

**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 21ST APRIL 2022 at 14:30 PM**

Present:	BTC: Cllr M North, Cllr M Russell (Deputy Chairman), Cllr M Knight CBC: Cllr I Bond, Cllr S Dixon, Cllr M Foster (Chairman) BTC Town Clerk & Chief Executive: Peter Tarrant BTC Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships: Karim Hosseini BTC Place Shaping Manager: Isaac Lord BTC Deputy Administrator & HR Manager: Sian van der Merwe BTC Senior Administrator: Ruby Jandu
In Attendance:	CBC Community Engagement Manager: Sarah Hughes (via Zoom) CBC Place Programme Manager: Beverley Gaynor CBC Highways Asset Manager: Mark Eaton
Members of the public:	One

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 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 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

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Hayley Whittaker.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

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.

None.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman advised the Committee that Mr Eaton's speaking slot had been moved to the start of the Part B section of the meeting to accommodate his need to attend to another business meeting.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Members reviewed and **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Biggleswade Joint Committee Meeting of 15th January 2022.

MATTERS ARISING

Cllr North requested an update on the Health Hub considering ongoing concerns about residents being able to access GP services in Biggleswade. Cllr Dixon advised that progress of the plan is reliant on the NHS's drive to get it implemented and CBC is assisting with certain aspects of the project. He stated this is still on the agenda but CBC are awaiting feedback on recent issues.

PART B – ECONOMY AND TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

HIGHWAYS UPDATES

Mr Eaton advised the Committee Members of the following planned works for 2022/2023:

Footways:

Road	Locality
Saffron Road	Palace Street to Hitchin Street.
Sutton Avenue	Rowan Crescent to Stratton Way (both sides of the footway).
Stratton Way	Hitchmead Road to Potton Road (both sides of the footway).
Mill Lane	Hitchin Street to Teal Road (block paving replacement to blend into town centre paving) and removal of guard rail.
Kitelands Road	Holme Court Avenue to London Road.
Sandpiper Close	Teal Road to end (full length).
Sun Street	Rose Lane to Shortmead Street (both sides of the footway).

Carriageway & Drainage:

Road	Locality
Lawrence Road	1 Lawrence Road to Drove Road

Other Highway Works:

Workstream	Description	Locality
Integrated Transport	Lawrence Road	One-way and Cycle contra flow. Expected to be on site Jan 2023.
Rights of Way	Mill Lane FP 21 Bank Repairs	Bank repair of Footpath 21 between Mill Lane and Jordan's Mill.

Mr Eaton discussed the Mill Lane Bank repairs in light of ongoing flooding incidents at the A1 underpass. The Engineer responsible for the project needed confirmation from the Committee whether the ongoing flooding is significant enough to warrant a feasibility study and flood alleviation measures. Cllr Russell responded that heavy rainfall washes a lot of debris and mud into the dip in the footpath and there is no way for the water to escape, causing flooding.

Cllr Russell asked Mr Eaton when the Town Council will be invited to contribute to decision making related to the Lawrence Road works. Mr Eaton stated he would arrange a meeting with Lisa Wright and the Town Clerk to discuss this. Cllr Foster added Members of the Town Council want to understand the long-term plans for this scheme. Cllr Russell added that discussions about parking or loss of parking on Lawrence Road should be included as a concern.

Cllr Foster commented on the Sun Street resurfacing, particularly that a number of residents had commented they had not been advised of the planned works by letter. Mr Eaton stated he was aware of delays to the project and will circulate relevant information to the Committee when he has been fully briefed by colleagues as to the issues causing the delay.

Cllr Foster also asked Mr Eaton to consider resurfacing works for Kitelands as the road is in poor condition. Mr Eaton said he would look at the condition data.

Cllr Bond stated Mr Eaton could also provide the Committee with an update on what information is used to support the Highways Plan. Mr Eaton agreed to present to the next Committee on the scheme selection process, how data is used and contributory factors to inform the Plan, managing safety risks and access to key services/businesses.

Cllr Ramsay informed Mr Eaton that Members were previously provided with a landscaped list of all works to be carried out and asked if this can be reinstated going ward. Cllr Foster asked Mr Eaton to send the 2022/23 Highways Plan to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.

Market Square paving

Cllr Knight said there is a recurring problem in the Town Centre where utilities contractors are covering repairs with tarmac rather than replacing the original paving materials. He asked what expectations are of those contractors and what corrective action the Town Council can take where the pavers are not replaced. Mr Eaton said CBC will start to monitor those repairs and the corrective statements. He agreed to pass on the Town Council's concerns to the Street Works team.

Lighting – Upgrade and replace light columns

Mr Eaton advised there are plans to upgrade and replace a number of light columns across Biggleswade to LED units which will be more energy efficient and more compatible with a central control system for all lighting across central Bedfordshire.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Proposals

Mr Lord informed the Committee there are plans for two events:

- 1) 2 June - an evening event including lighting of the gas beacon on with food and drink provided by local vendors and various live music acts;
- 2) 5 June – a larger scale street party celebration involving as many local businesses as can be enticed into participating, with music and children's entertainment.

Marketing has commenced, with plans for full-page marketing in the Biggleswade Bulletin and posters in local business' windows. The Town Council has received two street party applications to date and Cllr Bond recommended the Town Council post another advert in the Biggleswade Chronicle in April, as well as publicise the cut-off date for the street party applications.

Adopt-A-Street Litter Picking Initiative

Mr Lord advised the Committee he has been in regular contact with the organiser to support the purchase of equipment. The Town Council is arranging a meeting with the Adopt-A-Street Litter Picking Initiative and Plastic-free Biggleswade. Cllr Foster stated that the recent "Riverside Clean" event was successful, with 26kg of litter collected and plans for additional events through the year.

PART C - PLACE - KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATES

Ms. Gaynor updated the Committee on the **Biggleswade HIF Programme**:

Biggleswade Sub-Station Plans:

Planning consent has been given for that site and a team are working to discharge the planning conditions. Contractors are still planning an improved Super grid transformer route.

Lindsell's Crossing:

The contractors are working on the detailed design to allow fabrication to commence. The team are working to discharge the planning conditions.

Education Project

The feasibility study has been extended and CBC have provided the necessary information to Homes England.

Biggleswade Transport Interchange:

The interface between this and the Network Rail's "Access for All" Scheme is being discussed. The contractor will commence works at the end of June 2022.

Cllr Russell confirmed that said she and Cllr Bond have attended a number of meetings with Network Rail, CBC and the contractor for the project. The project completion has been marketed as Spring 2023.

Garden Communities/ Biggleswade Moves Festival

CBC are still undertaking consultation on Biggleswade Moves, with comments and feedback still being collated.

Stratton Business Park

There are no further updates on this project and Phase 2 of this development is still underway. Three of the units are still listed as available and one unit has been sold.

Cllr Russell previously asked Cllr Collins at CBC to keep the Town Council informed on planning-related decisions for the site. Cllr Russell submitted a formal request of this Committee that the Town Council be kept informed of planning decisions for Stratton Business Park.

Cllr Foster asked whether CBC is looking to change the plans for the Business Park to allow further extensions to the retail park because numerous non-retail businesses re-located to other parts of Biggleswade. Ms Gaynor agreed to investigate and bring more information on this project to the next Committee Meeting.

Biggleswade Library Consultation

Ms. Hughes informed the Committee on the Library Consultation which closes on 5th June 2022. The proposal covers reconfiguring and refurbishing the library to modernise the facility, including building improvements, new furniture and shelving, a dedicated study zone within the library, change of the existing garage to a new children's centre and registration office.

Once the consultation period is completed results will be analysed and reports will be prepared for CBC's Executive Committee to decide the next steps at the October 2022 meeting.

Cllr Russell advised the Town Council has formally considered this Consultation and is in full support of the proposal, which has also been conveyed to CBC.

Engine Idling Consultation:

Ms. Hughes advised there has been a significant response regarding proposed new legislation around engine idling. This potentially allows CBC to take enforcement measures to prevent residents leaving vehicle engines idling when stationary. CBC's survey is exploring which locations are particularly vulnerable to engine idling.

Biggleswade Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Examination in Public:

Cllr Russell stated the Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Examination in Public is with the Planning Inspector. He has submitted further questions to CBC and the Town Council for additional information. The Town Council's consultant for the Neighbourhood Plan, Mr Dave Chetwyn of Urban Vision CIC, has already responded to the Inspector's questions. Based on the current progress, the Town Council expects the Final Report to be delivered in May 2022, with a recommendation to go to a referendum to follow.

Market Place Workshop Planning Meeting:

Ms Gaynor and Mr Hosseini advised Members this meeting would be to discuss long term place shaping priorities for the Market Place, Century House, sustainable transport corridor, East-West Connectivity, Stratton Business Park, Holme Farm among others to ensure strategic planning and delivery.

CBC and the Town Council are investigating funding streams, including S106 and two funding streams within the Levelling Up Agenda:

- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund: CBC will be receiving £3.6 million pounds over the next 3 years for regeneration schemes to tackle economic decline and improving numeracy and literacy skills. The deadline to submit an investment plan is by end of June 2022 for the Multiply (numeracy) programme and 1st August 2022 for the UKSPF investment plan.
- The Levelling Up Fund: Government has released Round 2 and inviting bids from Local Authorities for local regeneration projects. There can be 1 bid per MP constituency. The deadline is 6th July 2022 and there is potential for projects such as the Biggleswade Sustainable Transport Corridor to be included in this bid. CBC Place Delivery will be developing town level bids and will keep partners informed.

Cllr Dixon asked to join the Market Place Workshop planning team.

PART D – ITEMS REQUESTING ATTENTION BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Joint Committee Work Plan and Meeting Dates:

Cllr Foster asked Members to consider other items to include in the Work Plan for the coming year and to email those suggestions to him or to Cllr Russell.

Cllr Russell stated she would like to see the Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council working together more closely to benefit Biggleswade and felt that there are occasions where some items may need to be discussed under exempt session to facilitate progress.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 3:41 pm