



**MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON 24<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 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 F Foster  
Cllr M Foster  
Cllr M Knight  
Cllr M North  
Cllr R Pullinger  
Cllr D Strachan  
Cllr H Ramsay  
Cllr C Thomas  
Cllr J Woodhead

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships  
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 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.

**ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGIES**

Cllr K Brown.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:**

None.

**b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:**

Item 10a for Cllr I Bond.

### 3. **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements from the Mayor.

### 4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No member of the public wished to speak.

### 5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

Mr Tom Price, Senior Sustainable Transport Officer from Central Bedfordshire Council gave a presentation on Electric Vehicle Charging Provision.

Speaking to Council, Mr Price presented the plan to roll out EV (Electrical Charging) charging points for electrical vehicles, both rapid and residential, to satisfy anticipated demand levels and meet County and National Targets.

Mr Price explained that 200 sites had been assessed across Central Bedfordshire and £360,000 grant funding had been secured to install 96 EVCP (Electrical Vehicle Charging Points) at 12 sites. He noted that 4 dual socket points were looking to be installed at The Baulk car park and other sites in Biggleswade were being assessed to widen coverage.

Mr Price pointed out that three areas had been identified as possibilities: St Andrew's Car Park, Mill Lane Car Park and The Orchard Community Centre.

It was **AGREED** for Members to have an informal meeting with Mr Price to discuss the practicalities of the matter further.

### 6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

None.

### 7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

Item 10a. Cllr Russell indicated that the words 'with the amendments' should be added to the paragraph so that it reads: 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 with the amendments proposed by Council and attaching with it the Transport Consultants' Report.

Item 13b. The word 'good' was missing. Sentence should read: Cllr G Fage noting the discussions responded that as Chair that some very good points were made.

Item 13b. Lord Rose is ASDA Chairman, not CEO.

Item 13b. Item should read: 'That Town Council parking is free evenings and weekends'.

Subject to these amendments the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

### 8. **MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr G Fage, pointing to Item 10a of the Minutes, requested that the letter regarding the Council's objection for Land North of Biggleswade and the Transport Consultants Report, should also be sent to Hallam Land and Carter Jonas.

## 9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### a. **Precept for Financial Year 2023/2024**

Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Cllr Pullinger, thanked Officers for their quick turnaround of numbers in preparation for this meeting following the recent Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting, held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

Cllr Pullinger noted the challenges faced in determining the precept and the impacts faced by residents due to the rise in inflation, particularly in respect to energy prices.

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept to set the precept at £1,533,241 which equates to an increase of 7.48% for Band D property and is an increase of 26p per week. This is in line with the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Responsible Financial Officer.

### b. **PWLB Governance Process**

Cllr G Fage put forward a motion which asked that any spend connected to the Public Works Loan Board money (PWLB) is approved, in both the amount and purpose, at Council first before spending.

Cllr G Fage noted that the reason for this motion was due to the first wave of PWLB monies arriving, adding that Council and Committee have been very diligent in how it will be spent on the Franklins Recreation Ground.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive noted that there are five key documents which need to be reflected on before the new Council is elected. Two of these documents relate to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which will need to be taken into consideration by Council.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the motion that any spend connected to PWLB monies is approved, in both the amount and purpose, at Council first, before spending.

### c. **Change in date for Personnel Committee Meeting**

Following discussion, Members **APPROVED** to change the date of the Personnel Meeting to 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023, due to absence of the Chairman of the Committee. Previously the meeting was set for Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

### d. **Ivel Medical Centre, Biggleswade – Stakeholder Update**

Cllr Strachan put forward a motion to debate the issues affecting the town as a result of the decision not to proceed with the health hub and the correspondence received concerning the Ivel Medical Centre.

Cllr Strachan indicated that the town is growing and the lack of medical services is having a huge impact on residents.

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** for Officers to facilitate a meeting with relevant stakeholders of GP practices, Integrated Care Board and local MP Richard Fuller.

- e. **Stopping up of Highway at land off Drove Road adjacent to 1A Drove Road, Biggleswade**
- Members **NOTED** the letter and indicated that the item should have been included under Items for Information.
- f. **Tree Felling in Biggleswade Town Centre Market Square**
- The Head of Governance and Strategic Partnerships noted that the issue recently came on the agenda of the Biggleswade Joint Committee, and it was understood that a longer gapping of trees (removal of older trees with newer trees planted later) is vastly preferable in principle.
- Members pointed out that replacing trees at present was not viable until bus exit routes were ascertained and understanding how the Market Square would be organised.
- It was agreed in the Biggleswade Joint Committee that trees would be removed and the ground would be flattened out in order to make it 'trip-hazard' free.
- Members **RESOLVED** for Officers to write to Central Bedfordshire Council to formalise the swift felling of the four trees but to request that trees are not replaced until the latter half of 2023 at the earliest, allowing time for discussion about the future layout of the Market Square.
- g. **Car Parking Tender Update Report**
- The Place Shaping Manger presented the report and noted that in consultation with the Chairman of the Town Centre Management Committee, some minor changes needed to be made to the report.
- Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the document tender report subject to the minor amendments.
- h. **Rose Lane Car Park Update**
- Members considered the report presented by the Place Shaping Manager. Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** a decision regarding drainage expenditure for Rose Lane Car park.
- Officers will investigate the drainage matter further and return with more detailed information to enable Members to reach a resolution.
- i. **CCTV Update**
- Following a presentation by the Place Shaping Manager, Members discussed the matter, and it was **RESOLVED** that due to the long delay in BT Open Reach Installation of the new Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) fibre line, Officers would write a letter to CBC's leadership.
- The letter suggested that a legal agreement would be entered into between CBC and the Town Council, enabling CBC to novate the existing analogue line to the Town Council. This in turn would allow BT Open reach to install a new fibre line for the Town Council as well as CBC.
- Members **AGREED** to progress the matter separately to the letter using alternative channels.
- k. **Design Guide SPD and Housing Policy Technical Guidance SPD (Consultation) January 2023**
- Members **RESOLVED** to defer the item to the Town Council meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 to allow for more time to review the detailed document.

## 10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

### a. CB/22/04935/VOC - Land to north of Lindsell's Level Crossing Biggleswade SG18 0AD

The Town Council **NOTED** the shorter ramps and proposed changes to rights of way. However, Council **STRONGLY OBJECTED** to the landscaping proposal, as it did previously in August 2022. The new plan reduces the planting further from the DOC approved in November 2022 and even further from that which was approved by DMC in July 2021. Condition 3 is required to mitigate the visual impact of the bridge in line with NPPF and Local Plan policies.

### b. CB/22/04809/FULL - Harrison House, Sheep Walk, Langford Road, Biggleswade, SG18 9RB

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.

### c. CB/23/00003/DOC - Land off Drove Road Adj to 1A Drove Road, Biggleswade, Beds SG18 8HD

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **STRONGLY OBJECT** to the discharge of conditions on this application as Council would like to see the conditions in place ahead of any planning approval.

### d. CB/22/04963/VOC - Park Corner Farm, Dunton Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8SH

The application was **NOTED**.

### e. CB/22/04896/DOC - Land to the South of Waste Transfer Site, Cow Close, Biggleswade

The application was **NOTED**.

## 11. PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES

This report was **NOTED**.

## 12. ACCOUNTS

### a. Financial Administration

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31/12/2022.
- ii. Detailed Income and Expenditure by Committee 31/12/2022.
- iii. Payment Listing from 01/12/2022 31/12/2022.
- iv. Summary Income and Expenditure to 31/12/2022

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the accounts as laid out. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive advised that to aid financial transparency, the accounts would be uploaded onto the Town Council website.

**13. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **ASDA Car Parking**

Cllr Russell read out the letter of response sent to ASDA officials and noted that it was also shared in the local press. However, no response had been received from ASDA yet.

Members **AGREED** to keep the item on the agenda for future Council meetings.

**14. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No one wished to speak at the meeting.

**15. EXEMPT**

None.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **9.05pm**