



Ref: Agenda/TCM – 20/06/23

15th June 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

All Members of the Town Council are hereby summoned to the Town Centre Management Committee Meeting of Biggleswade Town Council that will take place on **Tuesday 20th June 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 "P. Tarrant", written over a horizontal line.

Peter Tarrant
Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Distribution: All Town Councillors
Notice Boards
The Press

Committee Members:

Cllr. J. Woodhead (Chairman)
Cllr. S. Patel (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr. I. Agnew
Cllr. D. Albone
Cllr. M. Foster (ex-officio voting Member)
Cllr. P. Guilcher
Cllr. M. Knight (ex-officio voting Member)
Cllr. M. North
Cllr. A. Skilton
Cllr. D. Strachan
Cllr. C. Thomas

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. CHAIRMAN'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_nsN4nGGyRzW7_uwntUdSuA

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. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

6. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. For Members to receive the minutes of the Town Centre Management Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 21st February 2023** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

7. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 21st February 2023**.

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **The Bigg Eats**

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

- b. **Remembrance Sunday 2023**

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

- c. **Upcoming Events**

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

- d. **CCTV Report**

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

9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- a. **Crime Statistics Q1 2023**

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

10. 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_nsN4nGGyRzW7_uwntUdSuA

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**.

11. 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. (Christmas Lights Switch-on 2023).

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 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**

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Centre Management
20th June 2023
The Bigg Eats Update

Implications of Recommendations:

Corporate Strategy: ASPIRATIONS: ECONOMY: Develop a programme of events for the town centre.

Finance: Improved income through trader revenue.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

Officers' last update to Members on 21st February 2023 at the Town Centre Management (TCM) meeting included a proposal to proceed on a collaborative venture for The Bigg Eats. This event would be a major recurring event in the town square to attract greater footfall and expenditure. Recommendations within the report were focused on acquiring a signature from a third party to further mitigate risk, that would organise attendance of traders and ensure their paperwork was up to date. This would further lift health and safety standards. Officers would be responsible for marketing, closing parking spaces and providing bins, hand sanitiser stations, tables and benches.

Members resolved to proceed with the event on Thursdays and to call the event The Bigg Eats rather than The Biggs Eat. Officers registered in 2 stages the trademark with the UK Gov portal. Stage 2 confirmation is pending.

Summary

Regrettably, despite Officers having 2 separate traders lined up to run the event, they each pulled out after Members resolved not to enter another agreement with Street Food Heroes in parallel with a new Bigg Eats event for the first few months. Officers have since reached out to 5 other potential traders that might be interested in collaborating with no success for similar reasons. The only other alternative to a 3rd party agreement led event would be for Officers to conduct the entire admin and on the day operation. It is important for Members to note the several reasons that an Officer-only approach to the event might not be as feasible as initially thought:

- Stalemate with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) on the responsibility of repairing the electrical infrastructure of the Market Square. The grid is slowly deteriorating and becoming unsafe with reports of fuses having blown as recently as May. Officers would feel unsafe advising traders where to plug in and so it would be necessary to hire an electrician for each event to monitor.
- A considerable amount of time will be spent contacting traders (both in town and surrounding areas), determining a final selection and ensuring it is sufficiently rotated each time to keep it fresh. Further to this, paperwork needs to be reviewed on each occasion to ensure it is up-to-date and chasing visiting traders whose documentation has expired.
- The need for the event to include local and out of town offers to maximise its success by ensuring freshness of offer.
- Increased overtime costs for managing the event which is deemed currently unaffordable from the general budget.

Officers attended a locally run street food event last month and met the organisers. They were keen to run the event in Biggleswade in collaboration with the Town Council and already have relationships with some traders and business owners in the area. Officers were advised to plan in the events for this calendar year back in January 2023 as traders' diaries quickly fill up, however this was not possible due to the lack of

interest from third parties in working together despite Officer efforts. Whilst the resolution refers to holding the events on a bi-monthly basis, this was resolved based on Officer suggestions for the event to be held during summer months. Advice has been received that the event will have a poor turnout if held in October and beyond.

The prospective organisers have suggested a date of Thursday 14th September 2023 to provide enough notice to traders and provide enough time for marketing the event which will host circa 10-12 stalls. Officers are in the process of negotiating their payment terms.

Recommendations

For Members to agree to:

- Officers engaging with the selected third-party and agree a date for Thursday 14th September 4pm to 9pm.
- Officers engaging with the third-party to sign the third-party agreement, adjusting any terms as necessary in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of TCM.
- Officers providing regular updates to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of TCM.

Isaac Lord
Place Shaping Manager

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Centre Management
20th June 2023
Remembrance Sunday Update

Implications of Recommendations:

Corporate Strategy: ASPIRATIONS: COMMUNITY: Protect the distinctive character and heritage of Biggleswade.

Finance: Spend sourced from £1,000 budget line relating to the service.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

The Town Council are ultimately responsible for the organisation of the Remembrance Sunday service, whilst collaborating with the Royal British Legion (RBL) and other key stakeholders in the community. Last year's service was generally well received by Members, stakeholders, residents and visitors alike. Items to consider reviewing in more detail for 2023 included the order of parade, dress code and first aid visibility. Due to the interchange works on Station Road at the time of the service, the Council were refused permission for the usual road closure, forcing the procession to take an unorthodox route.

Summary

Officers and the Chairman of the Town Centre Management (TCM) met with representatives of RBL on 8th June 2023. Following this, a road closure request was submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) for the route attached in Figure 1. A request has also been sent to Great Northern Rail for support in closing the forecourt for the procession to gather. Feedback was received by Officers and noted within the working document for the service and Officers are now beginning early preparations. Most of the discussion was focused on low-level detail, however one change from pre-COVID years is that the procession will be dismissed on the Market Square as it was last year.

RBL did however raise that they would like their bench placed in the Market Square, suggesting that one of the existing Council benches is removed to make way for it. Officers have suggested which bench as attached in Appendix A, as this provides a location in which residents can sit and see the Memorial whilst remembering the fallen.

Another meeting with RBL only is being scheduled for late August.

As usual, a meeting with all stakeholders will be held in early October.

Recommendations

For Members to agree to removing a bench from the Town Centre to be replaced with the RBL bench when it has been delivered.

Isaac Lord
Place Shaping Manager

Appendix A: RBL Bench Location

Appendix A – RBL Bench Location



BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Centre Management
20th June 2023
Market Square Events

Implications of Recommendations:

Corporate Strategy: ASPIRATIONS: ECONOMY: Develop a programme of events for the town centre.

Finance: Overtime may be required to facilitate some of the events. Although one suggestion will need funding, it is likely to break even through sponsorship.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

The Chairman of the Town Centre Management (TCM) committee and the Place Shaping Manager held a meeting to brainstorm ideas for events, to support in delivering the relevant corporate aspiration.

Summary

One idea includes inviting public and community services onto the Market Square to showcase what they do for Biggleswade. Public services would include organisations such as the Police, Fire, Ambulance and Air Ambulance services. More specifically, this idea consists of one event for public services and another for community services, each being attached to the Tuesday Market. Whilst the intention would be to raise awareness for these organisations, the events would also support in filling out the Square and hopefully pulling more footfall into the Town Centre. Depending on its success, the intention would then be to make it monthly or bi-monthly. It may have the added benefit of attracting traders as they realise the potential of the Market. If and when too many traders are attending the Market that it limits the community aspect, this could be moved to a separate day of the week.

Another idea is a vintage car show which would see the Council collaborate with Shuttleworth Trust and the United Counties Preservation Group. The latter being the organisation that put on the vintage bus routes on 30th October 2022 when Stagecoach closed their Biggleswade to Bedford route. Last year, Officers had conversations with the Executive Director of the Shuttleworth Trust discussing a similar idea, and although the meeting was positive, an event was never planned due to their busy calendar. Officers now have another contact within the organisation and are in the process of setting up a meeting and have also reached out to the United Counties Preservation Group to understand whether they would like an involvement.

A final idea includes an augmented-reality adventure through the Market Square and wider Town Centre. This includes ten or more quick response (QR) codes that are strategically placed in key points around the Square, which could include businesses that sign up via sponsorship and play areas. Without the need to register or download an app, families start by scanning the first 'story point' and then playing for free. Players will be told a story along the route, meeting virtual characters and getting to decide how their story plays out. Upon finishing the game, the player is rewarded with an e-book or in some types, a physical prize that could be collected from the Council Offices. The intention of this idea would be to drive footfall to key areas that the Town Council may wish to promote such as Franklin's Recreation Ground. With business sponsorship, it gives businesses the opportunity of increased footfall. As an example, a coffee shop might be a great location for a sticker and a mid-game refreshments break. Indicative costs are £549 as per <https://highstreetsafari.com/trails-2023>. This could be offset by asking businesses to pay for the QR sticker.

Recommendations

For Members to agree to the following:

- Officers pursue the community day idea and implement as soon as practically possible.
- Officers engage with the Shuttleworth Trust and Stagecoach to organise a day in Summer.
- Officers gauge interest in the augmented-reality adventure from residents (via survey) and Town Centre businesses, presenting a report soon to Town Council either way with an update. This would include a business plan if the interest was there.

Isaac Lord
Place Shaping Manager

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Centre Management
20th June 2023
CCTV Update Report

Implications of Recommendations:

Corporate strategy: ASPIRATIONS: PLACE: Ensure the provision of CCTV that supports the Council's anti-crime initiatives and policies.

Finance: Agreed S106 for £58,009 capital costs. Further S106 application to be made with Central Bedfordshire Council and a virement from the accounting fees line in the general budget due to increased revenue costs.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Supports with deterring and capturing criminal activity in Biggleswade.

Background

Members resolved at Council on 24th May 2022 to procure eight fixed wireless cameras, an additional mobile camera unit and to upgrade the existing four fixed cameras at Century House. £17,968 of S106 funding had been secured from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) at the time of presenting that report with a recommendation to pursue more funding from CBC. The report included reference to the increased revenue costs associated with the project from £16,000 to an indicative £20,330.

Officers updated Members at the Town Centre Management (TCM) meeting on 19th July 2022, stating that CBC had improved their S106 offer to £33,081.40 but could not cover the indicative £58,009 total cost, leaving a shortfall of circa £25,000. Members of the committee resolved to proceed with the initially outlaid strategy regardless of whether CBC could cover the shortfall for the project. It was also resolved to discuss this shortfall at the upcoming Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) meeting to approve the funding required, if necessary, from the Council's capital reserves.

Members of the F&GP committee resolved on 26th July 2022 to draw down £25,000 of capital reserves funding in the event that Officers were unable to access additional S106 contributions from CBC.

On 6th September 2022, Officers presented a further update report to Members of F&GP that CBC had approved for an additional £10,000 S106 contribution to the project, leaving a shortfall of circa £15,000. Officers were awaiting a response from CBC at the time of the report to understand whether they would cover the remaining amount, which Members noted.

Officers then verbally confirmed at Council on 27th September 2022 that the full indicative £58,009 cost for the project had now been covered by S106 funding.

Members received a further update on 18th October 2022, confirming that the order had been placed for the equipment with the next stage being to complete the novation agreement with CBC. This would give Biggleswade Town Council (BTC) the legal ownership of the existing analogue CCTV line. By owning the line, Officers were advised that BTC would receive existing customer rates for the capital cost of installing a digital line in its place and its associated revenue costs.

Following a conversation between Officers, CBC and BT, a number of options were set out to Members on 24th January 2023 regarding the digital line. Members resolved for Officers to write to CBC expressing the urgency of the project and outlined costs associated with the digital line installation as a new or existing customer.

CBC were unwilling to sign the novation agreement until they had completed their ongoing CCTV works across the county, including works in Biggleswade. Officers escalated this to the Director of Place and Communities via letter but CBC remained firm on their position. With further BTC officer pressure, on 12th April 2023, these works were completed and on the same day, the novation agreement was signed by both parties and sent to BT. This was accepted by BT on 2nd May 2023 with updated capital and revenue costs sent via email on 15th May 2023. This is the first time that BTC has legally owned the existing analogue line since its inception.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Members on the variance between the initial and revised capital costs for the project, as well as an update on the emerging revenue costs, and how any shortfalls will be funded.

Figure 1 illustrates initial and revised capital costs. Officers are looking to source this from S106 in the first instance and will update Members via another report if this is not possible.

Figure 2 illustrates the indicative costs relating to revenue. By taking on the existing line from CBC, BTC now incurs an annual analogue line rental cost of £3,758.88. Once this is upgraded from analogue to digital, this will increase to £4,312. CBC have given notice to Herts CCTV for the 3 cameras they manage for BTC at present and their responsibility for the 3 cameras will end on 8th September 2023. As a result, BTC will be invoiced for the period covering 1st April 2023 through to 8th September 2023. These costs were sent through to Officers on 13th June 2023. BT estimate circa four months before the digital line can be installed, and so Officers have made projections assuming a full changeover to digital with simultaneous new cameras rolled out on 27th November 2023 hence the figures included in the figure being indicative and pro rata.

BT's quotes relating to the capital cost of installing the digital line and the annual digital line rental are valid for 30 days and expire on Friday 30th June. BT have stated they are open to taking orders for the digital line up until 13th August 2023 however the maximum contract term they will now accept is 12 months.

Figure 1. BT Link Capital Costs

Digital Line Installation (Capital)		Commentary
Initial Cost	£2,775	Outlined to Members on 24th May 2022
Budget	£2,775	Sourced from S106
Revised Cost	£4,275	Quote received by BT on 15th May 2023
Variance	£1,500	Suggested to be sourced from S106 in the first instance

Figure 2. CCTV Revenue Costs for 23/24

Revenue Item	Cost	Commentary
Budget 23/24	£18,000.00	CCTV cost line within Town Centre General.
Analogue Line Rental	£2,192.68	Indicative pro rata cost covering 13th April 2023 through to 27th November 2023.
Digital Line Rental	£1,437.33	Indicative pro rata cost covering 28th November 2023 through to 31st March 2024.
M&M	£6,212.00	Indicative pro rata cost covering 1st April 2023 through to 8th September 2023.
M&M	£3,000.00	Indicative pro rata cost covering 9th September 2023 through to 27th November 2023.
M&M	£6,293.33	Indicative pro rata cost covering 28th November to 31st March 2024.
Variance	£1,135	Net overspend.
M&M - monitoring and maintenance. Time period for digital line to be up and running is indicative based on a four-month lead time for BT to install the digital line after accepting their quote, therefore all costs are indicative.		

Recommendations

For Members to agree to:

- Officers continuing to liaise with CBC to acquire S106 funding to cover the £1,500 of capital cost relating to the digital line. Regardless of whether this is successful, a further report will go to Council on 27th June with a final recommendation to ensure BTC can accept the quote before further price increases and to avoid slippage.
- Officers continuing to review the projected outturn of CCTV revenue. In the event of an overspend, as projected within the above figures, Officers will request a virement from the accounting fees heading. There will be a sufficient underspend in this heading as the contract with DCK has finished early.

Isaac Lord
Place Shaping Manager

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Centre Management
20th June 2023
Crime Statistics Report
Quarter 4 2022-2023

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: ASPIRATIONS: COMMUNITY: Ensure Biggleswade is a safe and confident community, working with Bedfordshire Police and other emergency services so that they aware of our concerns and priorities.

Finance: May influence positioning of mobile camera units, which has minor impact on budget.

Equality: No impact.

Environment: No impact

Community Safety: No impact.

Background

Officers continue to report on crime statistics as agreed at the Town Centre Management meeting in July 2022.

Introduction

If there have been no reported crimes of a category of crime this will not be displayed in the graph. The figures used within this report are the crimes recorded in Biggleswade by Bedfordshire Police that can be shared with the public. Due to the volume of data included in some of the appendices, they have all been uploaded to SharePoint if Members would prefer to review the data digitally.

Appendices are supplied separately on A3 sheets.

Appendix A analysis

Overall, the number of crimes recorded in the period between January and March (Q4), is far lower in 2023 than in any year for the same period, besides 2018, which has only a few more incidents.

Appendix B analysis

Whilst January saw 95 incidents of crime reported, this rose to 112 incidents in February, which then remained fairly static into March at 111. Assaults was the highest reported category at 71 in total over the three-month period. This was closely followed by business theft or attempted theft with 65 incidents in Q4. Notably, there was a murder in February and whilst there were 6 incidents of violent offences in January this dropped to only 1 by March.

Appendix C analysis

Theft and attempted theft has remained relatively static in Q4, with 11 incidents in January, 13 incidents in February and finally 19 incidents in March. The majority of these relate to other theft at 15 reports followed by theft from motor vehicles at 13 reports.

Appendix D analysis

Business theft or attempted theft largely peaked in February at 27 incidents versus January and March numbers which were 16 and 22 respectively. A large proportion of these were related to shoplifting as opposed to making off without payment.

Appendix E analysis

Biggleswade Ivel continues to see the highest number of incidents relating to business theft or attempted theft at 45 versus Biggleswade Holme at 18 and Biggleswade Stratton at 2.

Appendix F analysis

As with the majority of previous reports, the Market Square sees the highest number of reported incidents of business theft or attempted theft at 20. This is followed by London Road at 13 reports and Bonds Lane at 10.

Appendix G analysis

16 incidents were reported over Q4 and spread evenly throughout each month. There was a slight majority for burglaries relating to business and continuity at 5 reports versus residential burglary at 4.

Appendix H analysis

Criminal damage started in January at 9 reports, increasing to 15 in February and falling back down slightly to 11 in March. Criminal damage to a vehicle was the highest reported category at 11, followed by other criminal damage at 10 then criminal damage to a business-related building at 6.

Appendix I analysis

Assaults continue to be very high with 25 incidents in both January and February then 21 incidents in March. The majority of these were without injury at 46 of the 71 total reports followed by with injury at 24.

Appendix J analysis

The total number of violent offences increased between Q3 and Q4 from 2 to 6. These largely took place in January with one incident of possession of other weapons in March.

Recommendations

For Members to note the Q4 crime statistics.

Isaac Lord
Place Shaping Manager

Appendix A: Comparing crime in Q4 versus the same period in previous years

Appendix B: Comparing all crimes recorded in each month within Q4

Appendix C: Comparing theft or attempted theft in Q4

Appendix D: Comparing business theft or attempted theft in Q4

Appendix E: Comparing business theft or attempted theft across wards in Q4

Appendix F: Comparing business theft or attempted theft across streets in Q4

Appendix G: Comparing burglary crimes in Q4

Appendix H: Comparing criminal damage in Q4

Appendix I: Comparing assaults crimes in Q4

Appendix J: Comparing violent offence crimes in Q4

Appendix K: Breakdown of crime categorisation

