



MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 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 G Barrett (Deputy Mayor)
 Cllr J Jones
 Cllr M Knight
 Cllr M North
 Cllr S Patel
 Cllr M Russell
 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 E Bour – Head of Finance & Deputy RFO
 Mx K Chambers – Committee Clerk

Members of the Public – 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 I Agnew.

b. **Remote Attendance**

Cllr D Albone, Cllr P Guilcher, Cllr S Sajid.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

None.

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

Cllr Russell for Item 10r.
 Cllr Barrett, Cllr Foster, & Cllr Thomas for Item 10s.
 Cllr Strachan for Item 13e.

3. **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a. **Remembrance Sunday 2024**

The Mayor recognised that the event was an excellent showcase for the town and thanked the Royal British Legion, Members and Officers for their involvement.

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No member of the public wished to speak.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

a. **Cllr S Watkins – Disposal of Holme Farm, Biggleswade.**

Cllr Watkins introduced the plan, highlighting the intended new uses including up to 63 hectares of new employment land, improvements to both A1 roundabouts, a new pedestrian and cycle footbridge, and landscaping. Cllr Watkins added that the sale was authorised by CBC Executive on 8th April 2024 and that the process will be handled by himself, the new Director of Place and Communities, Robert Ling, and the Executive Member of Finance, Cllr Baker. He also noted that a decision will be made on starting the disposal process in the first quarter of 2025.

Members asked what the new walkway will lead to. Cllr Watkins responded that it could be a commercial area, but it will depend on the market demand. Members raised the current rules for the Green Wheel and how this might be impacted by the addition.

Members asked how any requirements will be enforced within development contracts, such as bus services, pedestrian and cycle access, and tree belt. Cllr Watkins noted that these would all be likely covered during the consultation and that they hope to have an established bus service that lasts longer than two years.

Members queried whether the site will be sold as piecemeal and that this might lead to a lack of safeguards in the contracts and planning. Members also noted that it is important to encourage visitors to come into the town centre as well as this new site. Cllr Watkins said that he would be resistant to selling as piecemeal.

Members asked what impact the redevelopment might have on both A1 roundabouts. Cllr Watkins responded that there is currently interest from developers for the site on the other side of the A1 to the Holme Farm site and that this might provide a solution in the future but could not provide any further detail at this time.

Members questioned whether Bedford Borough Council has any reciprocal obligation to pay money to Central Bedfordshire Council for development on their former county council land. Cllr Watkins confirmed that this would be the case.

Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes be sent to Cllr Watkins for his reference.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

- a. Cllr Thomas asked whether there was any availability for the Drove Road Chapel or the Old Depot. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive responded that phase three of the development work for the Chapel should be complete by the end of January 2025 and asked that the details of the enquirer be shared with Officers. He also noted that the

Old Depot currently has tenants whose contract runs out in July 2025, and that they are currently being consulted on a potential rent increase.

- b. Cllr Jones proposed that part of the discussion for Item 13e be moved into exempt, subject to paragraph 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members **RESOLVED** to have this discussion in public and exempt session.
- c. Cllr Russell raised the St Andrews Street Traffic Island and asked if there were any updates. The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships responded that none had been received but this will be chased again.
- d. Cllr Strachan asked whether the new phrasing for the minute item is necessary and asked that this be changed to “reviewed” rather than “approved” in future agendas.
- e. Cllr Barrett asked whether there was any update regarding the draft Standing Orders. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive responded that Members agreed to share any comments by 19th November and it will be discussed on 26th November. Members **RESOLVED** that this link be shared again with Councillors for ease of access.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Subject to amendments, the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 8th October 2024**.
- b. The Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 22nd October 2024**.
- c. The Minutes were **NOTED** the draft minutes of the PLOS Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 1st October 2024**.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. There were no matters arising for the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 8th October 2024**.
- b. There were no matters arising for the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 22nd October 2024**.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Scheme of Delegations

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the policy once distributed to Members for review and that Officers upload it to the Council’s website with the following recommendations:

- Change introductory paragraphs to “for resolutions on expenditure under £15,000”.
- Remove “...if these are for sums larger than...” from introductory paragraphs.
- (P33) Reintroduce ‘Chapel’ and reword to “...and related contracts and hire”.
- (P33) Include reference to Stratton Way Cemetery.
- (P35) Rephrase the 7th bullet point to “...and related contracts”.
- (P37) Remove ‘Recommend’ from the 9th bullet point.

b. **Police Liaison Role**

Members **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr P Guilcher as the new representative for the Police Liaison Role.

c. **Stratton Way Cemetery Update**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships shared that the response from the Langford & Biggleswade Windfarm fund is expected soon and that another grant application has been made for £15,000 for landscaping. It was noted that the next Working Group meeting will be on Thursday 21st November 2024.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the report, the project's progress, and agree with the direction of travel of the project set out in the separate capital projects reports. Future funding will be assessed by Members alongside all other capital projects.

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/24/02326/FULL – 4 St Margarets Gardens, Biggleswade, SG18 8NU**

CBC Excerpt: One and a half storey rear extension and single storey side extension following demolition of garage.

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

b. **CB/24/02654/FULL – 7 Mead End, Biggleswade, SG18 8JN**

CBC Excerpt: Erection of a front extension and replacement front door and porch. Erection of a rear extension, part single storey, part two storey. Creation of a dropped kerb and removal of the chimney.

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

c. **CB/24/02768/FULL – 28 Larkinson Avenue, Biggleswade, SG18 0RF**

CBC Excerpt: New open front porch, single storey side and single storey rear/side extensions.

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

d. **CB/24/02861/FULL - 29A Lindsell Crescent, Biggleswade, SG18 0DL**

CBC Excerpt: Retrospective Planning Permission for an existing rear canopy / timber structure.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

e. **CB/24/02802/FULL – Flat 130 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0BH**

CBC Excerpt: Replacement of existing rear extension with new rear/side extension with roof lantern, Juliet balcony to rear 1st floor, loft conversion and installation of rear dormer and 2 conservation roof lights to the front.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consideration of the conservation officer's comments.

f. **CB/24/02739/REG3 – Social Centre, Mead End, Biggleswade, SG18 8JU**

This planning application was withdrawn.

g. **CB/24/02945/FULL – 77 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EE**

CBC Excerpt: Erection of a front porch.

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

h. **CB/24/02431/LB – 81 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0BB**

CBC Excerpt: Listed Building: Removal of a plasterboard stud wall in kitchen area, to allow investigation of chimney breast and fireplace behind to allow for a traditional style oven and additional storage options and future refurbishments.

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the basis of it being a Grade 2 listed building and consideration of the conservation officer's comments.

i. **CB/24/03022/FULL - Biggleswade Academy, Mead End, Biggleswade, SG18 8JU (Mead End entrance)**

CBC Excerpt: Creation of new pedestrian drop off/pick up point for parents, enhanced pedestrian access within the site, provision of two disabled car parking bays, new fencing, vehicular access gate and associated ancillary works.

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the basis of highways safety concerns.

j. **CB/24/03050/FULL - Biggleswade Academy, Mead End, Biggleswade, SG18 8JU (Kitelands Road entrance)**

CBC Excerpt: Creation of new hardstanding area for children's collection point, new footpath link with associated ramps and associated landscaping and ancillary works.

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the basis of highways safety concerns.

k. **CB/24/03014/FULL – 5 Laurel View, Lawrence Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0LR**

CBC Excerpt: Single storey rear extension with rooflights, new door to side elevation and single storey garden shed to front garden.

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

l. **CB/24/03072/FULL – 5 Laurel View, Lawrence Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0LR**

Part single and part two storey side extension (part retrospective).

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

m. **CB/24/03019/ADV - Land outside Unit B Stratton Business Park, Normandy Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8QB.**

CBC Excerpt: Advertisement: Installation of a non-illuminated, free standing business park directory sign.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with local businesses and consideration of their comments.

n. **CB/24/03133/FULL – The Plough House, 276 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 9TB**

CBC Excerpt: Demolition of 2 existing buildings and removal of pre-existing mobile home. Change of use of land for the creation of 4 Gypsy/Traveller Pitches, comprising the siting of 4 static caravans and 4 touring caravans alongside the erection of 1 combined dayroom (Part Retrospective).

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the basis of highways safety concerns.

o. **CB/24/02555/LB – 11A Sun Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0BP**

CBC Excerpt: Listed Building: Replace windows and door to front elevation.

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

p. **CB/TCA/24/00501 – 45 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8ED**

CBC Excerpt: Works to a tree within a conservation area: (T1 - Reduce by 2m. Lifting and pruning back from the footpath to allow easier pedestrian access. The tree has previously been pruned poorly, which we will rectify by pruning above the previous points to healthy growth and blend into a suitable shape ...

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

q. **CB/TRE/24/00455 – Land Adjacent To 18 Manor Court, Dunton Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8QS**

CBC Excerpt: Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order: (A) - Sycamore, 12m tall to pollard down to 6-7m. (B) - Horse Chestnut, 15m tall to pollard down to 8-10m, which is below previous pollard points. (C) - Sycamore, 15m tall to pollard down to 8-10m.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

r. **CB/TRE/24/00482 – 26 Ivel Gardens, Biggleswade, SG18 0AN**

CBC Excerpt: Works to a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order: MB/09/00002/T2 (T1) Common Lime tree. Re pollard back to previous pollard points.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

s. **CB/TCA/24/00505 – Conservative Club, St Andrews Street, Biggleswade, SG18 8BA**

CBC Excerpt: Works to trees within a Conservation Area: T1- Sycamore crown lift to 5.5m all around to give clearance over road and car park. T2 - Sycamore crown Lift to 5.5m all around to give clearance over road and car park. Remove dead branches at the top of the tree only. T3 - Medium silver birch dismantle to near ground level. Due to tree being in significant decline.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

t. **CB/TPO/24/00040 – Amenity land along frontage of A1 Retail Park, Biggleswade Tree Preservation Order No. 40/2024**

CBC Excerpt: Any tree within the area shown on the plan including Sycamore, Lime and Field Maple Located on amenity land which runs along London Road next to Unit I of A1 Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8NE.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

Members asked that future items have an indicator when updates have been made to the shared document.

This report was **NOTED** by Members.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

Financial Administration

a. **September 2024 Position & Accounts**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the report.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Quarterly Bank Reconciliations**

Members **NOTED** the report.

b. **Proposed Temporary Road Closure – Market Square/Station Road/Hitchin St/Bonds Lane, Biggleswade**

Members discussed ways to prevent cars parking in the square the night before the event. This included putting up signs a week before, placing something in each bay or asking car parking enforcement for support.

Members **NOTED** the report.

c. **East West Rail Upcoming Consultation**

Members **NOTED** the report.

d. **Launch of Brownfield Call for Sites**

Members discussed potential sites that which could be developed in Biggleswade and that this should be discussed at the next TCM Committee meeting.

Members **NOTED** the report.

e. **Planning Update**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive shared that the appeal outcome for Land North of Biggleswade was 'allowed with conditions'. Members noted that the importance of ensuring the developers adhere to the named conditions, whether this is by attending Highways Management meetings or discussions with Ward Councillors.

Members **RESOLVED** to add this as a standing item for the Biggleswade Joint Committee meeting agenda.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No one from the public wished to speak.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Football Update Report**

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations.

b. **Planning Update**

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **8:34pm**.

16. **EXEMPT**

a. **Football Update Report**

Members asked whether this would be showing preference for FC Biggleswade over other football clubs in Biggleswade. The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships responded that The Lakes generate very low levels of revenue. The site will still be available for members of the community.

Members asked whether the maintenance and improvements will be funded by the Town Council. The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships responded that this will be funded by FC Biggleswade. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive added that other improvements for BTC Football Pitches have been discussed in the recent budget setting meetings.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the progress Officers have achieved and enable Officers to progress a 25-year lease and partnership arrangement.

b. **Planning Update**

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers contact the three Consultants (Planning/Transport & the Barrister) for advice on other options and the indicative costs involved.

Members **RESOLVED** to add Land North update as a standing item for the Biggleswade Joint Committee meeting agenda.

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers investigate raising a formal complaint to CBC in regard to their handling of the Land North appeal with a view to escalating this to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Members **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk continue to engage with the other large Bedfordshire Town Councils in an effort to create a joint voice that would be more powerful when engaging with CBC.

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers post the recent Land North letter sent to the Chief Executive of CBC onto the Councils website to enable public viewing.

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers create an external draft press release that would then be share with Members prior to distribution to local newspapers.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **9:47pm**.