



Ref: Agenda/Council – 25/04/2023

20th April 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

All Members of the Town Council are hereby summoned to the Council Meeting of Biggleswade Town Council that will take place on **Tuesday 25th April 2023** at the **Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade** commencing at **7:00pm**, for the purpose of considering and recommending the business to be transacted as specified below.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Peter Tarrant", written over a horizontal line.

Peter Tarrant
Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Distribution: All Town Councillors
Notice Boards
The Press

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

- a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.
- b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.

3. **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, pertaining to matters listed on the Agenda.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HbqUbKXkSpy3hv5b7O4COW

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman, prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed **(one) three-minute slot**.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

No guest speaker.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. For Members to receive the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 11th April 2023** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. For Members to note the Minutes of the Biggleswade Joint Committee meeting held on **Thursday 19th January 2023**.
- c. For Members to note the Minutes of the Public Land & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on **Tuesday 31st January 2023**.
- d. For Members to note the Minutes of the Town Centre Management Committee meeting held on **Tuesday 21st February 2023**.
- e. For Members to note the Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on **Thursday 23rd February 2023**.
- f. For Members to note the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on **Tuesday 21st March 2023**.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 11th April 2023**.

9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Bicycle Hire Proposal Report**

For Members to receive and consider a report by the Place Shaping Manager.

b. **Amendment to Council Meeting Dates**

For Members to receive and consider a report by the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships.

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

You can view details of applications and related documentation such as application forms, site plans, drawings, decision notices and other supporting documents for planning applications on the Central Bedfordshire Council website. Click on the hyperlink (electronic copy) on the heading of each planning application listed below.

a. **CB/23/01107/FULL - 8 Ivel Gardens, Biggleswade, SG18 0AN**

Alterations to front porch.

b. **CB/23/00223/ADV - 36 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL**

Advertisement: wall mounted, illuminated logo signs to High Street and Victoria Place elevations.

c. **CB/23/01093/FULL - 45 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JF**

Installation of bird point spikes and a steel mesh access gate.

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

- a. A report of the Planning Application Outcomes (by exception applications only) as of **17th April 2023**.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Internal Audit – Final Report 2022-23**

For Members to consider the Internal Audit final report for the 2022/23 financial year. The report to be considered prior to the adoption of the Accounts and the AGAR.

b. **Accounts & AGAR for the year ended 31st March 2023**

i. For Members to approve and adopt the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the 2022/23 financial year.

ii. For Members to approve and adopt the Accounts and Statement of Accounts contained in the Annual Return for the 2022/23 financial year.

The electoral rights of inspection of accounts will begin on Monday 5th June 2023 and end on Friday 14th July 2023 consistent with Sections 25 to 27 of the Local Audit and Accountabilities Act 2014. Public Notices will be issued on Friday 2nd June 2023.

All financial documentation needs to be forwarded to Mazars (the Council's External Auditor) by Thursday 30th June 2023.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Closure of the central reservation gap on the A1 at Upper Caldecote**

For Members to note the correspondence from National Highways.

b. **Pre-Consult to upgrade of Footpath No. 12 Biggleswade**

For Members to note the correspondence from Central Bedfordshire Council.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, in respect of any other business of the Town Council.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HbqUbKXkSpy3hv5b7O4COw

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed **(one) three-minute slot**.

15. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

a. (Provision of Gas Contract).

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

MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 11th APRIL 2023
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 F Foster
Cllr M Foster
Cllr M Knight
Cllr M North
Cllr R Pullinger
Cllr H Ramsay
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr C Thomas
Cllr J Woodhead

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships
Mr R Youngs – Finance Manager
Ms F Gumush – Meetings Administrator

Members of the Public – 1

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 L Fage.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

Cllr J Woodhead for Item 10d as a resident of The Baulk.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Community Interest Company

On Sunday 2nd April Cllr G Fage attended a performance by the Community Interest Company at the Weatherly Centre. The performance was called Imagination Dance and the company covers Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and Cambridgeshire.

Cllr G Fage indicated that the company offers opportunities for those who face challenges such as children with learning challenges, the elderly and those with dementia.

Cllr G Fage noted that it was a well-attended performance, and he was impressed with how the children performed in front of the crowds.

b. Committee Meeting Minutes

Cllr G Fage requested that any outstanding minutes from the various Committees should be submitted for approval to the Council ahead of the elections in May.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No member of the public wished to speak.

5. INVITED SPEAKER

Mr Tom Leeming, Tritax Symmetry

Mr Leeming provided an update on the development proposal for the land at Springfield Bungalow and Stratton Farm Cottages, London Road, following the Council's consultation responses to Central Bedfordshire Council.

Mr Leeming explained the details of the S106 Agreement with Central Bedfordshire Council and fully addressed all the concerns of the Town Council referring to the letter which was included in the agenda pack.

The Town Council **AGREED** to formally discuss the application again under Item 10 Planning Applications, and subject to the applicant following through with the proposed actions, the Town Council is prepared to remove its objection to the application.

The Town Council discussed with Mr. Leeming the Community Benefit Fund which Tritax has established and which has generated over £50,000 from Phase 2 for local community projects and will generate more through the development of Phase 3.

Members suggested that a panel similar to the wind farm be established with representation from both CBC and the Town Council, noting that the fund would solely be for Biggleswade.

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Cllr Strachan asked if there were further details with regards to 7th May 2023 - Coronation Big Lunch. Officers were asked to email Members with emerging details.

Cllr Woodhead raised the matter of the recent installation of EV Charging Points in The Baulk Car Park and asked if the restrictions requested by the Town Council were being implemented.

Cllr Bond pointed out that the matter had recently been discussed at Traffic Management and he would be briefing Members on the outcomes.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

P9 – Item 8 Matters Arising – Second paragraph should read ‘that the informal meeting’ not ‘informed meeting’.

P10 – Item 9d – Resolution should read OBJECT rather than REJECT.

Subject to these amendments the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on 28th March 2023.

8. MATTERS ARISING

Cllr Strachan asked if there were any updates with regards to CCTV footage on vandalism at Franklins.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that the police had not yet generated a crime reference number despite Officers efforts.

Cllr Strachan pointed out it was unacceptable that a crime reference number had not yet been generated and the matter needed to be urgently addressed.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Preparation for Annual Statutory Meeting

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive who presented the report noted that preparations were being made ahead of the Annual Statutory Meeting and discussions with Members of the Working Group were held on possible amendments to the key documents.

Members pointed to minor amendments to the documents to ensure consistency.

Members also suggested that when preparing Induction Packages for Town Council Members that input from existing Members would be beneficial.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations to adopt the revised Scheme of Delegation, existing Standing Orders, as amended on 8th March 2022, and revised Financial Regulations, subject to standardisation of terminology, of the documents.

Members also **RESOLVED** to note the Town Council’s intention to revisit the Standing Orders and produce a Risk Management Policy.

b. Second Interim Internal Audit Report 2022/2023

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive presented the report and pointed out that this was the second interim report from the current auditor, with the third and final visit planned on Friday 14th April.

Members **NOTED** the report and extended thanks to Officers for their speedy release on the work.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/22/04252/FULL – Land at Springfield Bungalow and Stratton Farm Cottages London Road, Land at Bridleway 58 to the south of Dunton Lane and Land to the south of Stratton Business Park, Gold Road, Biggleswade (Symmetry Park Phase 3)**

The Town Council agreed to formally discuss the application again following a presentation by Mr Tom Leeming. The Town Council's decision is that, subject to the applicant following through with the proposed actions, the Town Council is prepared to **REMOVE THE OBJECTION** to this application.

- b. **CB/23/00745/FULL – 12 Wiseman Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8LN**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.

- c. **CB/22/01990/FULL - Land west of Salcombe Close Biggleswade**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.

- d. **CB/23/00489/FULL - The Red Lion, 1 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8ED**

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the grounds of safety.

The current use of the building is listed as a public house and there is currently no other application to change the use of the building.

The Council believes that access to and from the building is dangerous due to its position being opposite a junction and on a cycleway. There is also no clarity over deliveries being made there.

The Council suggests that if a planning application is put forward to change the use of the building, access arrangements should also be included in this application.

- e. **CB/23/00900/FULL - 4 Stoneland Avenue, Biggleswade, SG18 0EA**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.

- f. **CB/22/04410/FULL – 29 Lilac Grove, Biggleswade, SG18 8TP (Planning Appeal)**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.

- g. **CB/23/00864/FULL – Biggleswade Baptist Church, 24 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EB**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

This report of 29th March 2023 was **NOTED**.

Members discussed that an application for 17 Market Square had been approved on 31st March 2023, despite an objection by the Town Council.

Officers were asked to write to CBC with regards to this application and draw attention to the fact that the approval was not consistent with the Design Guide and the Neighbourhood Plan and noting the urgency given the impending decision on a similar application for 8 High Street.

Officers were asked to point out that 'the locations are within the Biggleswade conservation area, and the plans are out of character, visually disruptive to the street scene, and non-compliant with CBC design principles as listed in the CBC Design Supplement 6: Shopfronts and Signage, section 5.04 E'.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

March 2023 accounts were not available for this agenda.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

There were no Items for Information.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No one from the public wished to speak.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Commissioning of Utilities**

Members discussed the report by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive which explained the most cost-effective quotation for both gas and electricity.

It was noted that the contract for gas is valid until the end of April 2023, whilst the electricity contract runs out at the end of June 2023.

Members **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** the decision in selecting a gas provider for the next Town Council meeting in order to ensure all the data is up to date and verified.

Members **NOTED** the limitations of the 24-hour spot price quotes.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **8.50pm**

**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**

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 would be concluded.

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 a project 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 agreement of 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

MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE PUBLIC LAND AND OPEN SPACES
MEETING HELD TUESDAY 31 JANUARY 2023
AT 7.00PM AT BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE, SG18 8DL

PRESENT:

Cllr M North (Chairman)
Cllr C Thomas (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr K Brown
Cllr G Fage
Cllr M Russell
Cllr F Foster
Cllr M Foster
Cllr M Knight
Cllr R Pullinger
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr J Woodhead

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships (via Zoom)
Mr J Woolley – Public Realm Manager
Ms F Gumush – Meetings Administrator

Members of the Public – 0

Meeting Formalities:

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

3. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Biggleswade Allotments Association Meeting

Cllr North explained that the Biggleswade Allotments Association (BAA) held a meeting on Thursday 26th January 2023. Cllr North noted that the meeting was amicable and added that the BAA wished their thanks to be recorded to Town Council for the noticeable improvements made to the allotment site.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No member of the public wished to speak.

5. INVITED SPEAKER

No guest speaker was invited.

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Cllr Woodhead extended his thanks to the Public Realm Team for ensuring the Commonwealth War Grave signs were installed at Drove Road Cemetery. Cllr Woodhead noted the signs were smart and drew public attention and hoped that in the forthcoming months a dedication ceremony in liaison with the Royal British Legion could be organised.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

No amendments were made to the Minutes which were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Public Land and Open Spaces Meeting held on Tuesday 24 October 2023.

8. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matter arising.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Play Areas Project Update

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships informed Members that additional to the report submitted, the project will be entering its second year as of April 2023 of its five-year plan.

The four areas in the report, namely Brunel Drive, Berkeley Close, Playfield Close, and Poppyfield 2 were identified as needing to be regenerated both in play equipment, and landscaping.

The Public Realm Manager indicated that the play equipment specification in the report was a base specification and it was expected that tenderers would come forward with a holistic approach.

Members noted that much of the play area equipment needed regeneration at Brunel Drive.

Members also added that it was important to be strategic with play areas and concentrate investment on areas where the parks would be used more frequently such as Brunel Drive and Kitelands.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships informed Members that the tender process was dependent on the application of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive informed Members that a detailed report would be presented to Town Council regarding the PWLB.

Members **AGREED** to **NOTE** the progress made to date on Franklins Recreation Ground.

Members also **AGREED** to focus on Brunel Drive Park and Kitelands Park as strategic areas, and consider funding for those, with further consideration of smaller sites in due course.

b. **Allotments Improvement Project**

Members were informed that the Allotments Improvement Report was recently discussed at the BAA meeting.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that the allotment holders' observations were largely positive adding that they looked forward to the layout of the new proposed half plots and believed the south facing plots were better for growing.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive indicated that there was a high demand for allotment plots and hoped that in the future there would be alternative space for a variety of different reasons.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive also underlined that no PWLB monies were being used for this project and it was due to the work of the Public Realm Team.

Members **AGREED** to accept the recommendations of the report which stated Officers use the existing allotments budget allocation to spend an indicative £935 on the project to deliver lasting improvements.

c. **Football and Terms & Conditions Policy Review**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships who presented the report in the absence of the Place Shaping Manager, noted that the main change made to the Terms & Conditions was the inclusion of the new online booking system.

Members requested that several items such as key holder information, booking by other clubs, and points of contact would need amendment.

Members **AGREED** to bring the policy, with amendments, to the next Town Council meeting.

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Linear Wood and Saxon Gate Pocket Park**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships informed Members that Officers were waiting to hear back from Central Bedfordshire Council about progress on a new lease for the park.

It is expected that a new draft lease would be presented to Council in April.

Members **NOTED** the update.

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No member of the public wished to speak.

12. **EXEMPT**

a. **Kings Reach Estate S106 Project**

A discussion was held and Officers are awaiting a response from the Consortium. It is expected that detailed work will be required for a meeting in April.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **7.53pm**

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2023
AT 7.00PM AT BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE, SG18 8DL**

PRESENT:

Cllr M Knight – Chairman
Cllr D Strachan – Vice Chairman
Cllr D Albone
Cllr I Bond
Cllr G Fage
Cllr M North
Cllr M Russell
Cllr C Thomas
Cllr J Woodhead

Mr Karim Hosseini, Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships
Mr Isaac Lord, Place Shaping Manager
Ms Funda Gumush, Meeting Administrator

Members of the Public – 1

Meeting Formalities:

Following a reminder to meeting attendees 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 may infringe the Data Protection Rights of that individual.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr R Pullinger.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

3. **CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a. **Vandalism at Franklins Recreation Ground**

Cllr Knight indicated that an urgent item was to be added to the agenda regarding vandalism at Franklins Recreation Ground. Cllr Knight noted that the item would be discussed as the last item under Items for Information.

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No one from the public wished to speak.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

None.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Cllr Strachan noted that following the felling of the four trees in the Market Square, several residents had voiced serious concerns over the future of the Square and inquired as to what communicate had been released over the felling.

Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships responded that no information had yet been released but noted that Officers would be doing so.

Cllr G Fage indicated that following the relaunch of the Market Square after COVID lockdown ended, investment had been made into rebranding for the Square. Having visited the Market several times recently Cllr G Fage noted that he had not seen any of the rebranding signs.

The Place Shaping Manager responded that Officers were instructed by a senior CBC Officer to remove the signage above Century House due to the pigeons and the cleaning but added that Officers would be looking at this matter again.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

Members noted that resolutions which read 'It was RESOLVED by the Town Centre Management Committee that...' were too many words and should be corrected as 'It was RESOLVED that...'.

Subject to these amendments the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18 October 2022.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr Woodhead asked whether Officers had been successful with investigating the official ownership of the War Memorial and Victorian Water Fountain on the corner of High Street and Station Roads.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships explained to Council that the matter was still under investigation and Members would be duly informed.

Cllr G Fage inquired about Item 10a Bus Routes on the Minutes and whether Officers had any updates with regards to the matter.

The Place Shaping Manager indicated that Central Bedfordshire Officers Transport Officers were still in discussions with the bus operators and would be giving Biggleswade Town Council Officers feedback soon.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Market Square Vision Update

Members discussed the written report by the Place Shaping Manager and welcomed that the Chief Executive of Central Bedfordshire Council recently suggested that Senior Officers of Biggleswade Town Council and CBC meet regularly to progress talks with regards to the Market Square.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships responded to say that BTC Officers would be attending a meeting with CBC in June this year.

Members **RESOLVED** to review the draft Biggleswade Town Centre Masterplan at one half-day workshop with Members and Officers goal being to produce a list of specific aspirations in the context of:

- a vision for the Market Square specifically including what happens if and when bus exit lanes can close,
- what happens to Century House,
- where trees should be replanted,
- broader conversations about the Town Centre and Market Square layout.

b. The Biggs Eat

Members discussed the report by the Place Shaping Manager which was based on a previous report presented at the Town Centre Management Committee meeting in October recommending a monthly food truck event coined 'The Biggs Eat'.

It was noted by Members that having events in the Town Centre on days where the footfall was lower was more advantageous to the Market Square and surrounding businesses. Members added that in the warmer months different days could also be looked at.

In terms of financing Members urged Officers to tidy up the Terms & Conditions so that there was no ambiguity with regards to how profits are calculated.

Members **RESOLVED:**

- to proceed with the 'Bigg Eats' name rather than 'Biggs Eat',
- hold the event bi-monthly on a Thursday and not Wednesday throughout 2023.

c. Street Food Heroes

Members discussed the report by the Place Shaping Manager. Noting a resolution was passed in the previous item regarding the establishment of Bigg Eats event, there would be no need for any more Street Food Heroes events for 2023.

Members **REJECTED** the proposal to enter into a new agreement with Street Food Heroes.

d. **Busker & Street Performers Code of Conduct**

The Place Shaping Manager presented the report to Members and noted that this was a voluntary code of conduct as busking was not within the Council's jurisdiction, but it was within the jurisdiction of CBC.

The Place Shaping Manager added that the Council encouraged performers to sign up as it would build a positive relationship between the industry and the Council that could be used for future events.

It was also noted that BTC does not presently own a suitable noise metre and any busker wishing to collect money is punishable against Section 3 of the Vagrancy Act 1824. Selling merchandise without the correct license from CBC is punishable against the Local Government Act 1982.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the Code of Conduct subject to:

- the removal of paragraph 5 of the Terms & Conditions relating to decibel limits as it was a repetition,
- removal of 'set-up within 50m of another busker/performer' and adding 'only one busker at a time',
- amplification of instruments that require amplification like keyboards should not be disallowed,
- following the implementation of the Code of Conduct as adopted for a trial period, bring the Code of Conduct back to the next Town Centre Management Committee meeting for review.

e. **Commemorative Plaques, Benches & Memorials Policy**

The Place Shaping Manager presented the report and added that the estimated cost of purchasing a plaque would cost £50, the estimated cost of purchasing the bench would be £299. The estimated cost of maintaining the bench over 15 years, assuming 5% inflation, would be £1,800.

Members **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** the policy to the Town Council subject to wording included around:

- the approval of the final location of the benches at the discretion of officers,
- approval of the final wording is at the discretion of officers,
- changes to the wording around who accepts liability if something happens to the bench,
- £100 donation to the Mayoral Charities.

f. **Footfall Monitoring Devices**

Members discussed the report by the Place Shaping Manager which was based on a previous report to the TCM last year to defer a decision around the proposal to introduce footfall monitoring devices in the Town Centre.

The Place Shaping Manager indicated an amendment to the recommendation should be changed to reflect that Officers should ask whether S106 funding could be used. He added that if not the project can proceed this financial year with £4000 drawn from the election provision allocation as a by-election is highly unlikely before the 31st of March 2023 with the remaining £1000 being absorbed from general budget.

Members noting the report indicated that the proposed coverage area of the Market Square was too small an area to cover at a high cost.

However, it was also noted that it was an activity the Council and Central Bedfordshire Council should look at doing at some point in time.

Members proposed to **DEFER** the proposal for now but instruct Officers to find out if S106 monies could be used for this recommendation.

g. **The King's Coronation**

The Place Shaping Manager presented the report and added that BTC Officers had completed an application to the National Lottery for funding for this event and were waiting to hear back.

Members discussed the report, underlined the importance of ensuring that the public were aware that the event was going to take place.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept Officer recommendations to proceed with a Coronation Big Lunch on the Market Square on Sunday 7th May.

Members **AGREED** to form a small Working Group to include the Place Shaping Manager to proceed with the organisation of the event.

h. **Christmas Light Switch-on Planning**

Members discussed the report by the Place Shaping Manager.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations by Officers to undertake an online survey with residents to understand their views for the event.

Members **RESOLVED** to proceed with pulling together quotes for all categories to present at the next TCM meeting.

Members **AGREED** not to have a Santa's Grotto this year.

Members **AGREED** for Officers to urgently source other options for lighting now that there were less trees in the Market Square and in other areas where lighting is limited.

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **CCTV Update**

Members discussed the response received by Central Bedfordshire Council and underlined that CCTV was more than necessary now considering the increased vandalism in Biggleswade.

Members **NOTED** the letter.

b. **Vandalism at Franklins Recreation Ground**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships indicated that since the project began at Franklins Recreation Ground, vandalism has taken place on three occasions which caused some damage to the fencing and portable toilet. He noted that minimal damage to fencing and some wood play equipment had also occurred on another occasion and recently quite a lot of damage to the wood play equipment and to the installation works. This has been reported to Police with a crime reference number obtained.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships indicated that the Contractor has temporarily halted the installation works stating that the vandalism has caused 2-3 weeks of installation delays due to the need to re-dig the multiple holes and trenches which were filled in, and re-prepare the surfaces for matting beneath play equipment.

The Contractor is calling for site security to be introduced to preserve the play equipment, the installation and the delivery timeline. As it stands, he can no longer guarantee 31st March deadline for completion of the works.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships pointed out that Officers would be presenting a report to Town Council on the 28th of February 2023 with options to address the vandalism to be funded by the Public Works Loan Board.

Members **AGREED** to bring the item to the agenda of Town Council on 28th February 2023.

c. **Q3 Crime Statistics**

Members discussed the report by the Place Shaping Manager.

Members **PROPOSED** to put forward concerns to the Bedfordshire Police with regards to criminal damage to property as a priority and have more adequate policing on unsocial behaviour and vandalism.

Members **NOTED** the Q3 Crime Statistics and asked Officers to inquire with the police to get a better understanding of the increase and nature of assaults seen in the statistics.

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

- a. No one from the public wished to speak.

12. **EXEMPT**

- a. There were no exempt items for discussion.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **8.35pm**

MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2023
AT 7.00PM AT BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES,
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE SG18 8DL

PRESENT:

Cllr J Woodhead (Chairman)
Cllr H Ramsay (Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Russell
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr C Thomas

Mr P Tarrant - Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Miss H Calvert - Administration & HR Manager
Mrs S van der Merwe – Deputy Administration & HR Manager

Members of the Public - 0

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 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 F Foster, Cllr M Knight, Cllr M North, Cllr M Foster, Cllr R Pullinger.

ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGIES

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

- a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item - None.
- b. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item - None.

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

4. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. The Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 1st November 2023** were **APPROVED**.

5. MATTERS ARISING

None.

6. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **HR Policies**

i. **Overtime & Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) and Unsociable Hours Policy**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive reiterated that the constant point of reference with regard to all policies for the Town Council is the NJC Conditions of Service.

The Personnel Committee **RESOLVED** that a rider should be added to the beginning of all Personnel-related policies to make it clear a) they have been drafted in line with NJC Conditions of Service and on employment advice given by the Town Council's independent HR Advisor, and b) that NJC-related conditions will be inserted in bold (as they have been in the Standing Orders), but only when Policies are due for reviews. Subject to these amendments, the Overtime & Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) and Unsociable Hours Policy is **APPROVED**.

ii. **Information and Data Protection Policy**

Members requested the wording of the Policy be amended to read:

The Personnel Committee requested the following change to the wording of the Policy: "The Town Council will be pleased to make special arrangements on request for persons with hearing or sight difficulties."

The Personnel Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Information and Data Protection Policy subject to the changes recommended above.

iii. **Remote Working Policy**

The Personnel Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Remote Working Policy subject to the following conditions:

- All remote working requests are to be approved by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships in his absence.
- That employees are able to work from home on a temporary ad-hoc basis and based on the needs of the service.

iv. **Travel & Subsistence Policy**

The Personnel Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Travel & Subsistence Policy subject to the following changes:

- The current HMRC rate for travel expenses be specified as being 45p per mile.
- Include that expenses do not apply to employees travelling to and from work.
- All expense requests are to be pre-approved by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive, or in his absence by the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships.
- All expense requests are to be signed off by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive, or in his absence by the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships.
- That Council vehicles are not to be used for employees to travel to and from home.

v. **Disclosures and Barring Policy**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Expenses Policy subject to the following changes:

- Ensure the policy ties in with specifications set out in the Town Centre Lost Child & Vulnerable Adult Policy regarding which staff need DBS.

7. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

None.

8. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

9. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

The following resolution will be moved that it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt items are discussed.

(10a. HR Updates)

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

10. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

a. **HR UPDATES**

Members received an update on a variety of HR related matters.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.02pm

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
MEETING ON TUESDAY 21st MARCH 2023 AT THE OFFICES OF
BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4
SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE COMMENCING AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT:

Cllr R Pullinger (Chairman)
Cllr M Foster (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr D Albone
Cllr I Bond
Cllr M Knight
Cllr M North
Cllr M Russell
Cllr D Strachan

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships (via Zoom)
Mr R Young – Finance Manager
Mr I Lord – Place Shaping Manager
Ms F Gumush – Meetings Administrator

Members of the Public – 0

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 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 G Fage.

NO APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr H Ramsay.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had no announcements.

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No member of the public wished to speak.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

No guest speaker was invited.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Cllr Knight indicated on 6th March he had read that the Biggleswade Town Council had begun a Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) consultation of up to £325,000 on their social media page.

Cllr Knight also noted that on 18th March he had read on the Town Council's social media page about recent fraudulent incidents at Council car parks.

In both instances Cllr Knight asked if the F&GP Chairman had been notified of either of these cases and wondered if social media was the correct forum for Members to be informed of them.

The F&GP Chairman responded to confirm that he had not been informed in advance of either of these social media posts or the incidents in the car parks. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive responded to the matter regarding the PWLB and noted that he believed Members had been briefed with regards to the consultation.

The Place Shaping Manager responding to the fraudulent activities indicated that Town Council Officers were aware and had informed the Police with regards to the issue.

Cllr Russell asked if any signs had been put up at the car parks to warn people not to engage with anybody with regards to ticket purchasing to which the Place Shaping Manager indicated that it could be done.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive observed that it was good practice to ensure that any and all Council social media postings and/or significant events are properly highlighted to Members.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

No amendments were made to the minutes.

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 17th January 2023.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **New Grants Policy**

Members discussed the report by the Finance Manager.

Several amendments were suggested on the policy:

- Under Important Dates to remove the words 'each January'.
- Change the word 'in accord' to 'in accordance'.
- Change the financial year to 2023-2024 for the new policy.

Subject to these amendments Members **RESOLVED** to accept the new grants policy as laid out.

b. **The Orchard Community Centre Hire Agreement**

Members discussed the revised hire agreement written by the Place Shaping Manager.

Several amendments were suggested to the Hire Agreement:

- Point 8 - to read 'should not overstay' rather than 'cannot overstay'.
- Point 8 - to read 'Any instances when' rather than 'Any instances in which'.
- Point 12 - has a typo 'Council' rather than 'Council'
- Point 25 - to read 'although reasonable effort' rather than 'although every effort'.
- Point 30 – Health and Hygiene should not be in capitals.
- Point 32 – remove 'children under eight years of age' and add "and other relevant legislation after the words "Children Act 1989".
- Point 34 – anyone should read 'any one'.
- The last point should be point 35 not point 23.

Subject to these amendments Members **RESOLVED** to accept the policy as laid out.

c. **Energy Broker Update Report**

The Finance Manager indicated that the Town Council gas contract with Osso Gas, is up for renewal at the end of April 2023. He added that the Town Council's electricity contract with Opus Energy also runs out at the end of June 2023 therefore an appropriate broker was needed to obtain market-relevant rates.

Members noted that a comparative paper of quotes received for brokers would have helped them to make an informed decision.

The Finance Manager indicated that as each broker offered a different service to the other, having a comparative table was not straight forward.

The Chairman observed that prices and quotes could be sourced by Officers as the Council only owned two premises which used gas.

Members **AGREED** to **DEFER** the report for the next Town Council meeting.

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Finance Review Update**

The Finance Manager indicated that good progress had been made as the financial year draws to a close. He pointed out that by the beginning of August the remaining five recommendations from the financial review will have been completed.

Members **NOTED** the report.

b. **Unity Trust Bank Update**

The Finance Manager who presented the report, noted that the cash encashment facility had now been moved from St Neots to Huntingdon because the St Neots branch is now closed.

Following Members queries regarding cash payments, The Finance Manager indicated that cash withdrawals were only needed every two months to source petty cash.

Members **NOTED** the report.

c. **Virements Quarterly Report**

Members **NOTED** the report.

d. **Finance Department Major Work Q1**

Members **NOTED** the report.

Cllr Russell also noted that she looked forward to new Management Accounting arrangements and hoped that the next F&GP Committee meeting of the new Council would set out exactly what the management accounting arrangements would be.

e. **General Insurance Policy Renewal**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships who briefed the Members pointed out that Officers had met the BHIB Broker in early March. The BHIB Broker pointed out that the market is very challenging at present and sent a renewal quote of £24,000.

The broker also confirmed that no other quotes had been forthcoming with two large insurers declining to submit quotes.

The Council's Insurance Broker covers 70% of the Town Council Marketplace and is a recognised specialist in the field. It is their expert belief that due to current circumstance; no additional quotation can be sourced. This is due to current market conditions.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships indicated that a report would be submitted to 28th March Town Council meeting with a recommendation that Members agree to suspend financial regulations and proceed with the recommended quote at £24,000. The latest quote was not a significant increase when compared to current inflationary pressures and in the opinion of the Broker represented good value for money.

Members **NOTED** the report.

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No member of the public wished to speak.

12. **EXEMPT**

a. **Fire Safety Compliance Update Report**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that Officers had worked hard to deliver Town Council fire safety compliance across its nine assets.

Members both **WELCOMED** and **NOTED** the report.

b. **Risk Management Update Report**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that Officers have been implementing the new risk framework across the business as per the existing external auditor's recommendation.

Officers thanked Members for their inputs.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive asked that Officers reach out to Members and offer a separate meeting to explain the detailed context behind the new risk tool. This will add to Members understanding as the new framework does not lend itself to being easily printed.

Members **RECOMMENDED** that the new risk framework and management approach is adopted at the next Town Council meeting on the 28th of March 2023.

c. **Telephony Convergence Contracts Update Report**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that quotes received from suppliers were bespoke and not directly like for like due to suppliers' different service provision. Members noted that the information provided was not sufficiently clear to make a decision and requested that a more comprehensive report is provided to compare the current provision with that proposed, including a review of the differing needs for different staff roles.

Members **NOTED** the report and **DEFERRED** the decision to Town Council on 28th March 2023.

d. **Selection of New Auditor Report**

The Finance Manager indicated that following a recent Finance Review it was recommended that as good practice, a new auditor was needed.

Officer's sourced quotes from several large companies and submitted their findings to Members.

Members **APPROVED** the recommendation of the Finance Manager to accept quote three.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **8.20pm**

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Council
25th April 2023
Bicycle Hire Proposal Report

Implications of Recommendations:

Corporate Strategy: **ENVIRONMENT:** Work with BRCC and Central Bedfordshire Council on the wider development and management of the Green Infrastructure Plan.

Finance: Not applicable.

Equality: Accessible cycling for lower-income families.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

Officers have previously presented reports on the bicycle hire scheme to Council, with the latest version discussed on 28th March 2023. Members resolved to defer a decision until a more detailed rationale could be provided by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) on their reasons for changing the initial outlay of the scheme.

Summary

Officers met with CBC colleagues on 13th April 2023 to discuss the scheme in further detail and requested they share their rationale behind the decisions on final proposed locations over email. Information provided has been summarised below.

The scheme operators would like to have 'bicycle start locations' at Dan Albone car park, Saxon Gate Leisure Centre, Kings Reach and Grasmere Road. Only four 'start locations' have been selected as the scheme operates a total of twelve bicycles and scheme operators would not want them spread too thinly as users may then become confused whether a bicycle has been docked temporarily or is available for use. Grasmere Road has been favoured over the Lakes Recreation Ground site as the former is overlooked by residential properties, whilst the latter is not and therefore is more prone to vandalism. Grasmere road is also favoured by the BRCC.

Bicycle 'docking locations', which appear in the digital application but will not have physical signage, will include the railway station, Franklins Recreation Ground and the Town Centre all using existing infrastructure. The scheme operators will monitor usage data for start and docking locations throughout the pilot to potentially adjust the offer over time.

CBC intend to install bikes on the 5th May with online communications published on the same day, followed by a full press release on 9th May.

Recommendations

For Members to agree:

- For CBC to proceed with the bicycle hire scheme at the locations set out in the report using BTC-owned land including Dan Albone car park, Grasmere Road and Franklin's Recreation Ground.

Isaac Lord
Place Shaping Manager

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Council Meeting 25th April 2023
Town Council Meetings Calendar Proposed Changes Report

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate strategy: ENGAGEMENT: Improve our engagement with all stakeholders, including hard-to-reach groups.

Finance: Not Applicable

Equality: Not Applicable

Environment: Not Applicable

Community Safety: Not Applicable

Background

The Town Council on 28th February 2023 approved the current meetings calendar (attached Appendix A).

Summary

Officers have scrutinised the meetings calendar and are suggesting a couple of changes to meetings (Appendix B) as follows:

- Currently there are back-to-back Town Council meetings on 20th June and 27th June 2023. The 20th June 2023 Town Council meeting should move to the 13th June 2023 to maintain the two-weekly rhythm between meetings.
- The F&GP Committee on 5th September 2023 should move to the 19th September 2023. This will ensure sufficient time for the grants applications to be processed.
- The PLOS Committee on 30th January 2024 should swap dates with the Town Council meeting on 23rd January 2024. This will ensure sufficient time for the budget precepts work to be delivered between the F&GP Committee on 16th January 2024 and the Town Council on 30th January 2024, in the event that changes are required to the precept delivered to F&GP.

Recommendation

That Members consider and resolve:

- The Town Council meeting should move from the 20th June 2023 to the 13th June 2023.
- The F&GP Committee should move from the 5th September 2023 to the 19th September 2023.
- The PLOS Committee on 30th January 2024 should swap dates with the Town Council meeting on 23rd January 2024.

Karim Hosseini

Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships

Appendix A: The Town Council on 28th February 2023 approved the current meetings calendar.

Appendix B: Recommended Meetings Calendar.



MEETING DATES FOR 2023

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

DATES	TIME	MEETING
25 th April	7.00 pm	Council – Planning Applications Meeting
9 th May		
16 th May	7.00 pm	Annual Statutory Council
23 rd May	7.00 pm	Council
25 th May	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
30 th May	7.00 pm	Personnel
6 th June	7.00 pm	Public Land & Open Spaces
13 th June	7.00 pm	
20 th June	7.00 pm	Council
27 th June	7.00 pm	Council
4 th July	7.00 pm	Finance & General Purposes
11 th July	7.00 pm	Council
13 th July	2:30 pm	Biggleswade J C
18 th July	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
25 th July	6:30 pm	Council
1 st August	7.00 pm	Personnel
8 th August	7.00 pm	Council
15 th August		
22 nd August	7.00 pm	Council
29 th August		
5 th September	7.00 pm	Finance & General Purposes
12 th September	7.00 pm	Council
19 th September		
26 th September	7.00 pm	Council
3 rd October	7.00 pm	Public Land & Open Spaces
10 th October	7.00 pm	Council
12 th October	2:30 pm	Biggleswade J C
17 th October	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
24 th October	7.00 pm	Council
31 st October	7.00 pm	Personnel
7 th November	7.00 pm	Council

14th November		
21st November	7.00 pm	Council
28th November	7.00 pm	Finance & General Purposes
5th December		
12th December	7.00 pm	Council
19th December		
26th December		

MEETING DATES FOR 2024

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

DATES	TIME	MEETING
	2024	
2nd January		
9th January	7.00 pm	Council
16th January	7.00 pm	Finance and General Purposes
18th January	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
23rd January	7.00 pm	Council
30th January	7.00 pm	Public Lands & Open Spaces
6th February	7.00 pm	Personnel
13th February	7.00 pm	Council
20th February	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
27th February	7.00 pm	Council
5th March		
12th March	7.00 pm	Council
19th March	7.00 pm	Finance and General Purposes
26th March	7.00 pm	Council
2nd April		
9th April	7.00 pm	Council
16th April	7.30 pm	Annual Assembly
23rd April	7.00 pm	Council
30th April		
7th May	7.00 pm	Annual Statutory Council
14th May		
21st May	7.00 pm	Council
23rd May	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
28th May	7.00 pm	Council

“* Biggleswade Joint Committee Meeting dates are subject to change subject to CBC scheduling.

**MEETING DATES FOR 2023****MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND**

DATES	TIME	MEETING
25 th April	7.00 pm	Council – Planning Applications Meeting
9 th May		
16 th May	7.00 pm	Annual Statutory Council
23 rd May	7.00 pm	Council
25 th May	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
30 th May	7.00 pm	Personnel
6 th June	7.00 pm	Public Land & Open Spaces
13 th June	7.00 pm	Council
20 th June	7.00 pm	
27 th June	7.00 pm	Council
4 th July	7.00 pm	Finance & General Purposes
11 th July	7.00 pm	Council
13 th July	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
18 th July	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
25 th July	6.30 pm	Council
1 st August	7.00 pm	Personnel
8 th August	7.00 pm	Council
15 th August		
22 nd August	7.00 pm	Council
29 th August		
5 th September	7.00 pm	
12 th September	7.00 pm	Council
19 th September		Finance & General Purposes
26 th September	7.00 pm	Council
3 rd October	7.00 pm	Public Land & Open Spaces
10 th October	7.00 pm	Council
12 th October	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
17 th October	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
24 th October	7.00 pm	Council
31 st October	7.00 pm	Personnel
7 th November	7.00 pm	Council

14th November		
21st November	7.00 pm	Council
28th November	7.00 pm	Finance & General Purposes
5th December		
12th December	7.00 pm	Council
19th December		
26th December		

MEETING DATES FOR 2024

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

DATES	TIME	MEETING
	2024	
2nd January		
9th January	7.00 pm	Council
16th January	7.00 pm	Finance and General Purposes
18th January	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
23rd January	7.00 pm	Public Lands & Open Spaces
30th January	7.00 pm	Council
6th February	7.00 pm	Personnel
13th February	7.00 pm	Council
20th February	7.00 pm	Town Centre Management
27th February	7.00 pm	Council
5th March		
12th March	7.00 pm	Council
19th March	7.00 pm	Finance and General Purposes
26th March	7.00 pm	Council
2nd April		
9th April	7.00 pm	Council
16th April	7.30 pm	Annual Assembly
23rd April	7.00 pm	Council
30th April		
7th May	7.00 pm	Annual Statutory Council
14th May		
21st May	7.00 pm	Council
23rd May	2.30 pm	Biggleswade J C
28th May	7.00 pm	Council

“* Biggleswade Joint Committee Meeting dates are subject to change subject to CBC scheduling.

OUTCOME OF CBC DETERMINED PLANNING					
Address	Application No.	Committee date	BTC Decision	Description	Central Beds Outcome/DATE
2019					
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/04301/OUT	14/01/2020	Strongly Object - does not comply with NPPF and various other comments made against the Applicant	Outline Application: planning permission with all matters reserved except for access for the development of the land situated north of Biggleswade, east of the ECML railway to provide for up to 406 dwellings including affordable housing; green infrastructure accommodating landscaping, allotments, community orchard, public open space, children's playspace; new roads, car parking, cycleways and footways; associated infrastructure; including a sustainable drainage system; vehicular access to be secured from Furzenhall Road.	Awaiting Decision
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/02827/PAPC	08/09/2020	Strongly Object - For reasons set out in previous correspondence Council also agreed that Cllr G Fage would be appointed to represent BTC and to speak at the Development Management Committee Meeting. It was resolved that the draft letter be approved, and that letter and the previous letter of objection be sent to the named planning officer and to the general planning address. Further, that a shorter version be circulated to Members of the CBC Development Management Committee for information.	Development Brief relating to residential scheme of around 400 dwellings at land north of Biggleswade, with access taken from Furzenhall Road.	No details as at 05/10/2022. PAPC applications are Private enquiries submitted before Planning Applications and only available to the Applicant/Agent that submitted them
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/04301/OUT	24/08/2021	Separate correspondence for this application has been sent to the Planning Officer, Nikolas Smith, as agreed with Council. Strongly Object - Due to: 1) Inadequate access to the site. 2) Severe Highways impact at Sun Street/Shortmead Street junction. 3) Severe Highways impact at Drove Road/London Road junction. 4) Exaggeration of site sustainability. 5) Reduction in Public Rights of Way. 6) Disruption to irreplaceable Archaeology.	Outline Application: planning permission with all matters reserved except for the development of the land situated north of Biggleswade, east of the ECML railway to provide for up to 416 dwellings including affordable housing; green infrastructure accommodating landscaping, allotments, community orchard, public open space, children's play space; new roads, car parking, cycleways and footways; associated infrastructure, including a sustainable drainage system; vehicular access to be secured from Furzenhall Road.	Awaiting Decision
Dunton Lane, Stratton Park Drive	19/02839/VOC	08/10/2019	No Objection	Variation of Condition no.1 on Planning Permission MB/83/456 "Renewal of Planning Permission for caravan park on a permanent basis" to state that the total number of caravans shall not exceed twenty-two at any time.	Awaiting Decision

2020					
Biggleswade Road, Land East of	20/00959/OUT	28/04/2020 and 11/08/2020, 13/10/2020	No Objection - provided the following points are considered: 1) Dunton Lane is upgraded. 2) The speed limit from Saxon Drive be reduced from the current 60 mile per hour to 40 miles per hour. 3) The necessary facilities be provided for pedestrian footpath and cyclist pathway. 4) Adequate access for Motorists to the A1.	Outline application: seeking Planning Permission for up to 1,500 dwellings (use Class C3) and up to a 2ha of commercial development dwellings (use Class C3) and up to a 2ha of commercial development (use Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1a,bc,B2, B8) up to 5ha of primary school development (class D1) and up to 4ha of other leisure and community development (Use Classes D1 and D2) up to 61 ha of open space including play space, allotments and a country park, infrastructure including site access, internal roads, car parking, footpaths, cycle ways, drainage and utilities. Subject to Environmental statement.	See Below
2021					
Shortmead Street, 130	21/02886/FULL	21/09/2021	No Objection - provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations. Also, 1) Clarification of the extent of F1(a) use is required; 2) To limit education use of the premises to current use; 3) There are concerns about the limited parking.	Change of Use of a building from the existing mixed E(a) and Sui generis (hot food takeaway; A5), to primarily E(a) Use Class with an ancillary E use class and F1(a) educational use.	Awaiting Decision

2022					
A1 Retail Park, Unit E, London Road	22/03121/VOC	13/12/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to the variation of condition for Unit E. The original condition was put in place to protect the town centre and should stand.	Variation of Condition 20 of planning permission CB/14/01181/VOC (Variation of Condition 20 of planning application No. CB/14/01109/VOC dated 11/06/2014 to allow up to 5% of the ground floor area of any one single unit only to be used for the sale of food and to allow a pharmacy to operate from part of the unit. Wording of the condition to be amended to:" The development hereby approved for the units referred to as A, B, D, E, F,G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Homebase, 1 & 2 as shown on plan no. 8659 P02 Revision W shall be used for A1 (retail) but shall not be used for the sale of food, as a post office, for the sale of tickets, as a travel agency, for hairdressing, for the direction of funerals, for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired, as an internet café where the primary purpose of the premises is to provide facilities for enabling members of the public to access the internet or as a pharmacy, except for Unit B, which can be in part used as a pharmacy and can sell food in up to 5% of its total ground floor area") - The variation is to increase the range of permitted goods that can be sold from the premises to facilitate reoccupation of the floorspace by incoming tenant, Poundland. Previously on Council Agenda 22/03121/VOC on Council Agenda 23/08/2022. Outcome as Town Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to the variation of condition for Unit B. The original condition was put in place to protect the town centre and should stand.	Awaiting Decision
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/04301/OUT	22/11/2022	Town Council Strongly Objects and called to move the item to EXEMPT agenda.		Report from Transport Consultants to be submitted to Council for discussion before sending to CBC.
Land at Bonds Lane and Foundry Lane	22/04159/VOC	22/11/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council has NO OBJECTION to the variations to this planning application. However, the Town Council does OBJECT to the variation regarding changes to cycle storage due to new proposals being less accessible.	CB/18/02353/FULL on Council Agenda - Variation of condition numbers 11, 13, 16, 17 and 19 in respect of planning permission CB/18/02353/FULL (Demolition of existing vacant and derelict buildings and erection of 50 residential apartments with associated vehicular access, car and cycle parking, refuse storage and landscape). Variation sought to new plan numbers and substitute previously approved drawings for condition 19.	Awaiting Decision

London Road, Unit E, A1 Retail Park	22/03121/VOC	23/08/2022	Town Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to the variation of condition for Unit B. The original condition was put in place to protect the town centre and should stand.	Variation of Condition 20 of planning permission CB/14/01181/VOC (Variation of Condition 20 of planning application No. CB/14/01109/VOC dated 11/06/2014 to allow up to 5% of the ground floor area of any one single unit only to be used for the sale of food and to allow a pharmacy to operate from part of the unit. Wording of the condition to be amended to:" The development hereby approved for the units referred to as A, B, D, E, F,G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Homebase, 1 & 2 as shown on plan no. 8659 P02 Revision W shall be used for A1 (retail) but shall not be used for the sale of food, as a post office, for the sale of tickets, as a travel agency, for hairdressing, for the direction of funerals, for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired, as an internet café where the primary purpose of the premises is to provide facilities for enabling members of the public to access the internet or as a pharmacy, except for Unit B, which can be in part used as a pharmacy and can sell food in up to 5% of its total ground floor area") - The variation is to increase the range of permitted goods that can be sold from the premises to facilitate reoccupation of the floorspace by incoming tenant, Poundland.	Awaiting Decision
Salcombe Close, Land West	22/01990/FULL	28/06/2022	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> that the Town Council would like to <u>PROVISIONALLY OBJECT</u> to this planning application pending provision of the following information: 1) further information is required on the sizing of mounds and elevations in the play area; 2) the potential effect of the proposed lighting on the existing neighbours on Sale Mews; and 3) information on why the CCTV is not under variations to conditions.	Flatten the existing mounds in the play area, install lighting columns, and improve the perimeter fence.	Awaiting Decision
Shortmead Cottage, Shortmead Lane	22/01860/FULL	28/06/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this planning application.	Erection of new dwelling with a detached annexe.	Awaiting Decision
Springfield Bungalow & Stratton Farm Cottages Land, land at bridleway 58 to the south of Dunton Lane and land south of Stratton Business Park	22/04252/FULL	13/12/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds of traffic congestion on the A1 south but note that if Officers are minded to pass this application then Biggleswade Town Council would like to see Section 106 money related to speeding, access to the A1, leisure facilities and in terms of sustainable transport to the Town Centre in terms of buses.	Demolition of 3 existing dwellings and the construction of 3 B8 units, together with associated access, vehicle parking, landscaping, and all other ancillary works.	Awaiting Decision
Potton Road, Land at former Scaffolding Depot	22/02691/FULL	08/09/2022	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> that the Town Council <u>OBJECTS</u> to this planning application as•The traffic impact on Furzenhall Road and Potton Road. •There are too many dwellings hence overdevelopment. •Loss of residential parking on Winston Crescent. •Properties would be very close to the railways line which will lead to noise pollution for residents. The Town Council notes that the Highways Officer has objected.	Erection of ten dwellings and the conversion of an existing building into two one bed flats.	Awaiting Decision
2023					
Arnold Rise, 11, Biggleswade, SG18 8UF	23/00010/FULL	28/03/2023	The Town Council has no objection to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments	Converting part of an existing garage into a small office with new window to the rear.	Awaiting Decision
Biggleswade Baptists Church, 24 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EB	23/00864/FULL	11/04/2023	The Town Council has no objection to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Erection of a wooden shed/workshop and retention of two existing sheds.	Awaiting Decision

Biggleswade, Land North of	19/04301/OUT	10/01/2023	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds of the letter circulated in the Town Council agenda pack, which must be sent to Senior Central Bedfordshire Council Officers, and attaching with it the Transport Consultants' Review.		Awaiting Decision
Dhillion Farm, Dunton Lane,	22/04966/FULL	14/02/2023	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.	Erection of palisade fencing and CCTV/lighting columns	Awaiting Decision
Drove Road, 36	23/00238/FULL	14/02/2023	The Town Council OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds that the application is different from its first application in 2019 and there is not an up to date transport and traffic survey.	Erection of 3 no. dwellings. Demolition of a single storey side and rear extension to existing dwelling	Awaiting Decision
High Street,8, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL	22/04939/ADV	14/03/2023	The Town council objects to the planning application on the grounds that - a. The building is in a conservation area. No consideration has been given to this in the application. b. It is visually disruptive to the street scene. And c. It is inconsistent with the Central Bedfordshire design principles.	Advertisement: sign 1 - 1 x Internally illuminated fascia, sign 2 - 1 x internally illuminated fascia, sign - 3 1 x internally illuminated fascia, sign 4 1 x IIPS wall mounted projection sign DS internally luminated, sign 5 - 2 x Double sided illuminated poster display unit, sign 6 - 2 x window vinyls, sign 7 - 1 x window vinyl, 8 - 2 x window vinyls	Awaiting Decision
Holme Crescent, 2, Biggleswade, SG18 8DA	23/00744/FULL	28/03/2023	The Town Council object to this planning application on the grounds of overdevelopment.	Demolition of existing garage & erection of a two-storey dwelling.	Awaiting Decision
Land off Drove Road, adj to 1A Drove Road	23/00003/DOC	24/01/2023	The Town Council STRONGLY OBJECT to the discharge conditions on this application as Council would like to see the conditions in place ahead of any planning approval.	Discharge of Conditions 6,8,9,11,12,13 and 21 against planning permission CB/22/00575/FULL (Erection of 5 dwellings with associated car park, access road and amenity space and proposed stopping up of the highway)	Discharge of Condition Decision Released
Land north of Lindsell's Level Crossing, Biggleswade	22/04935/ VOC	24/01/2023	The Town Council NOTED the shorter ramps and changes to right of way; however Council STRONGLY OBJECT, as they have done previously in August 2022, as this will present even less landscaping.	Variation of condition 8 of planning permission CB/21/02168/FULL: Construction of new ramped and stepped bridleway bridge to facilitate the closure of Lindsell's level crossing; formation of new bridleway to western side of railway and associated works. Revised Plans	Variation of Condition - Granted
Land adj to Furzenhall Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0ES	23/00691/TDM	14/03/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments. However, the Town Council noted that they OBJECT to the telecommunications mast being moved closer to homes in the area. The Council believes the planning application, which currently shows the location of the mast, is the best possible situation for its location.	Telecommunications Determination Masts: Installation of a 22.5m high monopole supporting 6no. antennas and 2no. 300mm dishes along with 4no. ground based equipment cabinets within a 6m x 6m compound and development ancillary thereto.	Awaiting Decision
Lilac Grove, 29, Biggleswade, SG18 8TP (planning appeal)	22/04410/FULL	11/04/23	The Town Council has no objection to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Single storey rear extension and installation of solar panels and new front porch	Awaiting Decision

London Road, 1, The Red Lion, Biggleswade, SG18 8ED	23/00489/FULL	11/04/23	The Town Council OBJECTS to this application on the grounds of safety. The current use of the building is listed as a public house and there is currently no other application to change the use of the building. The Council believes that access to and from the building is dangerous due to its position being opposite a junction and on a cycleway. There is also no clarity over deliveries being made there. The Council suggests that if a planning application is put forward to change the use of the building, access arrangements should also be included in this application.	Blocking up existing access from London Road and creation of a new vehicular access from The Baulk	Awaiting Decision
London Road, 107, Biggleswade, SG18 8EE	23/00868/FULL	28/03/23	The Town Council has no objection to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Rear side extension with timber posts to support flat roof and car port.	Awaiting Decision
Salcombe Close, Land west of	22/01990/FULL	11/04/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Flatten the existing mounds in the play area, install lighting columns, and improve the perimeter fence.	Awaiting Decision
Shortmead Street, 43, SG18 0AT	TCA/23/00098	14/03/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Works to a tree within a Conservation Area: Prune back overhanging branches of Willow tree.	Awaiting Decision
Shortmead Street, 46	23/00170/LB	14/02/2023	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this planning application, however the Council raised concerns to CBC with regards to parking on such a busy street.	Listed Building: change of use and conversion from shop to 1 residential dwelling and internal alterations.	Awaiting Decision
Simpson Lane, 14, Biggleswade, SG18 8YF	22/04808/FULL	28/03/23	The Town Council has no objection to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Installation of two first floor level air conditioning units to the side elevation.	Awaiting Decision
Land at Springfield Bungalow and Stratton Farm Cottages London Road, and Land to the south of Stratton Business Park Gold Road Biggleswade SG18 8UZ	CB/22/04252/FULL	28/03/23	The Town Council objects to this planning application on the grounds of: •Traffic congestion at the A1 Roundabout. •Sustainable transport to and from the Town Centre. •Queues of traffic. •Rights of way. •Archaeological and ecological matters presented in Officers reports. •Pedestrian safety particularly at the A1 roundabout. The Council would like it to be noted that these issues relate to potential other expansions in the area and although supportive of growth, increased traffic congestion for both cars and pedestrians are a concern.	Application seeking full planning permission for the demolition of 3 existing dwellings and the construction of 3 B8 units, together with associated access, vehicle parking, landscaping and all other ancillary works. Environmental Impact Assessment. Previously on agenda 13th December 2022.	Awaiting Decision
Land at Springfield Bungalow and Stratton Farm Cottages London Road, and Land to the south of Stratton Business Park Gold Road Biggleswade SG18 8UZ	CB/22/04252/FULL	11/04/23	The Town Council agreed to formally discuss the application again following a presentation by Mr Tom Leeming. The Town Council's decision is that, subject to the applicant following through with the proposed actions, the Town Council is prepared to REMOVE THE OBJECTION to this application.	Application seeking full planning permission for the demolition of 3 existing dwellings and the construction of 3 B8 units, together with associated access, vehicle parking, landscaping and all other ancillary works. Environmental Impact Assessment. Previously on agenda 13th December 2022.	Awaiting Decision
Stoneland Avenue, 4, Biggleswade, SG18 0EA	23/00900/FULL	11/04/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Retrospective planning permission for erection of an annex	Awaiting Decision

Wiseman Road, 12, Biggleswade, SG18 8LN	23/00745/FULL	11/04/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Loft Conversion with two front facing flat roof doormers and roof lights to rear.	Awaiting Decision
Woodlands, 11&12, Dunton Lane	22/04516/REG3	10/01/23	The Town Council OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds that there is no flood risk or noise analysis reports present for this area. The item came back to the agenda on the 14th of Feb after which the Council OBJECTED to the use of transit pitches and noise levels coming from them when used as permanent pitches.	Change of use of land, from the stationing of two transit pitches to two permanent pitches for gypsy and traveller use, with associated parking and amenity units	Awaiting Decision



Biggleswade Town Council

Internal Audit Report 2022-23 (Final)

For Auditing Solutions Ltd

Background

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Return. Auditing Solutions Ltd has provided this service to Biggleswade Town Council since 2004,

This report sets out the work undertaken in relation to the 2022-23 financial year, during our visits on 21st December 2022, 8th March and 14th April 2023.

Internal Audit Approach

In undertaking our review for the year to date, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Annual Governance and Accountability Return. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in several key areas to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and fit for the purposes intended.

Our programme of cover has been designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems are robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the Council's Annual Return, which requires independent assurance over several internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

We have concluded that, based on the programme of work undertaken this year the Council has again maintained internal control arrangements to a professional and effective standard. We are again pleased to acknowledge the quality of records maintained by the staff and thank them for their assistance, which has ensured the smooth progress of our review process.

Consequently, we have completed and signed the 'Internal Audit Report' as part of the year's AGAR process having concluded that, in all significant respects, the internal control objectives set out in that report were achieved throughout the financial year to an effective and professional standard meeting the needs of the Council.

Detailed Report

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. To that end, we have: -

- Noted that the Council's financial transactions are now processed mainly in house; with some support from third party contractors (DCK Accounting Services Ltd).
- DCK Accounting Services Ltd also provide support with the year end processes and compile a set of accounts.
- Ensured that an appropriate coding structure remains in place on the Omega accounting system to meet the needs of the Council's reporting requirements.
- Agreed the year's opening balances on the Omega accounting records to those reported in the closing Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for 2021-22.
- Ensured that the financial ledger remains in balance at the present date.
- Noted that the Council has changed its current account from Lloyds to Unity bank from 22nd November 2022, with the salary account to following a month later.
- Checked and agreed transactions the Council's Current account cashbooks to the relevant bank account statements for April 2022, August 2022, December 2022, and March 2023.
- Checked detail on the Omega based bank account reconciliations for the year to March 2023 ensure that no long-standing, uncleared cheques, or other anomalous entries exist.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation; we have ensured the accuracy of the year-end balances reported in the detailed Statement of Accounts and AGAR.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has a robust regulatory framework in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders; those financial transactions are made in accordance with the extant Financial Regulations and that we have a reasonable chance of identifying any actions of a potentially unlawful nature that have been or may be considered for implementation. Consequently: -

- We have completed our review of the full Council and standing Committee minutes for the financial year to ensure that no issues affecting the Council's financial stability either in the short, medium, or long term exist; and
- We note that Financial Regulations and Standing Orders were amended and readopted at the Full Council meeting held on 24th May 2022. They are scheduled to be readopted after the new Town Council is elected in May 2023.

- Reviewed the external auditor's report, issued since our last visit, and noted comments made.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation; we have ensured the accuracy of the year-end balances reported in the detailed Statement of Accounts and AGAR.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that, in addition to confirming that sound financial control procedures are in place: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets.
- Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the Council's SOs and FRs regarding tendering and quotation action noting that the FRs require a revised formal tender for procurement as detailed above.
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available.
- Where applicable, appropriate contracting arrangements are in place and that they comply with the Council's current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount.
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

To ensure compliance with the above criteria, we have examined a sample of 84 payments processed in the financial year from April 2022 to March 2023. Our test sample provides a broad cross section of payments and supplier invoices totalling £485,753.04.

It was noted that VAT Returns continue to be filed electronically on a quarterly basis.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

The Financial Risk Assessment Registers were reviewed by F & GP Committee on 21st March 2023 (ref 12b).

We note that the Council's insurance cover is provided by Local Councils, have examined the current year's policy schedule effective from 10th August 2022 to 31st March 2023. Both Public and Employer's Liability are set at £10 million and Fidelity Guarantee at £1 million.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Income

Our objective in this area is to ensure that all income due to the Council is identified for prompt recovery and banking. In addition to the precept, the Council receives income from a variety of other sources including playing field hire, allotments, car parking, cemetery, general and farmers markets.

On our visit on 21st December 2022, we have examined the procedures relating to Cemetery Fees, reviewing the Burials Register, Exclusive Rights of Burial and Memorials records examining a sample of entries relating to each area covering the period from April 2022 to November 2022. This is to ensure that each is supported by all relevant and legally required documentation and that the appropriate fees have been levied and recovered within a reasonable time. Also examined on this visit was the collection of parking monies from the car park ticket machines, testing a sample of ticket receipts to the collection summary and bank statements.

On our second interim visit we examined income streams of allotments, hire of football pitches and the Orchard Community Centre.

Allotment rent letters are issued using Rialtus software. We are pleased to note at the time of the audit there were only 5 invoices outstanding, 4 of these were being new tenants. The Council has implemented a new booking system for the Orchard Community Centre and football pitches, this is managed by the Accounts Administrator. The Council also now accepts card payments through Stripe.

We further note that at the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 17th January 2023, the Council undertook an Annual Fee review for the services it provides for the 2023-24 financial year (minute ref 9 a.).

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Petty Cash, Credit Cards & Fuel Cards

We are required, as part of the annual Internal Audit Certification process on the Annual Return, to indicate the soundness of controls in this area of the Council's financial activities and note that there is an imprest style petty cash scheme. Use of the petty cash is being discouraged; a physical check of the cash held was undertaken on this visit which had been reconciled to the end of February 2023.

The Council uses a credit card held by The Clerk for certain purchases, we are pleased to note that robust procedures have been implemented regarding its use. As part of our testing procedures the January 2023 entries were checked to the statement.

We are pleased to note that further to our previous visit the fuel card receipts are now attached to the invoices received from the provider.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation, we have ensured the accuracy of the year-end petty cash balance reported in the detailed Statement of Accounts and AGAR.

Salaries and HR

We note that payroll services continue to be produced by a local bureau provider (GH Online). The Council has implemented a new HR system (Citrus HR). This is also used to manage overtime payments, using email approval by the line manager before submission to the payroll provider.

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Investments and Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is investing "surplus funds", be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis, in appropriate banking and investment institutions and that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on the funds held, with any interest earned brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records, also that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

During our visits we test repayments of PWLB loans as recorded in the Council's accounts to independent PWLB statements. We have agreed the repayments to the bank statements as in relation to our work on accounting and bank reconciliation.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have currently been identified in this area and have verified the accurate disclosure of the residual year end loan liability in the AGAR from the accounts provided by DCK Accounting Services Ltd.

Precept Determination and Budgetary Control

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has a robust procedure in place for identifying and approving its future budgetary requirements and level of precept to be drawn down from the District Council: also, that an effective reporting and monitoring process is in place. We also aim to ensure that the Council retains appropriate funds in general and earmarked reserves to finance its ongoing spending plans, whilst retaining appropriate sums to cover any unplanned expenditure that might arise.

We are pleased to note that, at the Town Council meeting of the held on 24th January 2023 the Council agreed that the precept for 2023-24 be set at £1,533,241. This represents an increase of 7.48% on the previous year for a band D property.

We also reviewed the level of retained funds at the year-end, assessing their adequacy to meet the Council's ongoing revenue spending requirements and future development aspirations. On 31st March 2023, the General Reserve balance stood at £348,886, earmarked reserves at £76,243 and deferred grants £16,200.

We are pleased to note that members continue to receive regular budget monitoring reports with over/under-spends and the level of earmarked reserves the subject of regular review.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area, warranting further comment.

Asset Register

The Governance and Accountability Manual requires all councils to develop and maintain a register of assets identifying detail of all land, buildings, vehicles, furniture, and equipment owned by the Council.

We are pleased to note that the Council holds a detailed asset register updated by DCK to include additions and disposals for 2022-23.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation; we have ensured the accuracy of the year-end balances reported in the detailed Statement of Accounts and AGAR.

Statement of Accounts and Annual Return

The Accounts and Audit Regulations require all Councils to prepare annually a Statement of Accounts in the AGAR, which now forms the statutory Accounts subject to external audit scrutiny and certification.

We have checked and agreed entries in the Statement of Accounts generated by the accounting software to the underlying Trial Balance and other documentation provided by DCK. Similarly, we have checked and agreed the financial data reported to the AGAR.

Conclusions

No issues have been identified in relation to the verification of detail in the Statement of Accounts and AGAR this year.

Based on our detailed work during the year on the Council's systems of financial control and content of the detailed Statement of Accounts and that summarised detail set out in the AGAR, we have signed off the Internal Audit Report of the AGAR assigning positive assurances, in each relevant area.

Biggleswade Town Council

Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Biggleswade Town Council

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31 March 2023

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Biggleswade Town Council

Council Information

31 March 2023

(Information current at 25th April 2023)

Town Mayor

Cllr G. Fage

Councillors

Cllr M. A. Russell (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr D. Albone

Cllr I. J. Bond

Cllr K. Brown

Cllr L. A. Fage

Cllr F. S. Foster

Cllr M. Foster

Cllr M. A. R. Knight

Cllr M. North

Cllr R. M. Pullinger

Cllr H. Ramsay

Cllr D. A. Strachan

Cllr C. Thomas

Cllr J. Woodhead

Town Clerk and Chief Executive

P. Tarrant Ph.D. MA (Dist). MCGI. DipMS. CMgr. Cert CPD. MCMI. CiLCA

Auditors

Mazars LLP

Salvus House

Aykley Heads

Durham

DH1 5TS

Internal Auditors

Auditing Solutions Limited

Clackerbrook Farm

46 The Common

Bromham

Chippenham

Wiltshire

SN15 2JJ

Biggleswade Town Council

Statement of Responsibilities

31 March 2023

The Council's Responsibilities

The council is required:

- to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs
- to secure that one of its officers (R.F.O.) has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. At this council that officer is the Town Clerk, and
- to manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.

The Responsible Financial Officer's Responsibilities

The R.F.O. is responsible for the preparation of the council's Unaudited Financial Statements in accordance with Part 4 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide (England) (as amended)" (the guide), so far as is applicable to this council, to present a true and fair view of the financial position of the council at 31 March 2023 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

In preparing the Unaudited Financial Statements, the R.F.O. has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent, and
- complied with the guide.

The R.F.O. has also:

- kept proper accounting records, which were up to date, and
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Responsible Financial Officer's Certificate

I further certify that the Unaudited Financial Statements present a true and fair view of the financial position of Biggleswade Town Council at 31 March 2023, and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Signed:

P. Tarrant Ph.D. MA (Dist). MCGI. DipMS. CMgr. Cert CPD. MCMI. CiLCA- Town Clerk

Date:

Biggleswade Town Council
Statement of Accounting Policies
31 March 2023

Auditors

The name and address of the External Auditors is provided for information only.

These Statements are not subject to audit and the External Auditors have no responsibility for them.

Accounting Convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) (FRSSE) issued by the Accounting Standards Board, as applied to Local Councils by part 4 of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide (England) (the guide). Comparative figures have been restated to conform to the revised formats where appropriate. Certain requirements have been omitted for clarity and simplicity as these statements are not subject to audit. They are produced in support of the council's audited Statement of Accounts contained within the Annual Return Statement of Accounts.

These accounts have been prepared having regard to the fundamental accounting concepts of: Going Concern, Prudence, Accruals, Relevance, Consistency, Reliability, Comparability, Understandability and Materiality.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Fixed Assets

All expenditure in excess of £1000 (on any one item or group of similar items) on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of fixed assets is capitalised on an accruals basis in the accounts. Expenditure on fixed assets is capitalised, provided that the fixed asset yields benefits to the authority and the services it provides, for a period of more than one year. Fixed assets are valued on the basis recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and in accordance with the statements of asset valuation principles and guidance notes issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The closing balances are stated on the following basis:

land and buildings are included in the balance sheet at Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC). The DRC basis of valuation requires an estimate of the value of the land in its existing use, together with the current replacement cost of the building and its external works, from which appropriate deductions have been made to reflect the age, condition, economic, functional and environmental obsolescence and other locational factors which might result in the existing building being worth less than a new replacement building,

all other assets are included in the balance sheet at the lower of cost (estimated where not known) or estimated realisable value, except that,

certain community assets are the subject of restrictive covenants as to their use and/or future disposal. Such assets are therefore considered to have no appreciable realisable value and are included at nominal value only.

The surplus or deficit arising on periodic revaluations of fixed assets has been credited or debited to the Revaluation Reserve. Subsequent revaluations of fixed assets are planned at five yearly intervals, although material changes to asset valuations will be adjusted in the interim period, should they occur.

In accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 15, depreciation is provided on all operational buildings (but not land), as well as other assets.

Biggleswade Town Council
Statement of Accounting Policies
31 March 2023

Depreciation Policy

Buildings and leasehold land are depreciated over the shorter of 50 years or the anticipated remaining useful lives on a straight line basis.

Freehold land is not depreciated.

Non Operational Assets (including Investment Properties) are not depreciated.

Vehicles, plant, equipment and furniture are depreciated over 5 to 10 years on a straight line basis.

Play equipment is depreciated over 20 years at 5% per annum straight line.

Infrastructure assets are depreciated over 10 years at 10% per annum straight line.

Community assets are not depreciated.

Depreciation is accounted for as a Balance Sheet movement only, not through the Income and Expenditure Account.

Grants or Contributions from Government or Related Bodies

Capital Grants

Where a fixed asset has been acquired or improved with the financing either wholly or in part by a grant or contribution from government or a related body, e.g. Sports Council, the amount of the grant has been credited to Deferred Grants Account and carried forward. Grants so credited are released back to revenue over the life of the asset to match, and thereby offset wholly or in part, depreciation charged.

Revenue Grants

Revenue grants are credited to income when conditions attached thereto have been fulfilled and/or equivalent expenditure has been incurred. Grants received in respect of which the conditions have not been fulfilled, or expenditure incurred, are carried forward as deferred revenue grants.

Debtors and Creditors

The revenue accounts of the council are maintained on an accruals basis in accordance with the regulations. That is sums due to or from the council during the year are included whether or not the cash has actually been received or paid in the year. Exceptions to this are payment of regular quarterly and other accounts (e.g. telephones, electricity). This policy is applied consistently each year. Therefore, it will not have a material effect on the year's accounts or on the council's annual budget.

The council reviews the level of its commercial debtors on a regular basis and provisions are made, as required, where the likelihood of amounts proving ultimately collectable is in doubt.

Value Added Tax

Income and Expenditure excludes any amounts related to VAT, as all VAT suffered/collected is recoverable from or payable to HM Revenue and Customs. Any amounts not so recoverable are treated as a separate expense.

External Loan Repayments

The council accounts for loans on an accruals basis. Details of the council's external borrowings are shown at note 15.

Biggleswade Town Council
Statement of Accounting Policies
31 March 2023

Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to revenue on an accruals basis. Details of the council's obligations under operating leases are shown at note 16.

Reserves

The council maintains certain reserves to meet general and specific future expenditure. The purpose of the council's reserves is explained in notes 18 to 19.

Certain reserves are maintained to manage the accounting processes for tangible fixed assets, available for sale investments and retirement benefits. They do not represent usable resources for the council:

Capital Financing Account – represent the council's investment of resources in such assets already made.

Interest Income

All interest receipts are credited initially to general funds.

Pensions

The pension costs that are charged against precept in the council's accounts, in respect of its employees, are equal to the contributions paid to the funded pension scheme for those employees.

These contributions are determined by the fund's actuary on a triennial basis and are set to meet 100% of the liabilities of the pension fund, in accordance with relevant government regulations.

The next actuarial valuation is due at 31st March 2025 and any change in contribution rates as a result of that valuation will take effect from 1st April 2026.

Biggleswade Town Council
Income and Expenditure Account
31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Income			
Precept on District Council		1,424,171	1,289,691
Grants Receivable		15,139	22,098
Rents Receivable, Interest & Investment Income		16,111	1,008
Charges made for Services		173,303	122,633
Other Income		2,627	567
Total Income		1,631,351	1,435,997
Expenditure			
Direct Service Costs:			
Salaries & Wages		(433,507)	(396,927)
Grant-aid Expenditure		(38,530)	(27,658)
Other Costs	1	(373,719)	(320,201)
Democratic, Management & Civic Costs:			
Salaries & Wages		(468,115)	(395,556)
Other Costs	1	(291,824)	(361,775)
Total Expenditure		(1,605,695)	(1,502,117)
Excess of Income over Expenditure/(Expenditure over Income) for the year.		25,656	(66,120)
Exceptional Items			
(Loss)/Profit on the disposal of fixed assets		-	8,440
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for Year		25,656	(57,680)
STATUTORY CHARGES & REVERSALS			
Statutory Charge for Capital (i.e. Loan Capital Repaid)		(8,139)	(13,116)
Capital Expenditure charged to revenue	11	(11,681)	(63,038)
Reverse profit on asset disposals		-	(8,440)
Transfer (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	19	(4,276)	391,920
Surplus for the Year to General Fund		1,560	249,646
Net Surplus for the Year		5,836	(142,274)
The above Surplus for the Year has been applied for the Year to as follows:			
Transfer (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	19	4,276	(391,920)
Surplus for the Year to General Fund		1,560	249,646
		5,836	(142,274)

The council had no other recognisable gains and/or losses during the year.

The notes on pages 12 to 22 form part of these unaudited statements.

Biggleswade Town Council
Statement of Movement in Reserves
31 March 2023

Reserve	Purpose of Reserve	Notes	2023 £	Net Movement in Year £	2022 £
Capital Financing Account	Store of capital resources set aside to purchase fixed assets	18	1,241,911	(69,894)	1,311,805
Earmarked Reserves	Amounts set aside from revenue to meet general and specific future expenditure	19	76,243	4,276	71,967
General Fund	Resources available to meet future running costs		348,886	1,560	347,326
Total			1,667,040	(64,058)	1,731,098

The notes on pages 12 to 22 form part of these unaudited statements.

Biggleswade Town Council

Balance Sheet

31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		1,793,771	1,687,582
Current Assets				
Debtors and prepayments	13	178,635		42,423
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>718,732</u>		<u>479,406</u>
		897,367		521,829
Current Liabilities				
Current Portion of Long Term Borrowings		(17,201)		(8,139)
Creditors and income in advance	14	<u>(202,838)</u>		<u>(82,935)</u>
Net Current Assets			677,328	430,755
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			2,471,099	2,118,337
Long Term Liabilities				
Long-term borrowing	15		(501,987)	(93,277)
Deferred Grants	17		<u>(302,072)</u>	<u>(293,962)</u>
Total Assets Less Liabilities			<u>1,667,040</u>	<u>1,731,098</u>
Capital and Reserves				
Capital Financing Reserve	18		1,241,911	1,311,805
Earmarked Reserves	19		76,243	71,967
General Reserve			<u>348,886</u>	<u>347,326</u>
			<u>1,667,040</u>	<u>1,731,098</u>

The Unaudited Financial Statements represent a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2023, and of its Income and Expenditure for the year.

These accounts were approved by the Council on 25th April 2023 .

Signed:

Cllr G. Fage

Town Mayor

.....

P. Tarrant, Ph.D. MA (Dist). MCGI. DipMS.
CMgr. Cert CPD. MCMI. CiLCA

Responsible Financial Officer

Date:

.....

The notes on pages 12 to 22 form part of these unaudited statements.

Biggleswade Town Council

Cash Flow Statement

31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £
REVENUE ACTIVITIES				
<i>Cash outflows</i>				
Paid to and on behalf of employees		(907,993)		(779,850)
Other operating payments		(695,443)		(693,442)
			(1,603,436)	(1,473,292)
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Precept on District Council		1,424,171		1,289,691
Cash received for services		163,281		163,641
Revenue grants received		11,739		18,698
			1,599,191	1,472,030
Net cash inflow from Revenue Activities	22		(4,245)	(1,262)
SERVICING OF FINANCE				
<i>Cash outflows</i>				
Interest paid		(4,381)		(4,871)
Interest element of Finance Lease/HP Installments		-		(268)
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Interest received		14,572		849
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from Servicing of Finance			10,191	(4,290)
CAPITAL ACTIVITIES				
<i>Cash outflows</i>				
Purchase of fixed assets		(231,696)		(75,979)
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Sale of fixed assets		-		8,440
Capital grant received		47,304		4,501
Net cash (outflow) from Capital Activities			(184,392)	(63,038)
Net cash (outflow) before Financing			(178,446)	(68,590)
FINANCING AND LIQUID RESOURCES				
<i>Cash outflows</i>				
Loan repayments made			(8,138)	(9,808)
Hire Purchase and Lease repayments made			-	(3,308)
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
New loans raised			425,910	-
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from financing and liquid resources			417,772	(13,116)
Increase/(Decrease) in cash	23		239,326	(81,706)

The notes on pages 12 to 22 form part of these unaudited statements.

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

1 Other Costs Analysis

Other Costs reported in the council's Income and Expenditure Account comprise the following:

Direct Service Costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Community Centres	25,249	18,870
Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities	40,449	53,056
Allotments	3,522	1,330
Cemeteries	6,274	12,781
Public Conveniences	23,956	18,663
Community Safety (Crime Reduction)	11,111	13,992
Market Undertakings	7,197	9,217
Promotion & Marketing of the Area	39,384	39,577
Community Development	38,530	27,676
Street Lighting	-	(12,757)
Off-street Parking	74,868	81,703
Public Realm	141,709	83,751
Less: Grant-aid Expenditure	(38,530)	(27,658)
Total	373,719	320,201

Democratic, Management & Civic Costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Corporate Management	264,405	302,178
Democratic Representation & Management	10,371	50,214
Civic Expenses	2,467	4,163
Mayors Allowance	-	81
Interest Payable	14,581	5,139
Total	291,824	361,775

As reported in the Statement of Accounting Policies, apportionment of central costs is not reflected in the above analysis.

2 Interest Payable and Similar Charges

	2023	2022
	£	£
External Interest Charges - Loans	14,581	4,871
External Interest Charges - Lease/H.P.	-	268
	14,581	5,139

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

3 Interest and Investment Income

	2023 £	2022 £
Interest Income - General Funds	16,111	1,008
	<u>16,111</u>	<u>1,008</u>

4 Agency Work

During the year the Council undertook no agency work on behalf of other authorities.

During the year the Council commissioned no agency work to be performed by other authorities.

5 Related Party Transactions

The council entered into no material transactions with related parties during the year.

6 Audit Fees

The council is required to report and disclose the cost of services provided by its external auditors.

These may be summarised as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Fees for statutory audit services	2,520	2,000
Total fees	<u>2,520</u>	<u>2,000</u>

7 Members' Allowances

	2023 £	2022 £
Members of Council have been paid the following allowances for the year:		
Mayor's Allowance	-	81
	<u>-</u>	<u>81</u>

The council has resolved that, other than the Town Mayor, no members allowances will be paid.

8 Employees

The average weekly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Full-time	20	18
Part-time	4	3
Temporary	-	1
	<u>24</u>	<u>22</u>

All staff are paid in accordance with nationally agreed pay scales.

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

9 Pension Costs

The council participates in the Bedfordshire Pension Fund. The Bedfordshire Pension Fund is a defined benefit scheme, but the council is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities because all town and parish councils in the scheme pay a common contribution rate.

The cost to the council for the year ended 31 March 2023 was £140,539 (31 March 2022 - £111,250).

The most recent actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31st March 2022, and the council's contribution rate is confirmed as being 26.80% of employees' pensionable pay, plus a lump sum of £0 with effect from 1st April 2023 (year ended 31 March 2023 – 26.80%, , plus a lump sum of £0).

Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17): “Retirement Benefits” sets out accounting requirements for pension costs. For schemes such as Bedfordshire Pension Fund, paragraph 9(b) of FRS17 requires the council to account for pension costs on the basis of contributions actually payable to the scheme during the year.

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

10 Tangible Fixed Assets

	Operational Freehold Land and Buildings	Operational Leasehold Land and Buildings	Vehicles and Equipment	Infra- structure Assets	Community Assets	Other	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
At 31 March 2022	1,813,044	9,095	807,031	309,674	15,380	19,955	2,974,179
Additions	-	-	161,388	52,499	-	17,809	231,696
Disposals	-	-	(48,010)	-	-	-	(48,010)
Reclassification	-	19,955	-	-	-	(19,955)	-
At 31 March 2023	1,813,044	29,050	920,409	362,173	15,380	17,809	3,157,865
Depreciation							
At 31 March 2022	(484,836)	-	(543,428)	(258,333)	-	-	(1,286,597)
Charged for the year	(28,179)	(1,996)	(79,629)	(15,703)	-	-	(125,507)
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	48,010	-	-	-	48,010
At 31 March 2023	(513,015)	(1,996)	(575,047)	(274,036)	-	-	(1,364,094)
Net Book Value							
At 31 March 2023	1,300,029	27,054	345,362	88,137	15,380	17,809	1,793,771
At 31 March 2022	1,328,208	9,095	263,603	51,341	15,380	19,955	1,687,582

Although classified as capital expenditure, certain minor equipment purchases are not included in the above as they are not material in overall value.

Fixed Asset Valuation

The freehold and leasehold properties that comprise the council's properties have been valued as at 31st March 2004 by external independent valuers, Messrs Rushton International. Valuations have been made on the basis set out in the Statement of Accounting Policies, except that not all properties were inspected. This was neither practical nor considered by the valuer to be necessary for the purpose of valuation. Plant and machinery that form fixtures to the building are included in the valuation of the building.

Assets Held under Finance Agreements

The council holds no such assets

	2023 £	2022 £
Value as at 31 March 2022	3,676	7,354
Assets no longer subject to finance lease/hire purchase agreements	(3,676)	-
Depreciation Charged in Year	-	(3,678)
Value as at 31 March 2023	-	3,676

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

11 Financing of Capital Expenditure

	2023	2022
	£	£
The following capital expenditure during the year:		
Fixed Assets Purchased	231,696	75,979
	<u>231,696</u>	<u>75,979</u>
was financed by:		
Capital Receipts	-	8,440
Capital Grants	47,304	4,501
Loan Proceeds	172,711	-
Revenue:		
Capital Projects Reserve	11,681	63,434
Precept and Revenue Income	-	(396)
	<u>231,696</u>	<u>75,979</u>

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

12 Information on Assets Held

Fixed assets owned by the council include the following:

Operational Land and Buildings

- Old Court House
- Works Depot and Garage
- Pavilions at 3 Recreation Grounds
- Recreation Grounds – 6
- Cemeteries (2) and associated buildings
- Orchard Community Centre
- Car Parks – 6 (3 Leasehold)
- Allotments (Leasehold)
- Improvements to Depot (Leasehold)

Vehicles and Equipment

- Light trucks (4)
- Market Stalls
- Play Equipment at 14 sites
- Sundry grounds maintenance equipment
- Sundry office equipment
- Orchard Community Centre Fittings and Equipment

Infrastructure Assets

- Sandy Cycleway
- Street furniture
- Car Park Pay & Display Equipment
- Town Centre CCTV

Community Assets

- Land at Back Street
- Common Rights
- Jubilee Amenity Area
- Old Town Drum Clock
- Council Regalia

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

13 Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
General Town Council	9,018	188
Sports Pitch Hire	421	207
Trade Debtors	9,439	395
VAT Recoverable	36,574	18,824
Other Debtors	11,144	4,989
Prepayments	119,780	18,056
Accrued Interest Income	1,698	159
	178,635	42,423

14 Creditors and Accrued Expenses

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade Creditors	149,139	21,906
Other Creditors	12	-
Payroll Taxes and Social Security	16,021	22,391
Accruals	20,616	34,338
Accrued Interest Payable	10,200	-
Income in Advance	6,850	4,300
	202,838	82,935

15 Long Term Liabilities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Public Works Loan Board	519,188	101,416
	519,188	101,416

	2023	2022
	£	£
The above loans are repayable as follows:		
Within one year	17,201	8,139
From one to two years	17,612	8,528
From two to five years	49,749	21,612
From five to ten years	97,870	26,886
Over ten years	336,756	36,251
Total Loan Commitment	519,188	101,416
Less: Repayable within one year	(17,201)	(8,139)
Repayable after one year	501,987	93,277

16 Financial Commitments under Operating Leases

The council had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases of property as follows:

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Obligations expiring within one year	-	-
Obligations expiring between two and five years	-	-
Obligations expiring after five years	29,001	29,001
	<u>29,001</u>	<u>31,282</u>

17 Deferred Grants

	2023 £	2022 £
Capital Grants Unapplied		
At 01 April	-	-
Grants received in the year	47,304	4,501
Applied to finance capital investment	(47,304)	(4,501)
At 31 March	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Capital Grants Applied		
At 01 April	274,362	302,179
Grants Applied in the year	47,304	4,501
Released to offset depreciation	(35,794)	(32,318)
At 31 March	<u>285,872</u>	<u>274,362</u>
Revenue Grants and S106 Revenue Contributions		
At 01 April	19,600	23,000
Released to Revenue	(3,400)	(3,400)
At 31 March	<u>16,200</u>	<u>19,600</u>
Total Deferred Grants		
At 31 March	<u>302,072</u>	<u>293,962</u>
At 01 April	<u>293,962</u>	<u>325,179</u>

Capital Grants are accounted for on an accruals basis and grants received have been credited to Deferred Grants Account. Amounts are released from the Deferred Grants Account to offset any provision for depreciation charged to revenue accounts in respect of assets that were originally acquired with the assistance of such grants.

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

18 Capital Financing Account

	2023	2022
	£	£
Balance at 01 April	1,311,805	1,311,989
Financing capital expenditure in the year		
Additions - using capital receipts	-	8,440
Additions - using revenue balances	11,681	63,038
Loan repayments	8,138	13,116
Disposal of fixed assets	(48,010)	(57,139)
Depreciation eliminated on disposals	48,010	52,464
Reversal of depreciation	(125,507)	(112,421)
Deferred grants released	35,794	32,318
Balance at 31 March	1,241,911	1,311,805

The Capital Financing Account represents revenue and capital resources applied to finance capital expenditure or for the repayment of external loans. It also includes the reversal of depreciation to ensure it does not impact upon the amount to be met from precept. It does not represent a reserve that the council can use to support future expenditure.

19 Earmarked Reserves

	Balance at	Contribution	Contribution	Balance at
	01/04/2022	to reserve	from reserve	31/03/2023
	£	£	£	£
Capital Projects Reserves	71,967	35,301	(31,025)	76,243
Asset Renewal Reserves	-	-	-	-
Other Earmarked Reserves	-	-	-	-
Total Earmarked Reserves	71,967	35,301	(31,025)	76,243

The Capital Projects Reserves are credited with amounts set aside from revenue to part finance specific projects which are part of the council's capital programme.

The Other Earmarked Reserves are credited with amounts set aside from revenue to fund specific known commitments of the council.

The Other Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2023 are set out in detail at Appendix A.

20 Capital Commitments

The council had no capital commitments at 31 March 2023 not otherwise provided for in these accounts.

21 Contingent Liabilities

The council is not aware of any contingent liabilities at the date of these accounts.

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

22 Reconciliation of Revenue Cash Flow

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	25,656	(66,120)
Add/(Deduct)		
Interest Payable	14,581	5,139
Interest and Investment Income	(14,572)	(849)
Deferred Revenue Grants Released to Revenue	(3,400)	(3,400)
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors	(136,212)	52,929
Increase in creditors	109,702	11,043
Revenue activities net cash (outflow)	(4,245)	(1,262)

23 Movement in Cash

	2023	2022
	£	£
Balances at 01 April		
Cash with accounting officers	374	416
Cash at bank	479,032	560,696
	479,406	561,112
Balances at 31 March		
Cash with accounting officers	249	374
Cash at bank	718,483	479,032
	718,732	479,406
Net cash inflow/(outflow)	239,326	(81,706)

24 Reconciliation of Net Funds/Debt

	2023	2022
	£	£
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year	239,326	(81,706)
Cash inflow from new borrowings	(425,910)	-
Cash outflow from repayment of debt	8,138	13,116
Net cash flow arising from changes in debt	(417,772)	13,116
Movement in net debt in the year	(178,446)	(68,590)
Cash at bank and in hand	479,406	561,112
Total borrowings	(101,416)	(114,532)
Net funds at 01 April	377,990	446,580
Cash at bank and in hand	718,732	479,406
Total borrowings	(519,188)	(101,416)
Net funds at 31 March	199,544	377,990

Biggleswade Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2023

25 Post Balance Sheet Events

There are no significant Post Balance Sheet events since the preparation of these accounts, up to the date of their final adoption (on 25th April 2023), which would have a material impact on the amounts and results reported herein.

Biggleswade Town Council

Appendices

31 March 2023

Appendix A

Schedule of Earmarked Reserves

	<u>Balance at</u> <u>01/04/2022</u> £	<u>Contribution</u> <u>to reserve</u> £	<u>Contribution</u> <u>from reserve</u> £	<u>Balance at</u> <u>31/03/2023</u> £
<u>Capital Receipts Reserve</u>				
None				0
	0	0	0	0
<u>Capital Projects Reserves</u>				
Rolling Capital Fund	71,967	35,301	(31,025)	76,243
	71,967	35,301	(31,025)	76,243
<u>Other Earmarked Reserves</u>				
None				0
	0	0	0	0
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	71,967	35,301	(31,025)	76,243

Biggleswade Town Council

31 March 2023

Annual Report Tables

Table. 1 – Budget & Actual Comparison

	Budget £	Actual £
Net Expenditure		
Recreation & Sport	112,854	64,446
Open Spaces	(8,085)	(4,625)
Cemetery, Cremation & Mortuary	(13,300)	(34,384)
Environmental Health	15,000	23,956
Community Safety (Crime Reduction)	16,000	11,111
Planning & Development Services (including Markets)	67,248	129,123
Parking Services	47,400	33,423
Public Realm	397,534	435,264
Net Direct Services Costs	634,651	658,314
Corporate Management	736,418	731,372
Democratic & Civic	14,225	10,359
Net Democratic, Management and Civic Costs	750,643	741,731
Interest & Investment Income	(420)	(16,111)
Loan Charges	27,126	22,720
Capital Expenditure	-	11,681
Transfers to/(from) other reserves	35,301	4,276
(Deficit from)/Surplus to General Reserve	(23,130)	1,560
Precept on District Council	1,424,171	1,424,171

Biggleswade Town Council

31 March 2023

Annual Report Tables

Table. 2 – Service Income & Expenditure

Notes	2023 £ Gross Expenditure	2023 £ Income	2023 £ Net Expenditure	2022 £ Net Expenditure
CULTURAL & RELATED SERVICES				
Recreation & Sport	135,648	(71,202)	64,446	111,257
Open Spaces	3,522	(8,147)	(4,625)	(8,018)
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES				
Cemetery, Cremation & Mortuary	6,274	(40,658)	(34,384)	(7,370)
Environmental Health	23,956	-	23,956	18,663
Community Safety (Crime Reduction)	11,111	-	11,111	13,992
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES				
Economic Development (including markets)	112,086	(19,392)	92,694	75,334
Community Development	38,530	(2,101)	36,429	27,676
HIGHWAYS, ROADS & TRANSPORT SERVICES				
Street Lighting	-	-	-	(12,757)
Parking Services	74,868	(41,445)	33,423	47,740
OTHER SERVICES				
Public Realm	439,761	(4,497)	435,264	352,236
CENTRAL SERVICES				
Corporate Management	732,520	(1,148)	731,372	682,286
Democratic & Civic	10,371	-	10,371	46,964
Civic Expenses	2,467	(2,479)	(12)	3,677
Net Cost of Services	1,591,114	(191,069)	1,400,045	1,351,680

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2023**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2023**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2023
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2023 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2022/23**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2022/23**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2023 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2022/23

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2023.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2022) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2023).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2023**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2023 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

**Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL

<https://biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk/> (AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS)

During the financial year ended 31 March 2023, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2022/23 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2021/22, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2021/22 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2022-23 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2021-22 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2021/22 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

21/12/2022 08/03/2023 14/04/2023.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Sally King for Auditing Solutions Ltd

(ENTER NAME OF INTERNAL AUDITOR)

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

14/04/2023.

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

25/04/2023

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

<https://biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk/> / IABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

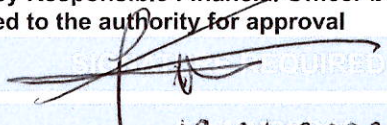
BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	584,569	438,894	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,289,691	1,424,171	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	155,847	676,994	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	792,482	901,622	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	14,679	22,720	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	784,052	921,189	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	438,894	694,528	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	479,406	718,732	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	2,974,179	3,157,865	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	101,416	519,188	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

19 04 2023

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2022/23

In respect of

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2022/23

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2022/23

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

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Date

DD/MM/YYYY



Closure of the central reservation gap on the A1 at Upper Caldecote

I'm writing to you about our plans to permanently close the gap in the central reservation barrier on the A1 near Upper Caldecote. The intended closure is in response to vehicle movements associated with the Woodlands Nursery development at Biggleswade.

Thank you for commenting. We're grateful for the feedback you and other respondents have given, and we have now carefully considered all matters raised. Having reviewed all representations, agreement to proceed with closing the gap in central reservation barrier has been upheld. This will now be formalised through the publication of a traffic regulation order.

The attached note summarises the key points made in the consultation process, setting out our response together with any actions or mitigations that we intend to carry out. It also sets out the expected next steps in the process.

A recurring concern raised by a number of respondents was appropriate provision for pedestrians and other non-motorised users who may opt to cross the carriageway at this location. We have decided that an appropriate access should be constructed. It will be subject to a full safety audit process with any agreed mitigations recommended being implemented as appropriate.

Closure of the gap in the central reserve barrier on the A1 at Upper Caldecote

The need to close the gap in the central reserve barrier is in response to the impact of the proposed development at Woodlands Nursery in Biggleswade on the A1. Closure of the gap was proposed to address the expected increased vehicle movements and resulting safety risks at the junction of the A1 and Biggleswade Road. A number of road traffic collisions have been recorded at the junction. These collisions have involved drivers attempting to make a right turn manoeuvre.

1. Has National Highways widely consulted on the proposals?

The views of the community, road users and wider stakeholders are extremely important to National Highways. To ensure such all views are carefully considered, numerous consultations and reviews about the proposed closure have taken place since 2018.

The most recent public consultation was undertaken between October 2021 and May 2022. More than fifty representations were received.

2. How is closure of the gap expected to impact local journey times?

For vehicles currently turning right from Biggleswade Road to travel on the A1 southbound, the most direct alternative route will be to travel north on the A1 to Sandy Roundabout and return southbound. This additional journey of around 4.5 miles is expected to add around six minutes to the travel time. This does not take into account waiting the time drivers currently experience trying to access the A1 southbound.

3. How is closure of the gap expected to impact traffic in Upper Caldecote?

Traffic modelling indicates that closing the gap will reduce traffic levels on Hitchin Road, Hill Lane and at the junction with the A1 Biggleswade North Roundabout. The weight restriction on Hitchin Road will prohibit large vehicles, HGVs etc. from travelling through the village.

4. Would it be feasible to restrict large vehicles using the crossing, thus allowing other vehicles to continue to access the A1 southbound?

No. Closure of the central reservation gap will effectively remove the safety risks associated with any vehicle trying to access the A1 southbound. However, provision for pedestrians and other non-motorised users who may opt to cross the carriageway at this location will be catered for. This will be subject to a full safety audit process with any agreed mitigations recommended being implemented as appropriate.

5. What effect will the closure have on Sandy Roundabout?

The additional vehicle movements at Sandy Roundabout resulting from the closure of the central reserve gap are expected to be minimal. No significant impact to the operation of the roundabout is therefore anticipated.

6. Is there a risk road users will attempt to turn around at other crossing points on the A1 between Lower Caldecote and Sandy?

No. The majority of other central reserve gaps in this vicinity have restrictions in place prohibiting certain vehicular movements.

7. When is the crossing due to be closed?

Closing the central reservation gap will be subject to completion of statutory procedures and scheduling of the required work. We currently expect closure to happen during autumn/winter 2023.

Dear Biggleswade Town Council,

I am writing to inform you of a **re-proposal of Biggleswade Footpath No. 12** (Highways Act Section 119) Diversion Order as per shown in the attached plan. Diverting the legal line from the farmers field onto the access track will allow the legal line to follow the currently walked route and will enable resurfacing works of the track to take place, which connects Bridleway No. 9 to the Biggleswade common.

Resurfacing of the track will be possible using Section 106 funding as is currently available. At a later stage we will look to upgrade this footpath to a bridleway status.

Only once this first stage has taken place, and once a connection to Potton Road has been confirmed by the Green wheel scheme (Steve Lakin), we can then look to upgrade this track to a bridleway status.

Please do contact should you have any questions regarding this, as we intend to start a final Internal Consultation as soon as back from Easter break.



