



MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 27th SEPTEMBER 2022
AT 7.00PM AT BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE SG18 8DL



PRESENT:

Cllr G Fage (Chairman)
Cllr M Russell (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr I Bond
Cllr K Brown
Cllr F Foster
Cllr M Foster
Cllr M Knight
Cllr M North
Cllr R Pullinger
Cllr H Ramsay
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr C Thomas

Mr Peter Tarrant, Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Biggleswade Town Council
Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships
Mrs S van der Merwe – Administrator
Mr I Lord – Place Shaping Manager
Mr R Youngs – Finance Manager

Members of the Public – 6

Meeting Formalities:

Following a reminder to meeting attendees 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 to 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 that individual.

Before commencement of the Town Council Meeting, Members observed a two-minute silence in memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

22/0136.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr J Woodhead, Cllr L Fage, Cllr D Albone.

ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGIES

None.

22/0137.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

22/0137.1 Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

22/0137.2 Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

Cllr M Russell Item 11r – Planning Application: 17 Ivel Gardens
Cllr D Strachan - Item 17c: Exempt: Kings Reach S106

Cllr G Fage – Item 11q: Planning Appeal – 65 and 69 High Street

22/0138.0 TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

22/0138.1 Proclamation Ceremony – 11th September 2022

Following the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Cllr Fage read the Proclamation of the Accession on Biggleswade Town Square.

22/0138.2 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Service – 18th September 2022

Cllr Fage attended this commemoration service to celebrate the Queen’s life on 18th September 2022 at St. Andrew’s Church.

22/0138.3 Welcome Service – 31st August 2022

Cllr Fage attended a welcome service for Trinity Methodist Church’s new leader, Reverend Lesley Noon.

22/0138.4 Lord Lieutenant’s Thanksgiving Service – 4th September 2022

Cllr Fage attended the thanksgiving ceremony for outgoing Lord Lieutenant Helen Nellis at St. Mary’s Church in Bedford. Also in attendance was the new Lord Lieutenant Susan Lousada,

22/0138.5 St. Andrew’s Fete – 17th September 2022

Cllr Fage opened the Fete, which raised over £3,000 for charity.

22/0138.6 Cllr Fage wished to remind Members that the Mayor’s Charity Dinner will be hosted on 29 September 2022.

22/0138.7 Justice Service – 25th September 2022

Cllr Russell attended this service held at St. Paul’s Church in Bedford, hosted by Lady Jane Clifford, the High Sheriff of Bedford for 2022 - 2023.

Cllr Russell gave an informative breakdown of the history of the position of High Sheriff of Bedfordshire to Members and a description of the day’s events.

22/0138.8 Neighbourhood Plan Update

Arrangements are in place for the Referendum for the Neighbourhood Plan to take place on Thursday 6th October 2022.

22/0139.0 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public who wished to speak at the Public Open Session.

22/0140.0 INVITED SPEAKER

22/0140.1 Ms Rhiannon Barrow and Ms Jackie Fountain gave a short presentation accompanied by slides on their plans to establish a community garden for Biggleswade.

Cllr Knight asked if governance of the group has been considered. Ms Barrow confirmed they have begun the process of working towards a Community Interest

Organisation. Ms Barrow stated they will need some allocated land to start the project.

Cllr Foster recommended that the Community Interest Organisation should provide a clear governance and operations proposal for the Town Council to consider. Cllr Fage confirmed this could be reviewed once the Asset Register report has been completed.

22/0141.0 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- Cllr Strachan stated the recent reduction of Stagecoach bus services to Biggleswade is having a serious effect on transport for Biggleswade residents and businesses. Cllr Russell said Central Bedfordshire Council is in negotiations with Stagecoach and a further update can be given to the Town Council in the future. Cllr Fage invited Cllr Strachan to table an item at a future agenda once Central Bedfordshire Council publishes the outcome
- Cllr Knight asked for an update on the purchase of CCTV equipment. Mr Lord advised the supplier is processing the order. Further details around the delivery and installation date are likely to follow in the next week.

22/0142.0 MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

22/0142.1 From the Minutes of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting** held on **Tuesday 5th July 2022** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr Pullinger, Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee advised these Minutes were considered at a previous meeting and had no further comment.

22/0142.2 From the Minutes of the **Town Centre Management Committee Meeting** held on **Tuesday 19th July 2022** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr Knight, Chairman of the Town Centre Management Committee had no further comment.

22/0142.3 From the Minutes of the **Personnel Committee Meeting** held on **Tuesday 2nd August 2022** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr Ramsay, Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Committee had no further comment.

22/0142.4 From the Minutes of the **Town Council Meeting** held on **Tuesday 23rd August 2022** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

- Cllr Russell requested full listings against non-pecuniary declared by Members.
- Item 22/0129.1 - Neighbourhood Plan – change the word “accept” to “approve”.

Subject to these amendments these Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Meeting from 23rd August 2022.

22/0142.5 From the Minutes of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting** held on **Tuesday 6th September 2022** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

22/0142.5.1 Cllr Pullinger requested the Town Council consider the Grant Application from NHS Trust First Responders (Item 9a on the Agenda) towards the cost of a dedicated Biggleswade First Responder.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **APPROVE** a grant award of £2,560 to NHS Trust First Responders.

22/0142.6 Cllr Russell requested that Item 9b – Christmas Offer Budget (page 37) be updated to include the full recommendation as set out in the agenda.

22/0143.0 **MATTERS ARISING**

From the Minutes of the **Town Council Meeting of Tuesday 9th August 2022** held at 7:00 pm in the Town Council Offices at The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

22/0143.1 Cllr Knight commented that the Applicant for 19A High Street had proceeded to install a kitchen extraction system without planning approval from Central Bedfordshire Council. Mr Hosseini advised Members that Officers have written to CBC and are awaiting further information.

22/0144.0 **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

22/0144.1 **Standing Orders**

Mr Tarrant advised Members the Standing Orders need to be reviewed annually and recommends reaffirming the Standing Orders of 9th March 2021 be reaffirmed. The next review would then commence prior to April 2023 via a Working Group to consider if adaptations need to be made.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Standing Orders last updated 9th March 2021 are **ADOPTED** and that a review of the Standing Orders be carried out in March 2023, to be brought to a Council meeting in April 2023 in advance of the next Election.

22/0144.2 **Changes to Meetings – Informal Protocol**

Members voted on guidelines relating to informal meeting protocols.

Guideline 1:

It was **RESOLVED** that staff will always consult with attendees to find mutually convenient times and where practicable, informal meetings with members should be held at lunchtime and be hybrid in nature.

Guideline 2:

It was **RESOLVED** that the Community Engagement Group meetings will be reduced to once per quarter.

Guideline 3:

It was **RESOLVED** that reports should be given as read and the hybrid meeting attendance is offered.

Guideline 4:

It was **RESOLVED** that Minutes of meetings contain important context and decisions of the meeting.

Guideline 5:

It was **RESOLVED** that Planning Applications should no longer be printed out and placed on the board.

22/0144.3 Remembrance Sunday

Mr Lord advised the Town Council that the Remembrance Day Parade is impacted due to the Biggleswade Transportation Interchange Works currently underway. For previous Remembrance Parades participants used to gather in the parking area at the front of the station.

Members **NOTED** Officers' efforts for the parade's route to go ahead as usual and that it cannot go ahead given the necessary permissions have not been obtained due to the Interchange project work restrictions.

Members **AGREE** that Officers are to meet with the Remembrance Sunday stakeholders to agree a revised route.

22/0144.4 Warm Spaces

Members considered making some of the Town Council's assets a "warm space" for residents to use given the current cost of living increases.

It was **AGREED** that the Town Council would consider supporting the principle of a warm space for local residents to assist with reducing their bills.

22/0144.5 Allotments

Members considered the report from the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships relating to two additional amendments to the Allotment Terms & Conditions, following meetings with Biggleswade Allotment Association representatives and independent plot holders.

The amended Allotment Terms and Conditions were **APPROVED**.

22/0144.6 Schedule of Meetings

As a result of strategic meetings to be held to inform the Play Area project, Members are being asked to consider moving the next PLOS meeting from 4th October to 24th October.

Members considered the recommendation from the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships to change the date of the PLOS Committee meeting from Tuesday 4th October 2022 to Monday 24th October 2022.

It was **AGREED** that the PLOS Meeting of 4th October be moved to 24th October 2022.

22/0144.7 Resilient Highways Network

Central Bedfordshire Council are consulting on the list of roads across Central Bedfordshire that need gritting in adverse weather conditions.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council requesting that Stratton Way and Hitchmead Road be included in the list of roads to receive treatment under adverse weather conditions.

22/0144.8 Consultation – Draft On-Street Parking Management Strategy

Members considered Central Bedfordshire Council's Draft On-Street Parking Management Strategy.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council respond to Central Bedfordshire Council regarding this consultation as follows:

- The Town Council regrets that the Draft On-Street Policy appears to favour preventing residents from using their cars at a point where public transport is clearly under a lot of pressure and cannot meet current demand. If Central Bedfordshire Council does implement this Strategy, it needs to commit to providing a better bus service into and around Biggleswade than is currently in place.
- The Town Council does not support residents being prevented from parking near their homes where there is no off-street parking provision.
- The Town Council does not accept the need for pedestrianising all High Streets – this would be detrimental to businesses in Biggleswade Town Centre and the High Street in Biggleswade is the diversion route when the A1 is closed. All parking on Market Street is vital to disabled visitors to the Town Centre who need to access the pharmacy and high street stores.
- The Town Council recommends that the minimum width of all roads being built in Central Bedfordshire should be 5.5m to accommodate access to built up areas by emergency vehicles and other large-scale vehicles.

22/0144.9 Proposed variation of the Central Bedfordshire Council Rail Crossing Diversion Order 2022 – Biggleswade Bridleway No. 11

This revised variation order plans are **NOTED**.

22/0144.10 Pre-Planning Application Planning Consultation – Proposed Single Wind Turbine at Eyeworth Lodge Poultry Unit, Northfield Road, Eyeworth, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG7 5JL

It was **AGREED** to write to Central Bedfordshire Council to advise that the Town Council supports the principle of a wind turbine, but it has no further comments as the area is outside of the Town Council's parish.

22/0145.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

22/0145.1 CB/22/03238/FULL – Biggleswade Cadet Centre Land to the rear of Pegasus Court, Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0BB

Single story rear extension to Cadet Centre. Demolition of existing Air Cadet building and shooting range.

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

22/0145.2 CB/22/03360/FULL – 11 Tennyson Avenue, Biggleswade, SG18 8QD

Erection of single storey rear/side extension and partial conversion of existing garage into habitable space.

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 CBC in their deliberations.

22/0145.3 CB/22/02951 – 19 Elm Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8JJ

Erection of side boundary fence 2.14m in height.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECTS** to this planning application as the height of the fence is excessive and all the Highways Officer comments should be taken into consideration.

22/0145.4 CB/22/03217/FULL – 53 Beech Avenue, Biggleswade, SG18 0EQ

Proposed side two storey side extension to existing dwelling.

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

22/0145.5 CB/22/03455/FULL – 234 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8PJ

Install PVC Conservatory to the rear of the property.

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

22/0145.6 CB/22/02922 FULL – BP MFG Biggleswade, London Road, SG18 8PJ

Creation of an EV charging zone with 7 no. EV charging bays. Associated canopy, substation and LV panel.

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

22/0145.7 CB/22/02972/FULL – Land at the Rear of 49-51 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0AT

Erection of a one bedroom dwelling.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECTS** to this planning application with regards to out of keeping in the conservation area, overdevelopment and concerns of access onto Shortmead Street as set out by the Conservation officer and the Highways Officer.

22/0145.8 CB/22/03441/FULL – Stratton Upper School, Eagle Farm Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8JB

Erection of 255 no roof mounted photovoltaic solar panels and 9 no floor level air source heat pump units.

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

22/0145.9 CB/22/03438/FULL – Unit B, Normandy Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8QB

Extension to factory building to accommodate 4 additional units for flexible use comprising Class B8 (storage and distribution), B2 and Class E (g)iii (light industrial).

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application. There is a concern regarding the parking.

22/0145.10 CB/22/03385/FULL – 54 Saffron Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8DJ

Widening of existing vehicular crossover by dropping additional kerbs.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECTS** to this planning application in regard to the Highways Officer comments and to the scattering of the gravel onto the footpath.

22/0145.11 CB/22/03368/FULL – 36 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL

Listed Building: Repair and decorate exterior of building.

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

22/0145.12 CB/22/03556/FUL – Land Adjacent to 58 Lawrence Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0LU

Erection of a detached bungalow and associated works.

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

22/0145.13 CB/22/03467/ADV – Unit A, A1 Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8NE

Advertisement: 1 x illuminated built up letter flexface box sign main entrance 2 x illuminated built up letters on flex top hat totem, 1 x individually affixed letters to west elevation illuminated, 1 x individually affixed letters north elevation non-illuminated.

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

22/0145.14 CB/22/03668/FULL – 10 Broadmead, Biggleswade, SG18 8LF

Proposed porch to supplement existing ongoing build of a two storey side and single storey rear extension.

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

22/0145.15 CB/22/03636/FULL – 14 Mead End, Biggleswade, SG18 8JN

Single storey rear extension and two storey side extension.

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

22/0145.16 CB/22/03246/REG3 – Biggleswade Library, Chestnut Avenue, Biggleswade, SG18 0LL

Change of use from ancillary garage to a children's centre working space (Class E) including new fenestration and internal works.

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

22/0145.17 PLANNING APPEAL – CB/EN/22/0081 – 65 and 69 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JH

Erection of shutters on ground floor shop fronts.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council supports Central Bedfordshire Council's reasons as set out in the enforcement notice.

It is also to be noted that the adjacent properties are listed buildings.

The shop front is within the town conservation area which is protected within the Neighbourhood Plan.

22/0145.18 CB/TRE/22/00445 – 17 Ivel Gardens, Biggleswade, SG18 0AN

Works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order MB/09/00002/T5: reduce overall crown height of front Sycamore Tree by 2.5m and laterally by 1m as needed. Side branches over hanging garage to be shortened and thinned where appropriate.

The tree works application is **NOTED**.

22/0145.19 CB/TCA/22/00494 – Beaumont Park Nursing Home, Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0AT

Works to a tree within the Conservation Area: remove 4 leylandii Trees G1 to the front and remove Oak Tree T1 to the rear.

The tree works application is **NOTED**. There is a concern about taking down the whole Oak Tree unless it is diseased.

22/0146.0 PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES

This report was **NOTED**.

22/0147.0 ACCOUNTS

22/0147.1 Financial Administration

Members received and **APPROVED** the Accounts up to 31st July 2022 as follows:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31/07/2022.
- ii. Summary Income and Expenditure by Committee 31/07/2022.
- iii. Detailed Income and Expenditure by Committee 31/07/2022.
- iv. Lloyds Bank Payment listing 31/07/2022.

22/0147.2 Financial Administration

It was **AGREED** to **DEFER** the review of the Accounts for August 2022 to the next Town Council meeting.

22/0148.0 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

22/0148.1 ASDA Car Parking Time Reduction

Members considered the current status of the time limits of ASDA parking being reduced from 2 hours to 1.5 hours.

Cllr North recommended that the Town Council contact CBC Ward Councillors to ask what they are doing to mitigate this situation.

Cllr M Foster recommended that the Town Council get clarification about what the planning rules are in relation to whether planning permission is needed in order to charge for car parks.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council Planning Team:

- a) that the reduction of parking time for Biggleswade town centre shoppers at its car park is not in keeping with the original agreement.

It was **RESOLVED** that a second letter is sent to ASDA's Head Office and the Biggleswade Chronicle.

An action for Councillors to follow up at a later stage that any charge for parking spaces needs planning permission.

22/0148.2 Public Notice – Temporary Closure – Biggleswade Footpath No. 39

This Public Notice is **NOTED**.

22/0148.3 Public Notice – Temporary Closure – Biggleswade Footpath No. 21

This Public Notice is **NOTED**.

22/0148.4 A1 Roadworks this Autumn – East Region Transportation National Highways

This letter was **NOTED**.

22/0149.0 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

22/0149.1 Mr Tony Reynolds

Mr Reynolds asked about traffic flow for buses and larger vehicles along station road and Palace Road in light of current building works for the Transportation Interchange. Cllr Fage confirmed that Station Road/Saffron Road junction will be a formal T-junction after the works are completed.

Cllr Russell confirmed that when the works are completed there will be a 20mph speed limit on the Bond Street/Station Street junction and the parking on the side of the road will be reduced as a zebra crossing will be installed, with the usual zig zag restrictions implemented to support the crossing.

It was **RESOLVED** that Item 16a be **MOVED** to be discussed in the Public Open Session.

Capital Reserves Prioritisation:

Mr Tarrant advised the Town Council that the Town Council's lawnmower needs replacing.

Options for replacement are:

- a) Option 1: Draw down elements of the Capital Reserve and outright purchase the lawnmower, subject to adhering to financial regulations. Because of the amount of money involved, this would need to go out to Tender on the Crown Procurement Framework.
- b) Option 2: Take out a 4-year lease of the same machine at a cost of £1,300 plus VAT per month, net cost £62,400; or
- c) Option 3: Take out a loan from the company selling the lawnmower, £1,600 plus VAT per month or net £76,800.
- d) Cllr North asked for clarification on whether the lease includes maintenance, Mr Hosseini confirmed it does.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) This item is **DEFERRED** pending Officers drawing a detailed specification for a tender inviting suppliers to cater for various lease or purchase methods and including details relating to service packages, then publishing the tender through the Crown Procurement Framework;
- b) A decision should be made after completion of the tender with assessment based on the net cost to the Council for the Budget year 2023-2024.

22/0150.0 **EXEMPT**

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

- (b. Fire Safety Risk Assessment)
- (c. Kings Reach S106)
- (d. Finance Function Resourcing)
- (e. Hay Review)

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.

22/0151.0 **EXEMPT**

22/0151.1 **Fire Safety Risk Assessment**

Members made recommendations around the report as follows:

It was **RESOLVED** that a) Officers proceed to implement fire safety upgrade works and; b) Officers implement an enhanced fire safety culture (testing, visits, user acceptance, and documentary audit trail) across all assets to build high assurance.

It was **RESOLVED** to allocate an extra £3,314 for corrective works to nine Town Council Assets and to consider any further allocation as part of the wider budget setting for 2023/2024.

22/0151.2 **Kings Reach S106**

It was **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** the recommendations as follows:

1. Officers proceed to immediately appoint a specialist s106 law firm (supplier C).
2. Officers accept the consultant proposal related to sports and other open spaces, surveys and commuted sums calculations.
3. Officers include expenditure on the legal budget and consultancy fees as growth items in the 2023-2024 budget.
4. In due course Officers stipulate to the developer that the project legal fees and consultancy costs be settled by the developer from the final agreed settlement amount.

22/0151.3 Finance Function Resourcing

It was **RESOLVED** to create the post of Assistant Accountant and to delete the post of Head of Finance & Planning. The Council's establishment list will be updated accordingly.

22/0151.4 Hay Review

This item was **DEFERRED** to the 11th October 2022 Town Council Meeting.

The Chairman ended the Meeting at 9:55pm