



MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 08TH JULY 2025
AT 7.00PM AT BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE, SG18 8DL

PRESENT:

Cllr. J Woodhead (Mayor)
Cllr. I Agnew
Cllr. P Guilcher
Cllr. J Jones
Cllr. M North
Cllr. M Russell
Cllr. S Sajid
Cllr. D Strachan
Cllr. C Thomas

Mr E Bour – Head of Finance & Deputy RFO
Mr I Campbell – Community Development Manager
Miss A Green – Committee Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE ONLINE:

Cllr. D Albone (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr. A Skilton

Members of the Public – 0

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. Apologies were received from the following Members:

Cllr. G Barrett, Cllr. M Foster, Cllr. M Knight, Cllr. S Patel.

b. The following Members were unable to attend in person but were in attendance remotely:

Cllr. D Albone, Cllr. A Skilton.

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. The Mayor provided Members with an update on his recent civic engagements. Since the last Town Council meeting, the Mayor has undertaken the following activities:

- Attended the St. Neots Armed Forces Day Civic Reception.
- Participated in the Bedfordshire Scouts Annual General Meeting.
- Spoken with the Biggleswade Academy Pupil Forum.
- Officiated the opening of Pocket Park and Linear Wood.
- Attended and delivered an address at the Victory Day celebrations in Market Square.

The Mayor thanked the Public Realm Team, expressing his gratitude for their exceptional work in transforming the Pocket Park and Linear Wood area. Additionally, he noted that the bicycles previously displayed in the Market Square have now been relocated to the Pocket Park.

The Mayor praised the success of the BTC Victory Day Celebrations to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VE/VJ Day, which took place last Saturday 05th July 2025 in the Market Square. He acknowledged the strong support from the community and highlighted the outstanding acts and entertainment provided on stage. He extended his thanks to the Council officers who contributed to the event's success.

Additionally, the Mayor presented to Members a commemorative book, gifted by Renate Tonecker-Bos, Chair of the Twinning Association in Erlensee and a member of the Erlensee Town Council. The book serves as a remarkable record of the long-standing twinning relationship between Biggleswade and Erlensee.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No members of the public were present either in person or online.

5. INVITED SPEAKER

a. There were no invited speakers.

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- a. Cllr. Agnew raised concerns regarding power circuits for pre-Christmas events and proposed preparing a motion for a joint committee.
- b. Cllr. Strachan on behalf of all Members formally thanked all staff for their involvement in making the recent Victory Day celebrations a success.
- c. Cllr. Russell requested that the following items be added to the agenda for the next Town Council meeting for information: an update on the Fen Reeves Association and an update on the A1 underpass, following a recent meeting with Northill.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. The minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 3rd June 2025**.
- b. The minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 10th June 2025**.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Pg 4. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting Tuesday 10th June 2025 - Item 9a: Call for Sites Update

Members questioned whether Officers had an update on the question raised about the £15,000,000 of funding allocated towards the building of a health hub for Biggleswade at the last Town Council meeting.

The Head of Finance responded that no concrete response has been given, and this will be followed up by Officers with an update provided at the next meeting.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **PWLB Application**

A report was presented by the Head of Finance regarding a loan of £79,528 for the refurbishment of fourteen play areas.

Members thanked the Head of Finance for his report.

Members queried/raised concerns regarding the following:

- Survey response rates and lack of detail.
- Phasing of the loan drawdown.
- The idea of pre-emptively increasing residents' council tax to accommodate the repayment of the loan.
- A need for more detailed information on each play area.
- Whether it would be prudent to replace play area equipment, especially considering that not all play areas are currently in use. They Members questioned whether it is more sensible to repurpose these areas for alternative uses that might better serve the community - e.g. a shelter for teenagers.

Members **RESOLVED** that officers provide additional information outlining the specifics of each play area and defer the item to a future meeting.

- b. **CBC Highways Footpath Proposal**

Members **AGREED** to support but requested clarification on how the footpaths may change to accommodate future commercial development.

c. **New Street Trading Application - Mr Softee Woburn**

Members raised concerns regarding the applicant's lack of food handling experience and the number of existing ice cream vendors operating within Biggleswade.

Members had **NO OBJECTION** to this application, provided that CBC ensures there is no overprovision of similar businesses within Biggleswade and that the applicant holds the appropriate certifications for food hygiene and safeguarding.

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/25/01792/FULL - 4 Aston Croft, Biggleswade, SG18 8GR**

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

b. **CB/25/01795/FULL - 44 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EB**

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

c. **CB/25/01565/FULL - 1 Poplar Close, Biggleswade, SG18 0EW**

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

d. **CB/25/00586/ADV - B & Q Unit P, A1 Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8NE**

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

e. **CB/25/01843/FULL - 72 Drove Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8HD**

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

f. **CB/25/02032/VOC - Car park at A1 London Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade, Beds**

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

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

Members noted the report.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

Financial Administration

- a. The Head of Finance & Deputy RFO outlined the Financial Management Report for May 2025 to Members.

He stated that it is difficult to calculate a projected outturn for the financial year 2025/26 based upon two months expenditure. In the absence of any patterns of expenditure or sophisticated profiling it is assumed in most cases that budgets will come in line with actual expenditure at the end of the financial year.

This will be kept under constant review.

Members **NOTED** the report.

13. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- a. There were no items for information.

14. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No members of the public were present either in person or online.

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

15. EXEMPT

- a. **Exempt minutes of the Town Council meeting 3rd June 2025**

The exempt minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 3rd June 2025**.

- b. **Exempt minutes of the Town Council meeting 10th June 2025**

The exempt minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 10th June 2025**.

- c. **Market Licence**

Members discussed the report by the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships and **AGREED** to defer the matter to a future meeting.

- d. **Community Governance Review**

Members **RESOLVED** to proceed with the recommendations outlined in the report and to bring the matter back to Council at the meeting on 8th August.

- e. **HR Report**

A HR report was considered by Members and the next steps were **AGREED**.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 7:44pm.