



MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 8th APRIL 2025
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 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
Mr I Campbell - Community Development Manager
Miss A Green – Committee Clerk

Members of the Public – 2

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 D Albone, Cllr I Agnew, Cllr P Guilcher, Cllr A Skilton, Cllr S Sajid.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

None.

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

None.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. None.

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Mrs Joanne West, Biggleswade Resident.

Mrs Joanne West, a resident of Mead End, addressed the Council to raise concerns about ongoing parking issues during school pick-up times.

She explained that the absence of parking restrictions has created a chaotic and, at times, unsafe environment for residents. Mrs West reported that residents have experienced verbal abuse and highlighted an incident where a neighbour's dog was nearly struck by a vehicle.

She recounted a specific occurrence where a parent parked across her driveway, preventing her from exiting her property. In addition, Mrs West stated that she has photographic evidence of drivers reversing unsafely and manoeuvring between parked vehicles, often blocking driveways in the process.

She also noted that a nearby road had been equipped with yellow lines to address similar concerns and questioned why similar measures had not yet been implemented on Mead End.

Mrs West urged the Council to act, expressing serious concerns about resident wellbeing and child safety. She cautioned that, if left unaddressed, the situation could lead to reduced visibility and increase the risk of a serious accident or injury.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

- a. None.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

- a. There were no Members' questions.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. P9. Typo in the title. Should read PCSO not PSCO and the word Chief should be included in Chief Inspector Jim Goldsmith's title.

P11. Typo in the second paragraph. Word should read 'banking' not 'baking.'

P11. Item 9a. Last paragraph should read "Officers highlight that the gated property at the location of the restriction should be avoided, when responding to CBC."

P12. Item 10c. Typo. The word should be 'referred to' not 'indicated to.'

Subject to these amendments, the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11th March 2025.

- b. Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 18th March 2025.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Page 9, Item 5a Invited Speaker. Cllr Strachan noted that the Council had received information from a gentleman in Hull, regarding Derbyshire Police's zero-tolerance policy on E-scooters.

He proposed that following the comments made by Chief Inspector Goldsmith regarding e-scooters at the previous Town Council meeting, the Council should consider writing to the Police and Crime Commissioner, The Chief Constable, and the Chief Inspector to share this information.

Members **RESOLVED** to send a letter to the appropriate police officials highlighting the information received by the council in the hope that Bedfordshire police's policy might mirror Derbyshire's.

- b. Item 8 Matters Arising. Cllr Russell asked whether Officers had received any updates on the Crab Lane cutting schedule since the last Town Council Meeting.

Officers responded to Members with the following update: Members of the Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Arboreal Team directed Officers towards 'Fix my street' where Officers submitted a request via the software. Officers received a response saying that that matter was being investigated and that cutting would begin soon.

Members **NOTED** the update and expressed concern that Officers had been directed to an online portal rather than accepting a direct referral.

9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. **Flag Flying Policy**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive summarised past actions connected to this item for Members, namely that Council on 10th December had resolved that:

- Officers liaise with Biggleswade Pride Organising Group to determine a suitable date for a flag to be raised on the Market Square flagpole for Biggleswade Pride weekend.
- The Town Council officially recognise Biggleswade Pride as an important event that celebrates diversity, inclusion and equality in the local community.
- Biggleswade Pride is included on the events page of the Council's website.
- The Progressive Pride Flag be considered for inclusion in the Flag Flying Policy review in February 2025.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnership outlined the report to Members.

Members thanked Officers for the report and acknowledged that an approval process for flags was required. Members expressed the belief that the recommendations put too much pressure on the Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Members suggested that due to the political or contentious nature of some flags, the Council should only fly flags listed in the policy and prohibit political/campaign flags. This would avoid causing offence or alienating parts of the community.

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the policy with only flags outlined within the document to be flown, and all reference to Category C flags removed from the policy.

b. **Town Twinning Report**

The Community Development Manager outlined the report to Members.

Members thanked Officers for the report and noted that they would like the Council to take more of an active role in the twinning association in future.

Members asked that Officers circulate more information on the two French suburbs, who would like to take a larger part in the Town Twinning program.

Members **RESOLVED** to support the recommendations in the report as follows:

- Enable Officers to extend invitations to both of our partners to participate in our Victory Day celebrations,
- Assist in supporting and reinvigorating the links and exchanges with Erlensee at community, Officer and Member level,
- Investigate and develop closer links with Noily and Bailly incrementally with a view to developing a formal partnership arrangement

c. **A1 Underpass**

Cllr Russell outlined a written summary of the A1 working groups key discussion on 31st of March 2025 for Members.

She noted that Cllr Daniels intends to submit a formal request to revisit the matter at the next CBC meeting.

Members raised concerns regarding the current wording, which specifies the solution can only be an underpass. A suggestion was made to consider revising the language.

Cllr Russell explained the Working Groups choice of wording, noting that the alternative to an underpass - a bridge, does not meet the community's accessibility needs.

Members **RESOLVED** to support the Working Group statement advocating for an underpass.

d. **Parking and Road Safety**

Cllr North proposed the Council write to Biggleswade Academy, urging them to respond appropriately regarding parking outside the school at the start and finish of school hours.

Members raised the following:

- The Council should consider writing to CBC and local police in addition to Biggleswade Academy. As the issue is regarding safety, local police need to be informed as some of the parking issues may be considered road traffic offenses.
- Parking and Road Safety is a CBC issue and actions such as having yellow lines drawn outside the school are imperative.
- Mrs West's reference to residents of Mead End being the subject of abusive behaviour from parents is a major concern.
- Biggleswade Academy needs to be aware of as parents' inappropriate behaviour towards residents of Mead End are setting a bad example to the children, and the

police should be informed as these instances are examples of anti-social behaviour.

- The importance of having Ward Councillors copied into any correspondence between BTC and Biggleswade Academy, so they are aware of the Councils position.

Members **RESOLVED** to request Officers write to CBC and Biggleswade Academy to highlight the identified concerns recognising their own efforts to find a solution.

e. **Premises Licence Application**

Members considered the premises licence application submitted by Piggott's Family Butcher to CBC, seeking authorisation for the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises, Monday to Sunday from 10:00 to 18:00.

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

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/25/00865/FULL - 8B Crowther Court, Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0AR.**

- a Single storey rear extension.

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

b. **CB/25/00835/FULL - 19 Coltsfoot, Biggleswade, SG18 8SR.**

Conversion of garage to habitable space. Erection of front infill porch and modification to bay window roof. Replacement windows and rendered finish to front elevation.

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

c. **CB/25/00739/FULL - Land north of 20 Tate Drive, Biggleswade.**

Continued change of use of CB/21/03749/FULL for an additional 2-year period from vacant field to use of the land for storage of site cabins, in association with planning approval CB/16/03258/RM and future Site 4 development.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, however Members requested that the cabins are positioned in the centre of the area, in line with where current cabins are positioned.

d. **CB/25/00808/FULL - 24 Lawrence Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0LS.**

Erection of a timber cabin in rear garden for incidental use of main property.

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

e. **CB/25/00915/FULL - 72 Drove Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8HD.**

Removal of rear utility structure and erection of part single and part two storey rear extension. Insertion of first floor side window.

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

f. **CB/25/00783/FULL - 107 Potton Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0EB.**

Demolition of existing rear kitchen and conservatory and construction of two storey rear extension.

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

g. **CB/25/00922/FULL - 126 Mead End, Biggleswade, SG18 8JX.**

Single storey front, side, and rear extensions with rooflights following removal of garage and conservatory.

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

h. **CB/25/00930/VOC - Unit B, Normandy Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8QB.**

Variation of condition numbers 8 and 13 of planning permission CB/22/03438/FULL (Extension to factory building to accommodate 4 additional units for flexible use comprising Class B8 (storage and distribution), B2 and Class E(g) iii (light industrial)) Variation sought for minor external alterations to the additional units resulting in the reduction in the total number of units from 4 to 3 and amendments to parking layout. Vary condition 8 (Opening Hours) - To allow Unit 7 to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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

i. **CB/TRE/25/00134 - 8 Eagle Farm Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8JD.**

Works to a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order: T1 Common Lime removal hazardous, T2 - Red Horse Chestnut Fell diseased, T3 Fell Leyland Cypress hanging over public footpath needs felling, T4 - Common Lime remove deadwood and lift common crown up to 4m, T5 Common Lime Lift Crown up to 4m.

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

j. **CB/25/00738/FULL - Unit B, Normandy Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8QB.**

New vehicular access and additional parking provision off Pegasus Drive.

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application. However, Members requested that the Arboreal Officers suggestions to provide improved landscaping should be implemented.

k. **CB/25/00982/FULL - 12 Warren Close, Biggleswade, SG18 0DQ.**

Single storey side extension and garage conversion with rooflights.

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

i. **CB/25/00907/FULL - 27 Sun Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0BP**

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

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

This report was **NOTED**.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

The Head of Finance & Deputy RFO presented the Position & Accounts for February 2025.

The projected outturn after month eleven suggests a deficit of £6,528 at the end of the financial year 2024-25. The reduction in the deficit is a result of the following:

- Increase in burial income compared to budgeted burial income.
- Increase in interest income compared to budgeted interest income.
- Unspent budgeted allocation.
- Good budget monitoring culture.

The deficit at the end of the financial year will be zeroed by general reserve.

Members **NOTED** the report.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- a. None.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No one from the public wished to speak.

Members **RESOLVED** to go into the exempt session in view of the nature of the business to be discussed.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Optimum Operating Model**

Members discussed the report by the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships and the Head of Finance & Deputy RFO and **AGREED** to the recommendations subject to Members amendment.

b. **Century House Report**

Members discussed the report by the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships and **AGREED** to bring back to future meeting.

c. **Public Entertainment Update**

Members discussed the verbal update from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and **RESOLVED** to defer the matter to a future Town Council meeting.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **9.30pm**