much – the electricity substation and improvements at the station, the renovation of our play areas, the improvement of our Market Square and all the events which happen there and, I hope, a successful Neighbourhood Plan!

Madeline Russell
Councillor and Mayor of Biggleswade 2019-22

PUBLIC LAND & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE 2021/2022

Chair: Cllr Frank Foster, Vice Chair: Cllr Colin Thomas, Cllr Kevin Brown,
Cllr Grant Fage, Cllr Mark Foster, Cllr Mark Knight, Cllr Michael North, Cllr Madeline Russell,
Cllr Duncan Strachan, Cllr Robert Pullinger

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL ASSEMBLY REPORT 2021/2022

Play and Recreation Areas

Following a comprehensive survey of all Play and Recreation Areas it was decided that although the all the Town Council's play areas met the required safety standards, most needed substantial updating to make them more attractive to the increasing population of the town. The Council therefore has decided to apply for a substantial Public Works Loan (PWL), part of which will be to fund this major expenditure estimated at around £500,000. When the PWL has been successfully obtained, a 5 year plan to update all Play and Recreation areas will come into effect.

BTC have reviewed the viability of the Buttercup Mead play area. Bearing in mind its very close location to the Saxon Leisure area, the Town Council considered that the small and under used play area with it's out of date play equipment should be replaced with an easier to maintain grassed leisure area with seating. This will be tied-in to the green verge which already exists. After a consultation process with Buttercup Mead residents the necessary work was commenced in Spring this year.

The Jubilee Recreation Area (JRA) off Potton Road, owned by Biggleswade Town Council (BTC) is a large undulating grassed area. To the north is the new Bellway development. Currently the residents of Larkinson Avenue and surrounding roads in this development are unable to access JRA or have pedestrian access to Potton Road due to a hedge/fence remaining in position. Following a report produced during the summer, BTC are in consultation with the developers with a view to providing access through the fence/hedge and to improve the overall experience within JRA with suitable pathways and planting.

Public Realm Staff

During another Covid-challenging year our Public Realm team has worked hard to cover the many and varied outdoor functions they are responsible for. The team's involvement in the setting up and participating in the smooth-running of the town's two main events: Remembrance Sunday and Christmas lights switch-on were major factors in the success of both.

Two new staff members: Fox Hilton and Ryan Wykes joined the team during the year and Jonathan Woolley was confirmed as Public Realm Manager - bringing to the role his many years of horticultural and play & recreation area experience which be invaluable in the exciting and transformational period ahead.

The Public Realm Depot

Having been handed the keys to the virtually empty shell of our new depot in Eldon Way in late April 2021, the fitting-out programme to provide Biggleswade Town Council a custom-designed facility to store and maintain our vehicles and grass cutting etc equipment commenced soon after and was completed in June. The depot also includes a meeting room and provides a kitchenette, lounge area and toilet facilities for Public Realm staff and a fully fitted workshop to enable in-house repairs to fences, planters etc and for the manufacturing and maintenance Of projects like "Santa's Grotto" - a very popular feature of the town's Christmas activities.

Now that the depot is fully operational, in addition to providing long needed safe-storage of equipment and excellent staff facilities, it enables BTC to look at other opportunities to make use of our team's expertise to increase our revenue.

Flower Beds, Planters and Hanging Baskets

Once again the Public Realm team provided the town with excellent flower displays throughout the summer of 2021 and thanks go to the volunteers from the Rotary Club who provided help with the planting. A welcome new feature was the Town Shield displayed in flowers in a specially angled flower bed in London Road to welcome visitors as they approach the town from the south.

With the H.M. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations taking place during the summer this year, "Jubilee Themed" hanging baskets, planters and flower beds are part of the Council's plans to support the various events planned for this time.

Allotments

With the development of the Taylor Wimpey site on Saxon Drive and the builder's access to the site using the same road as our allotment holders, access became difficult at times. Council Officers and staff were in regular contact with the builders to minimise the problems as much as possible and as the year progressed things became better.

Directional signage to the allotments site from Saxon Drive remains an ongoing matter with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) as does the maintenance of the access road and tracks within the allotment site.

During the year, a three-stage composting area was set up and Council Officers and staff are working with allotments holders to make the operation of this facility become a useful and environment friendly addition to our allotments offer.

Biggleswade Town Council (BTC) is continuing to search for more allotment space in addition to those plots at the Kennel Farm Road location.

Following an approach from Biggleswade Allotment Association, BTC have included provision within our budget for 2022/23 for an on-site Storage Building which is hoped will become a reality during the year.

Drove Road Cemetery

As reported last year, the boundary walls and the two chapels within the Grade II listed Drove Road Cemetery, which dates back to the mid 1800s, require repairs and other ongoing specialised maintenance. The Council has now engaged Hawkins Historic Limited, specialists in listed building repair. Mr Brian Hawkins from this company has put together specifications for various projects to go out to tender to cover both the immediately necessary repairs and future required repairs and maintenance. Mr Hawkins will project manage the works as they proceed. As with Play & Recreation Areas, the financing of this major expenditure will be included within an overall application for a PWL loan.

The regular maintenance of Drove Road Cemetery by the Public Realm team continues and the team has taken on the responsibility of tidying any unkempt graves so that the overall appearance of the cemetery can be improved. This action is undertaken only after every effort has been made to contact the deceased's family. Throughout the cemetery, any obviously self-set trees and shrubs are being removed before they cause problems to gravestones or hinder grass cutting.

All trees within the cemetery have been inspected and all the necessary arboreal work has been completed. To aid vehicle access, our team has cut back branches overhanging the driveway to the chapels.

The northern (unconsecrated) of the two Drove Road Chapels was previously used by Public Realm staff as a workshop/storage area. Following the opening of the Public Realm Depot in Eldon Way, the activities previously undertaken in this chapel are now undertaken in the new depot. Current plans are that this chapel could be let to a suitable business when necessary work on the building allows. The southern (consecrated) chapel has now been returned, as far as possible, to its original condition and can be used for religious ceremonies as required.

Stratton Way Cemetery

The acquisition of new good quality strimmers, and mowers with the right size cut to fit between the graves, has improved efficiency and has shown a marked improvement in our grass cutting and the overall look of this cemetery.

The excess soil removed from graves had been a problem which had resulted in a large accumulation of a number of tons which had to be disposed of at a cost to the Council. During the year, following a review of our Burial Regulations, the responsibility of disposing of unwanted soil has now been passed to burial contactors and this has been a great improvement.

Recently the Council has set aside an area of Stratton Way Cemetery to provide for Islamic burials. The first such burial took place in March this year. Our Officers and Public Realm staff consulted with local Muslims to ensure that the appropriate burial requirements are provided.

Some of the benches within the cemetery are in need of care and attention. As part of our overall maintenance strategy, the team are attempting to make contact with the owners, when they can be traced, with a view to re-staining them. When owners cannot be contacted the Council will decide if the bench should be removed or re-stained.

Saxon Gate Pocket Park and Biggleswade Linear Wood

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) owns both the Saxon Gate Pocket Park and Biggleswade Linear Wood and currently maintains them both. Biggleswade Town Council (BTC) is continuing its discussion with CBC with a view to taking over the management and maintenance of both sites subject to a terms agreement and the payment of an appropriate fee.

Tree Planting, Care & Maintenance

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. The Town Council are taking part by planting six Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) trees in (aptly) the Jubilee Recreation Area off Potton Road and within the Kitelands Road Play/Recreation Area. In addition, our local MP Richard Fuller, together with Cllr Madeline Russell and Deputy Mayor Grant Fage, have planted 2 Oak trees in The Spinney off Dells Lane and a further 17 trees were planted by our Public Realm staff.

Following a comprehensive survey of trees which are the responsibility of the Town Council, a planned programme of necessary remedial work is in place and work will continue throughout 2022/23 with updates being provided to residents of where and when such work will take place.

Cllr Frank Foster
Chairman Public Land & Open Spaces Committee

TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT (TCM) COMMITTEE 2021/2022

Chairman: Cllr Mark Knight, Vice Chairman: Cllr Grant Fage
Members: Cllr David Albone, Cllr Ian Bond, Cllr Michael North
Cllr Robert Pullinger, Cllr Madeline Russell, Cllr Duncan Strachan,
Cllr Colin Thomas, Cllr Jonathan Woodhead

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL ASSEMBLY REPORT 2021/2022

As we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, significant restrictions affected many businesses until July 2021, while ongoing health concerns and the emergence of the Omicron variant in December 2021 continued to have a substantial impact on our town and community. I know our thoughts are with everyone affected.

The Town Centre Management committee focuses on delivering services, events, and improvements to ensure Biggleswade Town Centre is an essential retail, service and leisure destination that attracts inward investment while remaining sensitive to Biggleswade's unique heritage.

The Town Council operates six car parks. All parking charges were suspended for nine months in 2020/2021. Once charging resumed, permit holders were offered a nine-month extension to ensure they were not disadvantaged. The price of short-term worker permits was also temporarily reduced from 1st April 2021 to 30th June 2021.

I believe that free and affordable parking is essential to ensure Biggleswade is a convenient destination for visitors from the largest possible catchment area. I'm therefore delighted that the Town Council was able to extend the lease on the Rose Lane car park by a further 15 years, securing these much-needed parking spaces. Looking ahead, I hope we can do more to promote Biggleswade's free parking with improved signage that helps visitors find our car parks.

A vibrant and imaginative market can make a town centre a destination that increases footfall and benefits all businesses. Throughout 2021 the Town Council built on the work started in 2020 to promote the market and secure new market traders. New visual branding was created, and new social media properties were launched on Facebook and Instagram, which now enjoy a substantial weekly audience. This investment has delivered significant growth in the number of Saturday stalls which regularly peaked at twenty-one stalls during the summer of 2021. It is now possible to purchase a wide range of essentials, luxuries, and gifts at Biggleswade Market. With the warmer weather returning, I hope we'll see further growth in 2022. To support first-time traders, the Town Council now offers low-cost gazebo and table rental, and we've seen many new businesses grow on our market over the past year. In the future, I hope we can incorporate an element of electronic footfall monitoring to accurately measure the success of different marketing initiatives to help our town centre thrive while ensuring value for taxpayers.

The bench refurbishment project is now complete, and all 36 benches are now cleaned and maintained to a high standard. Additional temporary benches and seating were purchased to support town centre events.

In 2021 local businesses organised the popular "Sunday on the Square" events to showcase their products and services. The Town Council was pleased to support these events, and I look forward to more community events in 2022.

An A-boards policy was implemented, and abandoned advertising boards were removed. This has helped to reduce visual clutter in the town while allowing local businesses to continue to promote their ventures.

Crime and anti-social behaviour remain a challenge within Biggleswade. The Town Council maintains a network of fully monitored CCTV cameras, and our moveable CCTV cameras have been used to provide a visual deterrent and support law enforcement. Modern technology offers improved image quality while reducing the burden on taxpayers. Work to upgrade the council's network of cameras is now well advanced, and consideration is being given to the feasibility and affordability of installing cameras in other parts of the town.

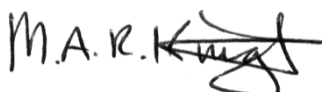
The annual Biggleswade Remembrance Sunday parade is always a special day, so I was delighted that this year saw the return of a full-scale parade and service with tremendous support from participants and our community.

December 2021 also saw the return of a Christmas light switch-on event. While COVID challenges meant that some of our regular school choirs had to decline our invitation, the stage was lit, artificial snow was primed, and the town was entertained with a wonderful range of performers culminating in a popular eight-piece ska band. In addition, the light shows we pioneered in December 2020 returned for eight evenings in December 2021, much to the delight of many children. I think everyone would agree the Christmas tree was magnificent and, for the first time, we were able to install a second tree outside the Orchard Community Centre.

Over the next year, the committee will need to look closely at our town centre events to ensure these are optimised to provide community value while supporting local businesses. The committee will also be considering a community toilet scheme and overseeing renovations to the war memorial.

With preliminary work on Biggleswade's new transport Interchange at the railway station progressing, we must now focus on developing a town centre strategy to optimise our public spaces. This should be a significant area of focus in the coming year.

My thanks to the Deputy Chairman, Cllr Grant Fage and the Town Council staff for their continued commitment to helping TCM carry out its mission. Thank you to Cllr Frank Foster and the Public Realm team for their partnership throughout the year. The Public Realm team has endured all weathers to support many events and has ensured that our floral displays are the envy of Bedfordshire.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M.A.R. Knight'. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Cllr Mark Knight
Chairman Town Centre Management Committee

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE 2021/2022

Chair: Cllr Rob Pullinger, Vice Chair: Cllr Michael North, Cllr D Albone, Cllr Ian Bond, Cllr G Fage, Cllr M Knight, Cllr H. Ramsay, Cllr M Russell, Cllr D Strachan

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL ASSEMBLY REPORT 2021/2022

Biggleswade Town Council Report on Financial Accounts Year Ended 31st March 2022

I am pleased to report the following information as an overview of the Town Council's financial performance for the year. The end of year accounts have not yet been finalised, so this report is based on the provisional figures for the year. Whilst I aim to report on the most important parts of the finances it must be understood that more detailed information is available which is subject to change when all year end entries have been completed.

Summary of Results for the Year

The financial overview of the Town Council's financial performance for the year 2021/22 shows an overall deficit of £44,051, compared with a budgeted surplus (contribution to reserves) of £71,000. However, following a restructuring of the financial reserves, the previous shortfall in the general reserves has now been eliminated.

Figures for the year have again been affected by the ongoing impact of the pandemic, reducing the income achieved from the Market and Playing Fields and increasing some costs as the Council has made various changes in terms of staffing and operations to ensure that there are no disruptions to services.

Significant differences between the budget and provisional year-end figures are as follows

- The Orchard Centre has achieved an above-budget income of £36,233 compared with its budget £33,120 and has reduced expenditure of by £7,649.
- Biggleswade Market net income was short of budget by £2,617.
- Council awarded grants totalling £27,806 against a budget of £32,767, with the remaining allocated towards grants agreed in the latest cycle.
- Car Park fees fell short of budget by £5,837, with an increase in expenditure of £8,444 following the renewal of the lease of Rose Lane car park.
- Public Convenience cleaning costs were £16,608 compared with a budget of £7,080. This was driven by the need for an increased cleaning schedule due to the Covid pandemic.
- Recreation grounds net expenditure was £6,358 greater than budgeted at £45,384, driven by additional investment in playground inspections and maintenance.
- An additional £20,000 was spent on the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, which will shortly be put forward for approval by referendum, in order support only sustainable and appropriate development in the town.

Major Activities

Biggleswade Town council secured £30,000 funding from 'The Welcome Back Fund' initiative, which was utilised to enhance the town centre experience for residents during the pandemic and encourage people to visit the town centre. This funded the promotion and operation of town centre events, including Christmas light shows and "Sunday in the Square" events, as well as the purchase of gazebos for the market.

The Council acquired a 15 year lease on a new depot facility, and made a number of modifications to the building to ensure that it is fit for purpose for the long-term needs of the Council. This new facility will enable the Council to support maintenance of the outdoor spaces across our growing town, and to properly protect our vehicles and other assets.

The Council has reviewed its medium-term strategy and identified a number of strategic projects to be delivered in the next 1-5 years. Following a zero-based budgeting exercise, the Council has reset a baseline for operational spending for the next financial year, and intends to finance significant capital expenditure through Public Works Loan Board funding, rather than through depletion of reserves.

Reserves Position

The Council's anticipated reserves balance at the end of the year is £416k, this has been realigned to conform with NALC guidelines (The NALC Practitioner's Guide recommends that general reserves should be held at 3 months of net revenue expenditure). This exercise resulted in a nil balance on Specific Reserves and £347.7k on the General Reserves with the remaining balance of £73.5k on Capital Reserves.

Cllr Rob Pullinger
Chairman Finance and General Purposes Committee

Personnel Committee 2020/2021

Chair: Cllr Jonathan Woodhead, Vice Chair: Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr C Thomas
Cllr M Foster, Cllr F Foster, Cllr M Knight, Cllr M North,
Cllr R Pullinger, , Cllr M Russell, Cllr D Strachan

Chairman's Annual Assembly Report 2021/2022

It has been another busy year for the Personnel Committee where we have welcomed new staff to help change and transform the Council. This shows the Council's investment in recruiting the right people to take us forward. I, as Chair, have personally been involved in the recruitment process for three senior colleagues and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome once again our new Head of Governance and Strategic Partnerships, Karim Hosseini, our new Head of Finance and Planning, Wilma Solomon and our new Place Shaping Manager, Isaac Lord. Helen Calvert also gained an internal promotion to become the new Administration and HR Manager. Welcome to all. On a sad note, we also said farewell to Philip Truppin, the former Assistant Town Clerk in March. We wish Philip all the best in his retirement.

The challenges of Covid-19 and working restrictions have placed additional pressures on staff over the past 12 months. As restrictions have eased it has enabled more staff to come back to the office and open up to the public. This is a welcome development.

As a responsible employer we are always reviewing our processes to ensure they are the best they can be. I am pleased the Town Clerk has introduced a number of policies to ensure that we continue to meet best practice in local government. Amongst other things these include dedicated training plans and objective setting for all members of staff. These have been strongly endorsed by the Personnel Committee.

The challenge for 2022-23 is to build on these new appointments and ensure the new team works well so that it can deliver the best possible service to the residents of Biggleswade.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our members of staff for their hard work over the past year. It has been very much appreciated.

Cllr Jonathan Woodhead
Chairman Personnel Committee

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL - TOWN COUNCILLORS

As at 7th April 2022

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Russell , Cllr Mrs Madeline madeline.russell@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk 31 Ivel Gardens, Biggleswade SG18 0AN	Tel: 01767 312966	Ivel	Conservative
Strachan , Cllr Duncan duncan.strachan@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	Tel: 01767 225919	Holme	UKIP
Thomas , Cllr Colin colin.thomas@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk 11 Drove Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8HD	Mobile:0794 053496	Stratton	Conservative
Woodhead , Cllr Jonathan jonathan.woodhead@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk 21 The Baulk, Biggleswade, SG18 0PX	Mobile:07719 888476	Stratton	Conservative

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Cllr Ian Bond
Cllr Steven Watkins
Cllr Mark Foster
Cllr Dr Hayley Whitaker

MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES 2021/2022

The Chairman and Vice Chairman, ex-officio, shall be voting Members of every Committee, unless they signify that they do not wish to serve

TOWN COUNCIL	FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE	PUBLIC LANDS & OPEN SPACES	TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT	PERSONNEL
Cllr. M. Russell (Mayor)	Cllr. R. Pullinger (Chair)	Cllr. F. Foster (Chair)	Cllr. M. Knight (Chair)	Cllr. J Woodhead (Chair)
Cllr. G. Fage (Deputy Mayor)	Cllr. M. North (Vice Chair)	Cllr. C. Thomas (Vice Chair)	Cllr. G. Fage (Vice Chair)	Cllr. H. Ramsay (Vice Chair)
Cllr. M. North	Cllr. D. Albone	Cllr. K. Brown	Cllr. D. Albone	Cllr. C. Thomas
Cllr. D. Albone	Cllr. I. Bond	Cllr. G. Fage	Cllr. I. Bond	Cllr. M Foster
Cllr. M. Knight	Cllr. G. Fage	Cllr. M. Foster	Cllr. M. North	Cllr. F. Foster
Cllr. I. Bond	Cllr. M. Knight	Cllr. M. Knight	Cllr. R. Pullinger	Cllr. M Knight
Cllr. R. Pullinger	Cllr. H. Ramsay	Cllr. M. North	Cllr. M. Russell	Cllr. M. North
Cllr. F. Foster	Cllr. M. Russell	Cllr. M. Russell	Cllr. D. Strachan	Cllr. R. Pullinger
Cllr. M. Foster	Cllr. D. Strachan	Cllr. D. Strachan	Cllr. C. Thomas	Cllr. M. Russell
Cllr. C. Thomas		Cllr. R. Pullinger	Cllr. J. Woodhead	Cllr. D Strachan
Cllr. J. Woodhead	TOTAL = 9		TOTAL = 10	TOTAL = 10
Cllr. H. Ramsay		TOTAL = 10		
Cllr. D. Strachan			BIGGLESWADE JOINT COMMITTEE	APPEALS
Cllr. K. Brown			Cllr. M. Foster (Chair)	Cllr. K. Brown (Chair)
Cllr. L. Fage			Cllr. M. Russell (Vice Chair)	Cllr. I. Bond (Vice Chair)
TOTAL = 15			Cllr. M Knight	Cllr. D Albone
			Cllr. M North	Cllr. G. Fage
			Cllr. H Ramsay	Cllr. L. Fage
			Cllr. D Albone (Substitute)	TOTAL = 5
			Cllr. I Bond (Substitute)	
			TOTAL = 7	

COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RECORD BY COMMITTEE
29th April 2021 – 22nd March 2022

Councillor	Council Meetings 2021-22	Annual Statutory Meeting 2021	Biggleswade Joint Committee 2021-22	Finance & General Purpose 2021-22	Public Land & Open Spaces 2021-22	Town Centre Management 2021-22	Personnel 2021-22	Appeals 2021-22
Cllr M Russell (Mayor)	93.75%	100%	100%	80%	33.33%	80%	100%	
Cllr G Fage (Deputy Mayor)	93.75%	100%		80%	100%	100%		100%
Cllr D Albone	68.75%	100%	100%	80%		80%		100%
Cllr I Bond	93.75%	100%	100%	40%		80%		100%
Cllr K Brown	100%	100%			100%			100%
Cllr L Fage	50%	100%						0%
Cllr F Foster	100%	100%			100%		100%	
Cllr M Foster	81.25%	100%	100%		100%		100%	
Cllr M Knight	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Cllr M North	87.50%	100%	100%	60%	66.67%	100%	66.67%	
Cllr R Pullinger	87.50%	100%		100%	66.67%	80%	100%	
Cllr H Ramsay	81.25%	100%	100%	0%			100%	
Cllr D Strachan	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%	
Cllr C Thomas	100%	100%			100%	100%	100%	
Cllr J Woodhead	87.50%	100%				60%	100%	



MEETING DATES FOR 2022

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

DATES	TIME	MEETING
	2022	
4th January		
11th January	7.00 pm	Council
18th January	7.00 pm	Finance and General Purposes
20th January	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
25th January	7.00 pm	Council
1st February	7.00 pm	Public Lands & Open Spaces
8th February	7.00 pm	Council
15th February	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
22nd February	7.00 pm	Council
1st March	7.00 pm	Personnel
8th March	7.00 pm	Council
15th March	7.00 pm	Finance and General Purposes
22nd March	7.00 pm	Council
29th March		
5th April		
12th April	7.00 pm	Council
19th April	7:30 pm	Annual Assembly
21st April	2:30 pm	Biggleswade J C
26th April	7.00 pm	Council
3rd May		
10th May	7.00 pm	Annual Statutory Council
17th May	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
24th May	7.00 pm	Council
31st May	7.00 pm	Personnel
7th June	7.00 pm	Public Land & Open Spaces
14th June	7.00 pm	Council
21st June	7.00 pm	Finance & General Purposes
28th June	7.00 pm	Council

DATES	TIME	MEETING
	2022	
5th July		
12th July	2.30 pm	Council
14th July	7.00 pm	Biggleswade J C
19th July	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
26th July	7.00 pm	Council
2nd August	7.00 pm	Personnel
9th August	7.00 pm	Council
16th August		
23rd August	7.00 pm	Council
30th August		
6th September	7.00 pm	Finance & General Purposes
13th September	7.00 pm	Council
20th September		
27th September	7.00 pm	Council
4th October	7.00 pm	Public Land & Open Spaces
11th October	7.00 pm	Council
13th October	2:30 pm	Biggleswade J C
18th October		
25th October	7.00 pm	Council
1st November	7.00 pm	Council
8th November	7.00 pm	
15th November	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
22nd November	7.00 pm	Council
29th November	7.00 pm	Finance & General Purposes
6th December		
13th December	7.00 pm	Council
20th December		



MEETING DATES FOR 2023

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

DATES	TIME	MEETING
	2023	
3rd January		
10th January	7.00 pm	Council
17th January	7.00 pm	Finance and General Purposes
19th January	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
24th January	7.00 pm	Council
31st January	7.00 pm	Public Lands & Open Spaces
7th February	7.00 pm	Personnel
14th February	7.00 pm	Council
21st February	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
28th February	7.00 pm	Council
7th March		
14th March	7.00 pm	Council
21st March	7.00 pm	Finance and General Purposes
28th March	7.00 pm	Council
4th April		
11th April	7.00 pm	Council
18th April	7.30 pm	Annual Assembly
25th April	7.00 pm	Council
2nd May		
9th May	7.00 pm	Annual Statutory Council
16th May		
23rd May		
25th May	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL STAFF

Biggleswade Town Council Management Team			
Name	Job Title	Email Address	Telephone
Peter Tarrant	Town Clerk & Chief Executive	peter.tarrant@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07940 89085
Karim Hossenini	Head Of Governance & Strategic Partnership	karim.hossenini@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07508 76445
Wilma Solomon	Head of Finance & Planning	wilhelmina.solomon@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07904 63122
Jonathan Woolley	Public Realm Manager	jonathan.woolley@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07947 31350
Isaac Lord	Place Shaping Manager	isaac.lord@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07399 15198
Helen Calvert	Administration and HR Manager	helen.calvert@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	01767 13134
Town Council Office Staff			
Sian van der Merwe	Deputy Administration and HR Manager	sian.vandermerwe@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07376 89182
Alison Dennis	Administrator	alison.dennis@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07904 94491
Karen Saunders	Administrator	karen.saunders@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07376 89182
Tracii Thomson	Accounts Administrator	tracii.thomson@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07949 58434
Orchard Centre Staff			
Angela Thomas	Information Officer	angela.thomas@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07377 62466
Andrew King	Caretaker	andrew.king@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07552 69069
Tracy Hilton	Assistant Caretaker	tracy.hilton@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07946 42935
Public Realm staff			
Carl Rummey	Machine Operative	carl.rummey@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07552 69075
Tony Tyrell	Property Maintenance	tony.tyrell@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	01767 48021
Marsha Kenney	Operative	marsha.kenney@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	01767 48021
Ryan Chambers	Operative	ryan.chambers@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	01767 48021
Paul Manners	Operative	paul.manners@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	01767 48021
Ryan Wykes	Operative	ryan.wykes@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	01767 48021
Simon King	Operative	simon.king@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	01767 48021
Market staff			
Colin Keeble	Market Superintendent	colin.keeble@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk	07976 29624