



Ref: Agenda/Council – 02/11/23

27th October 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

All Members of the Public Land & Open Spaces Committee are hereby summoned to the Public Land & Open Spaces Committee Meeting of Biggleswade Town Council that will take place on **Thursday 2nd November 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. M. North (Chairman)
Cllr. C. Thomas (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr. M. Foster (ex-officio voting Member)
Cllr. P. Guilcher
Cllr. M. Knight (ex-officio voting Member)
Cllr J. Jones
Cllr A. Skilton
Cllr. D. Strachan
Cllr. J. Woodhead

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_xXjbXpB3QCWc6dLYTbWTJQk

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 Public Land & Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 3rd October 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 3rd October 2023**.

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **All Play Areas Equipment Replacement Report**

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

- b. **Football Pitches Report**

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

9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- a. **Drove Road Chapel Update Report**

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

- b. **Jubilee Recreation Ground Update**

For Member to receive a verbal update from the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships.

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_xXjbXpB3QCWc6dLYTbWTJQ

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. (Brunel Drive Play Area Update Report).
- b. (Kitelands Play Area Update Report).
- c. (Stratton Way Cemetery Project Report).

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 PUBLIC LAND AND OPEN SPACES
MEETING HELD TUESDAY 3rd OCTOBER 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 P Guilcher
Cllr M Foster (ex-officio voting Member)
Cllr A Skilton
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 – 4

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 would infringe the Data Protection Rights of that individual.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

a. Cllr M Knight, Cllr J Woodhead.

b. REMOTE ATTENDANCE

Cllr J Jones (via zoom).

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. None.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No member of the public wished to speak.

5. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- a. Cllr Skilton pointed to concerns residents had raised regarding cows on Biggleswade Common which have caused problems not only for dog walkers on numerous occasions but have broken out of their enclosures, damaged fences and entered private properties.

Cllr Skilton indicated that even though the Town Council did not have any jurisdiction in this area, it was disturbing for residents and a matter which needed attention.

The Chairman of the Committee explained that Cllr Russell, was scheduled to have a meeting with Fen Reeves who are the custodians of the Common, to discuss this matter.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive underlined that the Council strongly sympathises with residents and although has no legal powers, has supplied residents with contact information for the Fen Reeves.

Cllr Foster indicated that the Council website should be updated so that it gives contact information for the Fen Reeves.

- b. Cllr Strachan asked that going forward, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor are included on distribution lists of all Committee meetings.

6. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

No amendments were made to the Minutes which were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the PLOS Committee meeting held on **Tuesday 6th June 2023**.

7. MATTERS ARISING

P7 – Cllr Strachan noted the resolution regarding progression of a power source to facilitate future connection for lighting and CCTV at Franklins and added that as Members had received informal reports on the matter, it would be appropriate to note this.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships pointed out that the outcome of this work would be presented at a forthcoming growth budget discussion.

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Brunel Drive Play Area Update Report**

The Chairman explained that several Members of the PLOS Committee had recently carried out a visit to Brunel Drive and Kitelands Play Areas with the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships and the Public Realm Manager.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships explained that there were several pieces of equipment in the play areas which had worn over time and for health and safety reasons needed to be reinvigorated.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive indicated that he was working with the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to prepare a report for Town Council on the 10th of October, which provides an umbrella overview of the potential funding streams for the key projects. He added that the debate this evening will contribute to that paper.

Regarding the location of the swings, the Public Realm Manager noted that they could not be relocated because this would cause damage to the swing sets. Presently, the seats of the swings would be replaced in situ.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation that they support the contents of the report and recommend to the Town Council that Officers and Members assess the anticipated bids with a view to selecting a winning supplier.

b. **Kitelands Play Area Update Report**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships presented the report.

He explained that one of the contractors had provided a 3D walk-through for both Brunel Drive and Kitelands Play Areas and these would be shared with Members in due course.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships pointed out that the first tranche of the Community Grant funding of £57,000 would be provided once the Town Council selects a viable contractor through the tendering process. He added that the children's play area would be completed first and the larger play area would receive the second tranche of funding once the go ahead is given.

Members questioned the material of some of the play equipment and their position in the park, noting that some of the metal equipment was positioned in the sun whilst the wooden equipment was placed in the shade.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that one of the suppliers had prepared their bid with this in mind.

Members commented that once the preferred supplier is selected, Members will need to scrutinize the plan, equipment, layout and colour of the equipment in order to achieve the right balance.

Members pointing to the vandalism issues during the renovation of the Franklins Play Area, also questioned how security would be achieved during the renovation of these new play areas.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships indicated that fencing would be erected around the parks, but other measures had not yet been explored. This would become clearer once the preferred supplier is selected.

On the point of colours for the play equipment, Members asked that colours were taken into consideration for children with special needs in mind.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive suggested that it may be an opportunity to reach out within the community and take into consideration the views of parents and teachers who work with less able-bodied children and young adults such as the Ivel Valley School, to get a sense of what they would like to see in play areas.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation that they support the report and recommend to the Town Council that Officers and Members assess all anticipated bids with a view to selecting a successful supplier.

c. **All Play Areas Equipment Replacement Report**

The Town Council is now in the second year of its five-year play areas project. In August 2023 Officers conducted a detailed review and the report calls for the replacement of identified play equipment and ground surfaces which are in poor condition.

The Chairman noted that the Council currently has a maintenance budget of £1,500 a year, which is inadequate to maintain the play areas.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the findings of the report and **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to approve option A.

This will enable Officers to:

- Draw down an indicative £183,000 in 2023-34 from PWLB funding.
- It will also enable Officers to make the case in October 2023 for growth funding of £20,000 maintenance for 2024-25.
- This will allow Officers to deliver timely improvements to play equipment with ground surfacing across all 11 play areas on a worst condition replaced first basis.

d. **Stratton Way Cemetery Project**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships and Public Realm Manager presented the report.

He noted that the project aimed to transform the cemetery into a more dignified offering for all faiths.

The project aimed to enhance both entrances to the cemetery and fortify the roundabouts to ensure it can be negotiated easily by vehicles. Additionally, memory walls and ash scattering areas will be introduced to boost the current offer.

Members commenting indicated that in heavy rain fall, the eastern part of the roundabout is usually flooded, and this needed to be addressed.

Members also indicated that it would be a good opportunity for Members to have a walkabout so that they are clear on how the cemetery could be set out better at a later stage.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the report and accept the recommendation for the use of an indicative £60,000 of PWLB funds and for Officers to report the tender outcomes to a future Town Council meeting.

Members also **PROPOSED** and **RESOLVED** that Officers present a report for Town Council to review the Terms & Conditions and Burials Policy to ensure they are aligned with future configuration and lay out of the Cemetery.

9. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

None.

10. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

a. Ellie Church, Biggleswade Resident

Ms Church who has been a resident of Biggleswade since 1989 wanted to draw the Committee's attention to the issues she has experienced due to the cattle on the Fen Reeves Common.

Ms Church underlined that for the last five years the cows from the common have crossed the river and destroyed her garden. She indicated that only recently, 20 cows overran her garden as well as her neighbour's property and despite the herdsman being notified, the issue was not taken into control until the next day.

Ms Church explained that although she contacts the managers of the common, she does not always get a prompt response. She stressed that the situation had become untenable and was causing her an untold amount of distress.

The Chairman repeated that a Member of Council would be meeting with the Fen Reeves Management soon and added that despite the Council not having any legal jurisdiction, they would be following the matter closely.

11. EXEMPT

a. None.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **8.05pm**

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
PLOS Committee 2nd November 2023
Play Areas Equipment Replacement Report

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: ENVIRONMENT: A Green Town: Consider the recommendations of the audit of play areas and how we might invest to improve those areas.

Finance: Implications for 2023-24 PWLB funding and future maintenance budgets.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background:

Officers presented a play areas condition report covering all of the play areas owned by the Town Council to the PLOS Committee and Town Council meeting in 10th October 2023. The Town Council meeting on 24th October 2023 resolved that an extraordinary PLOS Committee meeting should take place on 2nd November 2023 to provide further scrutiny on a range of Town Council projects including this one.

Summary:

On 5th October 2023, Officers launched on the Crown Commercial Services (CCS), an expression of interest exercise inviting all play equipment suppliers to bid using the provided specification (please see Appendix A) which covered 11 play areas. These exclude Brunel drive, Kitelands and Franklins. The exercise closes on 30th November 2023 and Officers are conducting a series of site visits with interested parties.

Once the exercise has closed on 30th November 2023, Officers will control open the bids with the Town Clerk and Members and then conduct the evaluation exercise using the Town Council matrix. It is anticipated that a winning bid can be selected by mid-December and feedback provided to all suppliers. This means that an agreement could be signed in early January (post legal scrutiny) and orders of play equipment and floor matting to be placed ahead of installation across the 11 play areas.

Officers are awaiting the decisions of the Town Council meeting on 14th November 2023 primarily on affordability, to ascertain whether this project may continue.

Recommendations:

That PLOS Committee Members note this report and approve that the project may continue within the above parameters ahead of the 14th November Town Council meeting.

Jonathan Woolley
Public Realm Manager

Karim Hosseini
Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships

Appendix A: Play Areas Equipment and Floor Surfaces Specification.

Appendix A

Play Areas Equipment and Floor Surfaces Specification Presented to previous Town Council Meetings

The play equipment and ground surfacing need direct replacement. Costs are indicative, excluding delivery, installation and removal. These additional costs sum to an indicative £49,000. In total, the project value is estimated at an indicative £183,000.

Play Areas	Play Equipment	Condition	Play Areas	Play Equipment	Condition	Play Areas
Watkins Walk	Seesaw, springer	Poor	£10,500	Rubber mats	Poor	£4,000
Stratton Way	2 springers	Poor	£9,400	Rubber mats	Poor	£4,000
Poppyfields 2	Seats toddler swing, paint frame	Poor	£1,000	Wet pour	Good	£0
Poppyfields 1	2 springers, e-Cup, hopscotch tiles	Poor	£15,700	Rubber mats	Poor	£4,000
Playfield Close	e-cup, 4-way springer	Poor	£11,800	Rubber mats	Poor	£4,000
Kaiser Court	Slide, 2 springers, seat for swing	Poor	£21,700	Rubber mats	Poor	£4,000
Heather Drive	Fence needs repainting, wood equipment maintenance	Poor	£2,000	Wet pour	Good	£0
Foxglove Drive	E-cup, swing	Poor	£10,000	Rubber mats	Poor	£2,000
Fairfield Road	3 Toadstools, table	Poor	£3,000	Wet pour	Good	£0
Berkeley Close	4-way Seesaw, e-cup, seats for swing	Poor	£11,900	Rubber tiles	Poor	£5,000
Lilac Grove	E-cup	Poor	£7,000	Rubber mats	Poor	£3,000
Totals	18 items		£104,000	Circa 150 sqm		£30,000

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL PLOS Committee Meeting 2nd November 2023 Football Infrastructure Report

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: COMMUNITY: A Town to be Proud Of: Work closely with the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sectors to build a strong community.

Finance: Officers are seeking precept growth funding for Financial Year 24/25 to improve football infrastructure and are exploring other funding avenues.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background:

Reports on football pitches recommending the conversion of a single full size pitch to two smaller 7-a-side pitches on Stratton Recreation Ground and on future budget growth requests, were delivered respectively to the 22nd August and 10th October Town Council meetings. Members resolved for Officers to create 2 additional pitches to reach a total establishment of 8 pitches across 3 locations.

Summary:

This report focuses on football infrastructure as the town and Town Council offer do not currently provide a good working model. The growth request has been considered at the 31st October finance meeting and at the pending CAWG meeting alongside all other bids for growth budget.

Officers are suggesting that investment (capital and revenue) is made in pitches' equipment, pavilions and maintenance equipment. These interventions would improve the overall football and other sports offer for the public on Town Council owned infrastructure. They would also enable the pitches' goal posts to meet the current safety compliance standards.

Fig 1: 2024-25 – Improvement to all football facilities, various funding sources to be explored (s106, grants and growth budget 24-25).

Facilities	Capital	Revenue	Comments
Pitches (8)	£0	£0	Pitches of 2 sizes, full and training
Equipment (16)	£32,000	£0	16 Posts, flags to replace old stock, safety compliance
Pavilions (3)	£60,000	£0	Football Fed funding + other to improve 3 buildings facilities
Containers 30 ft (3)	£15,000	£0	One per ground, could charge teams to rent space
Sub-total	£107,000	£0	
Maintenance (annual)	£7,000	£10,000	Capital for Rotovator, roller, spikes etc. Annual maintenance PR team time not included
Total requirement	£114,000	£10,000	Maintenance per annum recurring

The 2023-24 maintenance budget allocation for all recreation grounds is £1,500 and inadequate. The annual recurring maintenance costs to repair, treat, prepare 8 pitches, grounds and buildings are estimated to be an indicative £10,000. Additionally, the Public Realm team requires significant capital investment for a new rotovator, commercial roller, spikes, totaling £7,000. The wider capital growth requirement set out in the figure covers all aspects of investment in football facilities including the pitches, football equipment, floodlighting, storage, and changing rooms.

Officers have explored wider funding options and confirm that CBC has stated there are no section 106 funds available for football improvements this financial year. Other viable sources include the Football Foundation and Football Association, as well as Sport England and the National Lottery. The Council would meet the qualifying criteria for these funding sources and could apply. Officers have launched an expression of interest on the Crown Commercial Services

(CCS) platform to obtain quotes from interested suppliers with a closing date of 30th November.

Recommendation:

- For PLOS Committee Members to note this report and report to the Town Council meeting on 14th November 2023.

Jonathan Woolley
Public Realm Manager

Karim Hosseini
Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Public Land and Open Spaces Committee 2nd November 2023
Drove Road Chapel Update

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: ASPIRATIONS: PLACE: Improve the environment of the cemeteries in Drove Road and Stratton Way and upgrade and re-purpose the Grade II listed chapel in Drove Road.

Finance: Works funded from the Public Works Loan Board, general reserves and insurance claim.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented a report to Council on 24th October 2023 with a series of drawdown recommendations regarding Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) spend. This referenced two additional expenditures for the Drove Road Chapel project, which were approved. This report provides Members with further clarity on what these expenditures are and why they are necessary, to note.

Additional Work on Defective Boundary Wall

Work started on the defective boundary wall week commencing 11th September and since this date, Officers have received weekly updates with respect to these works and the chapel project. On 15th September, Officers received the below update in relation to the boundary wall.

‘A large section of the boundary wall has been taken down, along with hoardings erected in the adjacent garden and heras fencing within the churchyard to protect public from the site working area. It was noted that a further length of approximately 3m is leaning out of vertical and would benefit from re-building and to this end a quote has been requested for this section.’ A picture has been attached in Appendix A for reference.

Inflated Phase 2 Specification Costs

Members had previously resolved an additional £10,490 of costs for phase two to fund various items that were carried over from phase one, tower windows and inflationary pressures. Account figures that were put forward to Members were factually correct at the time, and the external project manager was sighted. Since this report to Members on 27th June, prices for some items have further inflated with an additional £4,764 of cost now requested from the external project manager.

Work on Vandalised Boundary Wall

Separately, a section of the boundary wall located in the northeast corner of the cemetery has been knocked down, which appears to be a result of vandalism and thus has been logged with the Police. A picture has been attached in Appendix B for reference. Officers have obtained a crime reference number and have quoted this as part of a claim with the Council's insurers. The claim was successful and the sum of money has been received. Officers will therefore be instructing the external project manager to complete the necessary repairs.

Recommendations:

For Members to note the report.

Isaac Lord
Place Shaping Manager

Appendix A: Picture of defective boundary wall.

Appendix B: Picture of vandalised boundary wall.

Appendix A: Picture of defective boundary wall.



Appendix B: Picture of vandalised boundary wall.



