



MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 8th NOVEMBER 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 D Albone
Cllr I Bond
Cllr K Brown
Cllr L Fage
Cllr F Foster
Cllr M Foster
Cllr M Knight
Cllr M North
Cllr R Pullinger
Cllr H Ramsay (via Zoom)
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr C Thomas

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships
Mr J Woolley – Public Realm Manager
Ms H Calvert – Administration & HR Manager
Ms F Gumush – Meetings Administrator

Members of the Public – 0

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.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr J Woodhead.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Biggleswade and District Art Society

On Sunday 6th November 2022, Cllr G Fage had the pleasure of attending the Biggleswade and District Art Society Show at the Weatherly Centre. Cllr G Fage informed the Council that it was a good event with a great turn out, and there was plenty of opportunity to speak with local artists and members of the Society. Cllr G Fage stated that as this was a district event, many from Stevenage, Hitchin and further attended.

b. Biggleswade Town Council Christmas Dinner

Cllr G Fage reminded Councillors of the Christmas dinner for staff and Members at Stratton House on Friday 9th December. Cllr Fage encouraged Members to send through their meal selections to the Administration Team.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Mr Tony Reynolds, Biggleswade

Mr Reynolds welcomed the approach by the Council regarding the signage of parking in ASDA car park (Item 13a).

Item 13c - Mr Reynolds questioned where the bus stops are going to be placed on the High Street.

Cllr G Fage, responding to Mr Reynolds, stated that the Town Council have proposed the conversion of certain parking bays in the High Street and are waiting to hear if Central Bedfordshire Council's Highways Department would approve of this proposal.

5. INVITED SPEAKER

No guest speaker was invited.

6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

None.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

Cllr F Foster pointed to a mistake with wording on the minutes of 25th October on item 22/0172.1 which said, 'to resort make to the previous minuting method'. The line should read 'revert back to the previous minuting method'.

Cllr Fage requested that the word 'the' should be taken out of the following sentence 'was raised in aid of the humanitarian charities'.

Cllr F Foster indicated that the item 22/0175.2 Bus Route Proposal was repeated on page 8 and page 9.

Cllr G Fage requested that the following sentence for item 22/0175.2 Bus Route Proposal is clarified from: 'Cllr G Fage, and additional line needs to refer Asda to Central Bedfordshire Council for the S106 documentation' to 'Cllr Fage noted that the Council refer back to the original S106 agreement stating the parking parameters'.

Cllr F Foster requested that item 22/0175.1 take the letter 't' off the word 'yes'.

Subject to these amendments these Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Council Meeting held on 25th October 2022.

8. MATTERS ARISING

None.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. CCLA account

The Finance Manager presented the CCLA Account report.

Members unanimously **APPROVED** the recommendations within the report and **RESOLVED** that Member signatories remain the same as those listed on the existing bank account.

b. Council and Committee Minute Numbering

Cllr Russell proposed that the numbering of minutes revert to the previous minuting method.

The proposal to revert to the previous way of numbering was **APPROVED**.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. CB/22/03012/Full – 19A High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JE

Change of use to pizza restaurant (Class E) and food delivery only (sui generis) with extraction system.

Cllr Knight raised several issues relating to this application:

- Further to the Town Council's comments in the letter dated 5th September 2022, previous strong objections stand - specifically on noise from the extraction facility and operating hours between 11am-11pm 7 days a week. This will be highly intrusive for adjacent residents.
- The proposed change of use will lead to a considerable increase in vehicular traffic to the property. Delivery drivers to the rear would be forced to reverse onto Church Street which is a one-way road. This will pose a danger to highway and pavement users.
- Lack of access to parking spaces at the rear and inability for parked vehicles to pass is likely to mean that vehicular traffic will park illegally on Church Street.
- There is inconsistency in the applicant's paperwork.

Cllr Knight said that, in the event this application was approved, the Town Council should request that Central Bedfordshire Council enforce parking restrictions on the High Street as per operating hours of the business.

Cllr Knight proposed that the Town Council re-state all previous objections strongly with the addition of increased traffic problems to the property and highlight the inconsistency in the paperwork with a high risk in there being a takeaway service.

Cllr Albone seconded the proposal and indicated that the Council had not seen a new Pollution Officer's Report.

Cllr M Foster raised concerns of a hazard to other vehicles due to the takeaway service at the property and added that this needed to also be included within the Council's objection.

The proposal was **APPROVED**.

b. **CB/EN/21/0226 – PLANNING APPEAL 4-12 Thames Bank, Biggleswade**

Change of use of highway grass verge to residential garden.

All representations must be received by 6th December 2022.

Cllr Russell commented on the appeal letter to Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and proposed that the Town Council support CBC's position on the alleged breach of planning control on the land. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Knight.

Cllr M Foster pointed to the issue of shared space, as there was a concern that if the land was not being looked after by developers, residents were keener to look after it themselves. Cllr M Foster added that it was important to support CBC as it may set a precedent in other areas of the development.

The Council **RESOLVED** to support CBC's position.

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

This report was **NOTED**.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

No accounts were available for approval.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Asda Car Parking Restrictions**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships informed Members that a letter had been sent to Asda as well as their Property Division and the Council are now awaiting a response.

Cllr F Foster stressed that receiving no response from Asda was unacceptable and called for serious action to be taken ahead of the Christmas period.

Cllr Brown suggested that direct action such as a petition and a protest outside of Asda should be made as this would draw the attention of the media.

It was **RESOLVED** to write urgently to CBC's Planning Enforcement Department as well as writing separately to Asda's CEO.

It was agreed that this item be included on the next agenda.

b. **Back Street and Station Road Interchange**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships informed Members that no response had been received from CBC yet. Members were reassured that as soon as any information is received this would be disseminated.

The Town Council **RESOLVED** to write to the Principal Project Manager at CBC with regards to the road closures.

c. **Bus Route Proposal**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships said Officers received a holding response from CBC to the letter sent earlier this month.

The update was **NOTED**.

It was agreed to include this item on the next Council agenda.

d. **Remembrance Parade & Service**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships, on behalf of the Place Shaping Manager, confirmed that all those involved in the Parade & Service have been briefed.

The Council is waiting for confirmation from CBC and Highways on correct directional signage.

e. **Public Notice – Temporary Closure – Biggleswade Footpath No 24**

This notice was **NOTED**.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

a. **Mr Tony Reynolds, Biggleswade**

Mr Reynolds expressed concern regarding cyclists using the railway bridge alongside pedestrians and electric scooters being used in town and should be disallowed as well.

Cllr Albane commented that the signage on the bridleway is insufficient and could be improved.

Cllr Pullinger stated electric scooters are only meant for private use and not on highways and this was a matter for law enforcement.

b. **Cllr Hayley Whitaker**

Cllr Whitaker informed members that CBC are waiting to hear from the contractors regarding works at Station Road and Back Street.

Cllr Whitaker commented on the Asda car parking issue and said that in the S106 Agreement, Article 9.4.2 it states, *“At not less than 12 monthly intervals, Safeway (Asda) shall consult with the Council regarding the use and operation of the carpark, taking notice of the Council's observations”*. Cllr Whitaker suggested that this would be good grounds for the Council to take this further with Asda and CBC.

Cllr G Fage called for this note to be added to the minutes and to be included in any correspondence with Asda and CBC.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Play Area Report**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships presented the report on the Play Areas project on Franklins Recreation Ground.

The preferred supplier provided a 3D walk-through video of their plan which was viewed by Members. The company confirmed full installation of the play area by 31st March 2023.

Members noted CBC Section S106 funding may be available for use in this project.

Members agreed to use the colouring presented in the company's proposal, with brighter colours towards the north side of the area and more subdued colours towards the rear.

Members **RESOLVED** to proceed with the preferred supplier Playdale RJ Warren and obtain a final reduced list of equipment with a final cost which will be below the indicative £192,696.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the colour palette as best recommended by the supplier.

It was **RESOLVED** that Officers investigate alternative funding methods aside from PWLB funding.

The Council **RESOLVED** to decide on detailed landscaping and funding sources at a future meeting.

Meeting closed at 8:45 pm