



MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 13th FEBRUARY 2024
AT 7.00PM AT BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE, SG18 8DL



PRESENT:

Cllr M Foster (Mayor)
Cllr M Knight (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr I Agnew
Cllr D Albone
Cllr G Barrett
Cllr J Jones
Cllr M North
Cllr S Patel
Cllr A Skilton
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 I Campbell – Community Development Manager
Ms F Gumush – Meetings Administrator

Members of the Public – 2 (1 online).

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

a. Cllr M Russell, Cllr S Sajid.

b. REMOTE ATTENDANCE

Cllr P Guilcher.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

Cllr Strachan for Item 9f.

3. **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. None.

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Ward Councillor, Grant Fage

Cllr Fage commenting on Item 9h, Street Trading Application, noted that the location on the application for this vendor looked to be on a roundabout, which he added is inappropriate. He also questioned the quality of this application and hoped Council would take a closer look at it and draw their own conclusions.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

None.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Cllr Jones explained that a member of public who contacted her recently, informed her that on a recent walk to see the new level crossing at Lindsell's bridge, they had to walk by the railway as the new path was not yet opened. She added however that there were major trip hazards there as a lot of plastic ties were strewn along the pathway, some of which was coming out of the ground. Cllr Jones requested that Officers raise the issue with Central Bedfordshire Council and also inquire as to how long it would be before the new path was opened as walking along the train track was not ideal.

Cllr Jones noted that the announcement of the cancellation of the Biggleswade Community Carnival this year was sad and wondered if the Council could support the fundraising that would be lost from not having this event this year.

Cllr Patel responded that they hoped there would be more onus on the annual Duck Race this year, making it a bigger event than usual.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. P10 Item 10d. Cllr Barrett indicated that the word 'path' should be included for the sentence to read 'provide a swept path plan'.

Subject to these amendments the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 23rd January 2024.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

P8 Matter Arising. Cllr Knight asked if there had been any response to the issue relating to the Jerk Hub application, to which the Town Clerk responded that Officers were still awaiting a response, and this was being followed closely.

9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. **Grants Policy Update**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive presented the report and indicated that the report followed on from the Council connected to precept. He added that it included minor changes which would

enable second tranche grant applicants to be paid in the present financial year, rather than the next financial year.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation changing the deadline date of the second tranche to 28th February and to approve the associated changes to the Grants Policy.

b. **Update to Financial Regulations**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive presented the report and indicated that following on from the F&GP Committee Meeting, it was agreed that a second credit card was issued as a back-up to the Town Clerk's card. He added that this would need a slight adjustment to the Financial Regulations to reflect the change.

Members indicated that there was a typo on P6 of the Regulation under article 4.1 which should read £15,000 - £30,000 not £15,00.

Members **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** the recommendation to agree changes detailed in Figure 1 of the report.

c. **Jubilee Recreation Ground Report**

Members discussed the report presented by the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships. The report had previously been presented at the recent Public Lands and Open Spaces Committee meeting; however, a Town Council resolution was necessary to take the project further.

Members agreed that as a concept the project was good, with points including:

- Opening of the fencing could affect the residents in the area as there are homes overlooking the grounds.
- Extending of the path to the east may be a better option as families use the area in the north for picnics and playing football.
- If trees are going to be planted; using the land south would be better as it would leave the flatter area in the north for families.
- Due to the history of the land as a former landfill, it may not be suitable for tree planting.
- The agreement would need to be looked over by a specialist solicitor.
- Residents in the area should be consulted on what the project will involve.

Following much discussion, Members **RESOLVED** the following:

- In relation to the trees, Officers continue negotiations on the exact location of the trees and the contract and have authority to proceed with that as required. This is subject to inviting Earthwatch to deliver the project as suggested subject to the legal agreement being satisfactory.
- Upon the successful conclusion of the negotiations and agreement with Earthwatch and the final location of the trees, new proposals are drawn up for the location of a path; consultation is held with the local residents and the item is brought back to Council or PLOS once the process is complete.
- To remove a 2.5m section of the fence to the north of the site irrespective of the tiny forest and the path.

d. **Kitelands and Brunel Report**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships presented the report. He explained that the play area items for Kitelands had been delivered to the Public Realm depot and were currently being built by the installers there.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships indicated that the installers would be arriving at the Kitelands site to start the installation work by the beginning of March, and they anticipated that the work would not take more than four weeks to complete. He added that Tritax Symmetry had been invited to a site visit.

With regards to the Brunel Play Area, the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that ahead of the Council meeting, Officers had received positive communications from the Department for Levelling Up and Housing to say that the application for Public Works Loan Board funding (PWLB) had been successful for this project.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships indicated that whilst waiting for the application to come through, the price of equipment for this play area had increased. Therefore, a new report, outlining the additional expenditure, would come back to a Town Council meeting for discussion.

Members **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the report and the progress on Kitelands.

Members also **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** that Officers will provide a revised costings report regarding the Brunel Drive Play Area equipment, to a Town Council meeting.

e. **Linear Wood & Saxon Gate Pocket Park Report**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive explained that a condition survey was carried out on this area which helped with the negotiations and highlighted any issues with Central Bedfordshire Council. He indicated that if the Council decided to take over these two areas, they would have to be in a very good condition prior to that decision.

Members **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** this report and agreed for the item to be brought back to the next Town Council meeting.

f. **Land North Access Arrangements**

Members discussed the correspondence from Carter Jonas and welcomed the invitation to meet with Council Members.

Members determined that the preference would be for any meeting to be in the public domain. They also indicated that if the organisation could share some documentation ahead of the meeting, it would help aid discussion.

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers consult with and invite Carter Jonas to a future Town Council meeting.

g. **Pre-Consult BIGG Green Wheel (Saxon Close & Baden Powell Way)**

Members discussed the correspondence from CBC which looked at the stopping up and diversion of parts of the Biggleswade public footpaths and the creation of a footpath and bridleway.

Members **NOTED** the correspondence and welcomed the introduction of a new footpath and acknowledged the work to be carried out.

h. **Street Trading Application: Ref 33452**

Members discussed the application for a new street trader.

Members **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to this planning application on the grounds of safety as the proposed trading location on the highway is unsafe. Additionally, the application was considered to be not of good quality in terms of submitted detail.

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/TCA/24/00038 - 1- 36 Claremont Court, Rose Lane, Biggleswade**

Works To Trees In A Conservation Area: Re-Pollard two Lime Trees and up to 30% Reduction to one additional Lime Tree, maintenance to uphold appearance.

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

b. **CB/24/00125/FULL - 22 Holme Court Avenue, Biggleswade, SG18 8PF**

Two storey front and side extensions.

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the grounds of the following:

- Impact on the appearance of the area.
- Design, appearance, layout and materials.
- Overdevelopment due to the height of the building.

The Town Council also asks that Officers check with the planning regulations for the height of the building.

c. **CB/24/00232/FULL - 29 Binder Place, Biggleswade, SG18 0RU**

Creation of a loft conversion with front and rear dormers. Erection of a two-storey side extension.

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

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

This report was **NOTED**.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

Members **RESOLVED** to note the Management Accounts report as attached in the agenda pack.

In addition, the usual financial documentation is available on the Council website.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **CBC Traffic Management Meeting**

Members **NOTED** the action items arising from the CBC Traffic Management Meeting.

b. **The Red Lion, 1 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8ED**

Members welcomed the decision of the Planning Appeals with regards to the appeal brought in by the Red Lion.

Cllr Knight thanked Cllr Thomas for attending the appeals hearings and making a valuable contribution at the hearing.

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers write to Central Bedfordshire Enforcement and ask that they ensure that the building is restored to its original state prior to any of the work on the building had been carried out.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No one from the public wished to speak.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Market Square & Wider Town Centre Vision Report**

Members discussed the report and **NOTED** the recommendations put forward by Officers.

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers continue to work with Members to establish a way forward with a target date of 31st March 2024 prior to formal engagement with Ward Councillors once this has been agreed.

b. **Kings Reach Football Pitches Report**

Members discussed the report by Officers and **RESOLVED** that Officers engage with the Consortium to get a data pack connected to all of the football pitches on the Kings Reach Estate before wider negotiations are carried out.

c. **Football and Cricket Proposal Report**

Members **NOTED** the report and agreed to all the actions proposed by Officers.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **9.15pm**.