

**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 19TH JANUARY at 14:30 PM**

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| Present: | BTC: Cllr M Russell (Deputy Chairman), Cllr H Ramsay, Cllr C Thomas CBC: Cllr M Foster (Chairman), Cllr I Bond, Cllr Dr. H Whitaker, Cllr T Stock BTC Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships: Karim Hosseini BTC Place Shaping Manager: Isaac Lord BTC Meetings Administrator: Funda Gumush |
| In Attendance: | CBC Community Engagement Manager: Sarah Hughes (via zoom) CBC Senior Community Engagement Officer: Stephanie Bailey (via zoom) CBC Principal Highways Engineer: Shahidullan Tarakhel (via zoom) CBC Public Transport Manager: Adrian Hardy (via zoom) |
| Members of the public: | None |

Following a reminder to Meeting attendees that this is a formal meeting, the 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 was being filmed and by being present attendees were deemed to have agreed be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Chair advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Chair asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

PART A – ADMINISTRATION

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. S Dixon
Cllr. M North
Mr. P Tarrant

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – None declared.
(b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – None declared

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

To adjourn for a period of 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Committee, through the Chairman, pertaining to items listed on the Agenda. Each speaker to be allocated a 3-minute speaking slot.

No member of the public was present.

4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. Integrated Care Board

Cllr M Foster read out a letter from the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (ICB) regarding the decision by GP Partners at Ivel Medical Centre to resign their current contract providing GP primary care services.

Cllr Stock confirmed that CBC were committed to delivering for an Integrated Health and Care Hub for Biggleswade.

It was noted that that the local MP had taken up the matter at Prime Minister's Questions.

Members were aware that letters would be sent to residents in the following week.

5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Members reviewed and **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Biggleswade Joint Committee Meeting of 13th October 2022.

6. MATTERS ARISING

None.

7. MEETING DATES 2023

The next meeting date is the 6th of April.

8. PART B – ECONOMY AND TOWN CENTRE

a. Highways Programme for Biggleswade

CBC Principal Highways Engineer, Shahid Tarakhel presented the report on behalf of Mark Eaton. In the presentation Mr Tarakhel pointed out that there were 7 footway schemes, 5 of which had been completed. The Stratton Way footway scheme was set to begin and finish in February. The Sandpiper Close footway scheme however has been deferred until next year. Other footway schemes would be added for the following year.

Mr Tarakhel pointed out that all carriageway schemes were now completed. The new Highways Term Service Contract was awarded to Milestone Infrastructure Limited, who will be delivering next year's structural maintenance programme for CBC.

With reference to Biggleswade Market Square, the report showed that four trees would be felled from the market square. The species of the trees and the timeline of replanting will be decided upon by Biggleswade Town Council.

b. Market Square Trees

Cllr Russell noted that the Town Council had recently met on the matter and resolved that a long gap period should be implemented between the removal of the 4 trees, the ground around the trees being made safe and the replanting of the trees. Any new trees should be replanted after strategic discussions on Market Square vision with CBC.

Cllr Russell noted concern on behalf of the Biggleswade Town Council, that CBC would not be considering the bus route impact on the transport interchange until the new financial year.

Once this is ascertained and how the bus exit routes will impact the Town Square, then it will be easier to determine where and how many trees are replanted.

The matter of Market Square Trees would be taken up by Town Council at their next meeting on Tuesday 24th February 2023.

Joint Committee Members agreed with the proposed trees gapping timeline.

9. **PART C – KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATES**

a. **Transportation Interchange Project**

A written report was submitted by CBC's Principal Project Manager, Nick Shaw.

Speaking to the Committee, CBC's Public Transport Manager, Adrian Hardy, provided an update of how buses would use the transport interchange once completed.

Mr Hardy indicated that some of the bus routes were contracted by Central Bedfordshire Council whilst others operated on a commercial basis. He added that discussions would be held with the commercial operators as to their timetables.

Cllr Russell pointed out that the issue lay with buses exiting the town square due to their size especially on Market days. Furthermore, the layout of bus stops was an issue as the older members of the public would find it difficult to get a bus at the Interchange due to distance from the Market Square.

Responding to the comments, Mr Hardy confirmed that CBC also wanted the buses to remain in the High Street and from speaking with various residents, noted their serious concerns about buses being removed from the Town Centre.

Commenting on the report, Cllr Russell indicated that once the Interchange project is completed by the end of March 2023 it would be beneficial to meet with Mr Shaw to discuss the closure of the bus exit lane for Biggleswade.

Cllr Whitaker commented that CBC will need to look at assets such as Century House to discuss their future use. It would be beneficial to ask Beverly Gaynor from CBC Place Making as Century House fell under Ms Gaynor's remit.

b. **Play Areas Project**

BTC Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships Karim Hosseini provided an update and indicated that the project at Franklins Recreation Ground play area began on Monday 16th January, noting that the majority of the play area is still open to the public.

Mr Hosseini pointed out that the work to remove existing play equipment was underway and digging for the new installations had begun. It was expected that the first suite of wooden equipment would be delivered by the end of January with the second suite of metal play equipment scheduled for mid-February 2023.

Mr Hosseini added that the new play equipment installation was expected to be completed by mid-March 2023.

c. **Drove Road Chapel Project**

Mr Hosseini explained that the Heras security fencing had been installed in November and that scaffolding was erected after this to provide access to the high-level works of the chapel.

Due to the cold weather however, scaffolding work was not finalised until the end of December. Mr Hosseini reiterated that this was a three-year project.

d. **Electricity Substation Project**

CBC Senior Community Engagement Officer, Stephanie Bailey presented on behalf of CBC Programme Manager David Fisher with regards to the Electricity Substation project. The report indicated that some delays had been experienced with the subcontractors but that works were largely on track.

e. **Lindsell's Bridge**

Ms Bailey presented the report on behalf of David Fisher and noted that the sale of land agreement for the bridge had now been signed. The programme of the works had been delayed and the intended bridge lift which was meant to take place at Christmas 2022 was cancelled. The ground-breaking ceremony was also thus cancelled.

The report continued that CBC were waiting for Network Rail's revised contingency programme to advise how extensive the works to the project's completion will be.

Cllr Bond indicated that the project was currently on hold to enable the widening of Furzenhall Road which would enable the cranes to bring replacement parts of the bridge.

10 PART D – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. **King's Coronation Event**

BTC Place Shaping Manager Isaac Lord presented the report and noted that officers continued to review communications from the Royal website to understand guidance for the event as well as reviewing other Town and Parish Council's plans.

Mr Lord noted that some Councils were forgoing any celebrations considering the cost-of-living crisis, whilst others were putting up outdoor cinema screens, dedicating memorials, and holding 'bring and share' tea events in their Town Centre.

Quotes have been obtained for an open-air cinema screen which are more than £10,000 in all instances.

The initial budget discussed was an indicative £5,000, but this needed agreement of Town Council.

Mr Lord indicated that Officers will be producing a report with recommendations for the Town Centre Management committee meeting, on 21st February 2023.

b. **Remembrance Day Event**

Mr Lord speaking about the Remembrance Day Event in November 2022, noted that the event was a success with many positives to take away.

A wash-up meeting was held with key stakeholders and issues relating to road closures, order of parade and visibility of St John's Ambulance will be considered for November 2023.

Mr Lord thanked to the various teams in CBC that supported in making this happen safely, such as Streetworks, Highways and the SAG.

11. **ITEMS REQUESTING ATTENTION BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

None.

12. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
6th April 2023

Meeting Closed at 3.30pm