



Ref: Agenda/Council – 12/05/2026

07th May 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

All Members of the Town Council are hereby summoned to the **Annual Statutory Meeting** of Biggleswade Town Council that will take place on **Tuesday 12th May 2026** 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 read 'Karim Hosseini'.

Karim Hosseini
Interim Town Clerk

Distribution: All Town Councillors
Notice Boards
The Press

AGENDA

1. **ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR FOR THE YEAR 2026/27**

To receive nominations for the office of Town Mayor for Biggleswade for 2026/27.

2. **DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

For the Town Mayor to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Town Mayor.

3. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR THE YEAR 2026/27**

To receive nominations for the office of Deputy Town Mayor for the year 2026/27.

4. **DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

For the Deputy Town Mayor to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Deputy Town Mayor.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- a. For Members to determine membership of the Town Council's Standing Committees.

Information setting out the Committees of the Council and existing membership is provided in Appendix A.

- b. For each Committee to appoint a "Chairman".

- c. For each Committee to appoint a "Deputy Chairman".

6. BIGGLESWADE JOINT COMMITTEE

For Members to nominate four Members to sit on the Biggleswade Joint Committee and two substitutes.

Under the Terms of Reference for the Biggleswade Joint Committee, Members will be elected annually to sit on this Committee.

The next Biggleswade Joint Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, 30th July 2026, at 7:00 pm. Membership will be confirmed at this meeting.

7. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES

Please note the following:

During the municipal year, Members of the Town Council agreed to take part in a joint A1 Underpass Working Group. This has been added to the list of appointments for representatives to bodies that the Town Council has membership of.

During the municipal year, the "Biggleswade Friendship Group" was replaced by the "Twinning Working Group", as Members voted on the appointment of Town Councillors to this group at the 14th April Town Council meeting. Nominations will stand until the municipal year 2027/28.

- a. For Members to consider appointments to the following bodies:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils | - 3 Members for voting at the AGM. |
| 2. Sir John Cotton Educational Foundation | - 2 Members. |
| 3. Fen Reeves Meetings | - 1 Member (proxy voter) & 1 sub. |
| 4. Langford & Biggleswade Community Fund Group | - 2 Members. |
| 5. Police Liaison Officer | - 1 Member & 1 sub. |
| 6. Biggleswade Green Wheel Development Group | - 2 Members & 1 sub. |
| 7. A1 Underpass Working Group | - 2 Members. |

A breakdown of representatives for each of the bodies listed above is provided in Appendix A of Item 5a.

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- a. To receive any apologies for absence.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.

If a Member has declared a Disclosable Pecuniary interest, they must withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item to which the interest relates. If the Member has been granted a dispensation by the Council, they must still declare the interest but may take part in the discussion and vote.

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

This is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest. Upon identification Members can take part in any vote.

10. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

11. 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_Tu-kiWXUSnufUg_luxd3Cg

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**.

12. INVITED SPEAKER

- a. None.

13. MEMBER'S QUESTIONS

14. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. For Members to receive the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 14th April 2026** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

15. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on **14th April 2026**.

16. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. General Powers of Competence

For Members to receive a report from the Interim Town Clerk and the Head of Finance.

b. Tempsford Development

For Members to receive and consider a report from Cllr. M Russell related to a consultation on the proposed Tempsford development. Members will need to agree a formal response to the consultation so Officers can submit a response on behalf of the Town Council.

c. Local Council Awards Scheme

For Members to receive a report from the Interim Town Clerk and the Head of Finance.

d. CBC Local Plan Scoping Consultation

For Members to receive and consider information related to the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Scoping Consultation. Members will need to agree a formal response to the consultation so Officers can submit a response on behalf of the Town Council.

Central Bedfordshire Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will guide growth in the area up to 2050. The preparation of the Plan is a lengthy process, and it is anticipated that it will be adopted in 2028.

This consultation follows earlier engagement undertaken in 2024, where residents and stakeholders were asked to identify key priorities and issues for the Local Plan. Since then, changes to national planning policy, including updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and new legislation introduced in March 2026, require the Council to carry out this formal scoping stage.

The scoping consultation provides a further opportunity for residents, organisations and stakeholders to help shape the Local Plan before it is drafted. At this stage, the consultation does not seek views on specific development sites but instead focuses on gathering feedback on the main issues facing Central Bedfordshire, including housing, infrastructure, the environment and climate change.

The consultation does not replace earlier engagement; rather, it seeks to confirm whether previously identified issues remain relevant and to gather additional information to inform future stages of plan preparation.

The feedback received will be used to refine and develop the Local Plan, ensuring that it reflects the priorities and needs of local communities.

The consultation closes Wednesday 3 June 2026.

All supporting documentation is available to view on the Central Bedfordshire Council website via the relevant consultation pages, or via SharePoint for Members.

17. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/26/00880/FULL - Unit 1, Albone Way, Biggleswade, SG18 8BN**

Change of Use of industrial unit (B2/B8) to gym with installation of internal mezzanine level, repainting of external elevations and alterations to external service yard to create car and cycle parking.

The Planning Officer has approved an extension, allowing the Town Council until 13th May to submit its formal response to the planning application.

b. **CB/26/00935/LB - Flat 6 Ivel Mill, Mill Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8AZ**

Listed Building: Replace existing roof window panels with conservation velux roof windows.

c. **CB/26/00718/FULL - 123 Dells Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8LD**

Single storey rear extension.

d. **CB/26/01116/FULL - Unit B, Normandy Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8QB**

New vehicular access off Pegasus Drive.

e. **CB/26/01086/LB - Shyre Cottage, 10-11 Ickwell Green, Ickwell, Biggleswade, SG18 9EF**

Listed Building: Erection of a single storey side extension, to replace current extension, addition of single storey rear flat bay window, and removal of chimney, alterations to windows and doors.

f. **CB/26/00908/FULL - 4 Mountbatten Drive, Biggleswade, SG18 0JJ**

Single storey rear extension with roof lights.

g. **CB/26/01044/FULL - 90 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EB**

Flat roof rear extension with rooflights following demolition of existing extensions.

h. **CB/TCA/26/00186 40 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0AP**

Works to trees within a Conservation Area: Tree of Heaven (1): Fell tree. European Larch Tree (2): Crown reduction, reshape and overall reduction of the whole tree reducing it by 6m. Sycamore Maple (3): Remove tree.

i. **CB/TCA/26/00173 - 3 St Andrews Close, Biggleswade, SG18 8BB**

Works to trees within a Conservation Area: Fell Spruce Tree (green circle). It is in a poor condition, and a risk to property and the surrounding areas.

The Planning Officer has approved an extension, allowing the Town Council until 13th May to submit its formal response to the planning application.

18. PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES

- a. A report of the Planning Application Outcomes (by exception applications only) as of **Tuesday 05th May 2026**.

For Members to note the report.

19. ACCOUNTS

Financial Administration

- a. **Position & Accounts for March 2026**

The usual draft financial documentation is available on the Council website as follows: Financial Transparency Documents Biggleswade Town Council

- i) Draft balance Sheet to 31/03/26.
- ii) Draft detailed Income and Expenditure to 31/03/26.
- iii) Payment Listing from 01/03/26 to 31/03/26.
- iv) Draft summary Income and Expenditure to 31/03/26.

- b. **Annual Governance & Accountability Return**

The closedown of accounts position will be shared with Members on 09th June 2026.

The final Internal Audit for 2025/26 is ongoing. The independent internal report will be shared with Members at the Town Council meeting on 09th June 2026.

The AGAR will be shared with Members at the Town Council meeting on 09th June 2026. The deadline for submission of the AGAR and supporting information to the external auditors (Mazars) is 30th June 2026.

20. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- a. **Bank Reconciliation**

For Members to receive a report from the Head of Finance.

- b. **ASDA Car Parking**

For Members to note a response received from ASDA Ltd regarding the recent changes to parking restrictions within their car park.

21. 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_Tu-kiWXUSnufUg_luxd3Cg

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**.

22. EXEMPT ITEMS

Members of the Town Council will **vote** to enter an exempt session due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, which includes information relating to the financial affairs of the Authority and/or ongoing negotiations.

If Members **resolve** to proceed into the exempt session, Members of the public and press will be excluded from the meeting under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and the live streaming of the meeting will be terminated.

Exempt items for discussion:

- a. (Exempt minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 14th April 2026).
- b. (Telecoms Report).

**Item 5a: Membership Of Standing Committees
2025/2026**

TOWN COUNCIL	FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE	PUBLIC LANDS & OPEN SPACES	BIGGLESWADE JOINT COMMITTEE	PERSONNEL
<p>Cllr. J. Woodhead (Mayor) Cllr. D. Albone (Deputy Mayor) Cllr. I. Agnew Cllr. G. Barrett Cllr. M. Foster Cllr. P. Guilcher Cllr. J. Jones Cllr. M. Knight Cllr. M. North Cllr. S. Patel Cllr. M. Russell Cllr. S. Sajid Cllr. A. Skilton Cllr. D. Strachan Cllr. C. Thomas</p> <p>TOTAL = 15.</p>	<p>Cllr. D. Strachan (Chairman) Cllr. I. Agnew (Deputy Chairman) Cllr. M. Foster Cllr. M. Knight Cllr. M. North Cllr. M. Russell Cllr. C. Thomas Cllr. J. Woodhead (Ex-officio Member) Cllr. D. Albone (Ex-officio Member)</p> <p>TOTAL = 9.</p>	<p>Cllr. M. Foster (Chairman) Cllr. M. Knight (Deputy Chairman) Cllr. I. Agnew Cllr. J. Jones Cllr. M. North Cllr. C. Thomas Cllr. A. Skilton Cllr. D. Strachan Cllr. J. Woodhead (Ex-officio Member) Cllr. D. Albone (Ex-officio Member)</p> <p>TOTAL = 10.</p>	<p>Cllr. (Chairman) Cllr. M. Russell (Deputy) Cllr. D. Albone Cllr. G. Barrett Cllr. C. Thomas Cllr. D. Strachan (Substitute) Cllr. I. Agnew (Substitute)</p> <hr/> <p>TOTAL = 6.</p> <hr/> <p>TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT</p> <hr/> <p>Cllr. S. Patel (Chairman) Cllr. G. Barrett (Deputy Chairman) Cllr. M. Foster Cllr. M. Knight Cllr. M. North Cllr. A. Skilton Cllr. D. Strachan Cllr. C. Thomas Cllr. J. Woodhead (Ex-officio Member) Cllr. D. Albone (Ex-officio Member)</p> <p>TOTAL = 10.</p>	<p>Cllr. M. Russell (Chairman) Cllr. P. Guilcher (Deputy Chairman) Cllr. M. Foster Cllr. J. Jones Cllr. M. Knight Cllr. D. Strachan Cllr. C. Thomas Cllr. J. Woodhead (Ex-officio Member) Cllr. D. Albone (Ex-officio Member)</p> <p>TOTAL = 9.</p> <hr/> <p align="center">APPEALS</p> <hr/> <p>Cllr. S. Patel (Chairman) Cllr. M. North (Deputy Chairman) Cllr. G. Barrett Cllr. A. Skilton</p> <p>TOTAL = 4.</p>

3 x Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils	Cllr. M. Knight, Cllr. M. North, Cllr. C. Thomas.
1 x Biggleswade Friendship Group	Cllr. J. Woodhead, Cllr. M. Russell (Substitute)
1 x Sir John Cotton Educational Foundation	Cllr. J. Woodhead, Cllr North (Substitute)
1 x Fen Reeves Meetings	Cllr. M. Russell, Cllr. A. Skilton (Substitute)

2 x Langford and Biggleswade Community Fund Group	Cllr. J. Jones, Cllr. M. North
1 x Police Liaison Officer	Cllr. P. Guilcher, Cllr. S. Patel (Substitute)
2 x Biggleswade Green Wheel Development Group.	Cllr. D. Albone, Cllr. M. Foster, Cllr. A. Skilton (Substitute)



MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 14TH APRIL 2026
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 M Foster
 Cllr. P Guilcher
 Cllr J Jones
 Cllr M North
 Cllr S Patel
 Cllr M Russell
 Cllr D Strachan
 Cllr C Thomas

Mr K Hosseini – Interim Town Clerk
 Mr E Bour – Head of Finance & RFO
 Mr I Campbell – Community Development Manager
 Miss H Calvert – Administration & HR Manager

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

Cllr D Albone, Cllr G Barrett, Cllr M Knight, Cllr S Sajid, Cllr A Skilton.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:**

None.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

Cllr. Woodhead declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 10b and 10g.

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 activity:
 - Visited the Blaze Netball Club at Stratton School. The Mayor commented that it was great to witness women's sport in the town.
 - Reopened Abbot's Walk following its refurbishment.
 - Attended the Easter Party in the Park at Franklin's Recreation Ground, which was organised by the Town Council. The Mayor commented that it was great to see a number of families enjoy the event, with approximately 450 people in attendance.
- b. The Mayor reminded Members of the Mayor's Charity Pub Quiz which will be held on Thursday 30th April at The Rose Pub, in support of Magpas and Biggleswade Good Neighbours.

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

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

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

There was no invited speaker.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

- a. There were no members' questions.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. The minutes and recommendations of the previous Town Council meeting were considered page by page for accuracy.

Members felt that it would be better to add to the wording to item 12a 'Members **NOTED** the above'.

Subject to this amendment, the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on 10th March 2026.

Members **NOTED** the F&GP minutes of the 17th March 2026.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Item 6a - Pedestrian crossing on St Andrew's Street

Members asked if there had been a response received from CBC in relation to the above item. The Interim Town Clerk confirmed that there currently had not been a response received from CBC. Members requested that Officers write again to CBC to request a written response.

b. Item 9b - Parking and Road Safety

Members asked if there had been any correspondence received in relation to the above item. The Interim Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council had received a response from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) which provided a range of options.

It was **AGREED** that CBC's options are presented at the next Town Council meeting for discussion.

c. Item 9c - CBC Road Scheme: TRO-067 The Baulk, Biggleswade - One Way (Already in place, retrospective consultation)

Members asked if there had been a response in relation to the above item. The Interim Town Clerk confirmed that a response had not yet been received.

d. Item 13f - Bedfordshire, Luton, Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (BLMK ICB) Update

Members asked if responses had been received from the surgeries following the Town Council's invitation to a meeting. The Interim Town Clerk confirmed that a response had been received from the ICB, and one surgery, but another surgery had not yet responded.

9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Asda Car Parking**

Members discussed ASDA changing its car parking rules and policy to introduce a reduced maximum period of one hour and thirty minutes, and to restrict parking only to ASDA customers.

Members **RESOLVED** that the Town Council write to Allan Leighton, Chief Executive of ASDA, copying in the local store manager and the local MP, restating:

- The original Section 106 agreement requirement of 2 hours of parking;
- That ASDA is not entitled to restrict public use of the car park;
- The Council's legal advice that supports this position, quoting it specifically.

b. **Tempsford Update**

Members discussed the update on emerging proposals for Tempsford and discussed likely impacts on Biggleswade, including transport, planning, infrastructure, and identity of the town.

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- The Community Development Manager and Councillor Russell attend the Tempsford stakeholder meeting on behalf of the Town Council.
- That the feedback of the Tempsford stakeholder meeting be reported back to Council.
- That further engagement with Central Bedfordshire Council leadership be pursued.

c. **Twinning Programme**

Members discussed who should sit on the Twinning Working Group.

Members **RESOLVED** to formally nominate the following Members to sit on the Twinning Working Group:

- Councillor Agnew
- Councillor Russell
- Councillor Woodhead

d. **Updated Local Plan Timetable**

Members discussed the updated Local Plan timetable.

It was noted that the Biggleswade Neighbourhood Plan currently carries more weight than the Local Plan because it is the most up-to-date plan.

Members expressed concern regarding the proposed four-week consultation period for submitted sites, commenting that the consultation period was too short.

Members **RESOLVED** that a dedicated planning discussion be scheduled for the 14th July Town Council meeting. This discussion would involve discussing the Call for Sites and the best way to discuss planning issues. Members also felt that it would be beneficial to hold a meeting with Cllr Zerny regarding planning.

Members **RESOLVED** that the Town Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council and request an extension to the consultation period.

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers share the submitted site information and Call for Sites map with Members as soon as these are available.

e. **Premises Licence Application - Ertan Salih**

Members considered a new premises licence application with proposed opening hours from 7am to 2am.

Members **RESOLVED** that the Town Council object to the application insofar as it relates to opening beyond midnight, on the grounds of prevention of crime and disorder and prevention of public nuisance.

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/26/00313/AD - Unit J, A1 Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8NE**

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

b. **CB/26/00500/REG3 - St Andrews Lower School Nursery Unit, Brunts Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 0LY**

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

c. **CB/26/00257/FULL - Anglian Sewage Works, Furzenhall Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0AD**

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

d. **CB/TCA/26/00119 4 Chapel Fields, Biggleswade, SG18 0ND**

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

e. **CB/26/00314/FULL - Stratton Upper School, Eagle Farm Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8JB**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to arboricultural considerations.

f. **CB/26/00827/FULL - 1 Warren Close, Biggleswade, SG18 0DQ**

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

g. **CB/26/00292/FULL - 4 Kittiwake Close, Biggleswade, SG18 8HH**

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

h. **CB/26/00904/FULL - 1D Winston Crescent, Biggleswade, SG18 0ET**

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

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

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

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

This report was **NOTED**.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

Financial Administration

The Head of Finance informed Members that the projected outturn for Month 11 indicates that there will be an underspend of just over £2k. In addition, there will be £25k transferred to the rolling capital as per the resolution of the 21st January 2025. The year end process is currently ongoing.

Members thanked the finance team for their work.

Members **APPROVED** of the financial documents.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Town Centre Vision**

Members received a progress update from the Community Development Manager on the Town Centre Vision. Members were informed that further work is ongoing with partners, including Central Bedfordshire Council.

The vision will shortly be presented at Biggleswade Joint Committee for endorsement. It is expected that the vision is agreed and in place by the end of 2026.

Members **NOTED** the update.

b. **CBC Fees and Charges Consultation**

Members **NOTED** the consultation.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No members of the public were present either online or in person. Members of the Town Council held a vote to close the meeting to discuss the following exempt items:

- Exempt minutes of the Council Meeting 10th March 2026.
- Recreational and Green Spaces Update.
- HR Update

Following a unanimous vote, Members **RESOLVED** that the meeting be closed and that members of the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The meeting was closed to the public and live streaming was concluded at 9:15pm.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Exempt minutes of the Council Meeting 10th March 2026**

The exempt minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the exempt session of the Town Council Meeting held on 10th March 2026.

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes.

b. **Recreational and Green Spaces Update**

The Interim Town Clerk provided an update to Members.

c. **HR Update**

Helen Calvert provided an update to Members.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 9.15pm

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Annual Statutory Meeting 12th May 2026
Item 16a: General Power of Competence Update Report

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: GOOD GOVERNANCE: Ensure that the Town Council continues to operate within legislation, regulation, ethical guidelines, and best practice.

Finance: Not applicable.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

The General Power of Competence (GPC) came into force on the 28th March 2012 under SI.961 of The Localism Act 2011 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2012. The Government's intention behind the legislation was to provide eligible councils the power to take on an enhanced role and to allow them to do things that previously they were unable to do.

The GPC gives local authorities, including eligible local councils, "the power to do anything that individuals generally may do" as long as they do not break other laws. The council needs to ask itself if an individual is allowed to do it. If 'yes' then the council is, normally, permitted to act in the same way. A Council has to be eligible to use the GPC.

Officers submitted a report on the GPC at the Annual Statutory meetings of the Town Council on 16th May 2023 and 14th May 2024. Members resolved at the 14th May 2024 Annual Statutory meeting that the Town Council met the below specified eligibility criteria and adopted the GPC. The GPC has been in vigour since 2024, Officers review it annually and confirm there has been no change in current legislation.

Resolution

The Council must resolve at a meeting that it meets the criteria for eligibility relating to the electoral mandate and relevant training of the clerk. The resolution can be passed at any meeting of the council, but a further resolution must be passed at every subsequent "relevant annual meeting" for the council to be able to continue to exercise the power. A "relevant annual meeting" is the annual meeting that takes place in a year of ordinary elections, once every four years.

Electoral Mandate

At the time the resolution is passed, at least two thirds of the members of the council must hold office as a result of being declared elected. This means they should have stood for election, whether at an ordinary or by election, even if unopposed, rather than co-opted or appointed.

Qualified clerk

At the time the resolution is passed the clerk must hold the certificate in local Council Administration, the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy, the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Council Administration or the first level of the foundation degree in Community Engagement and Governance (or successor qualifications) awarded by the University of Gloucestershire. The Clerk must also have completed training in the exercise of this power.

Summary

Officers assess that it is important to retain the GPC power indefinitely as it has a very wide scope of application. It is possible that in future the council will need to use the GPC to facilitate it delivering its objectives, such as with the advent of an enhanced post office or banking hub in the town centre.

Recommendation

That Members

- Note the Officer review of the GPC power, reporting no changes to legislation, and,
- Resolve that the council retains the GPC power to apply it as appropriate.

Karim Hosseini
Interim Town Clerk

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Annual Statutory Meeting 12th May 2026
Item 16b: Consultation Tempsford New Town

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: Not applicable.

Finance: None.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

The Government has identified thirteen possible locations for New Town expansion and is currently consulting on the New Towns Draft Programme. It is seeking views on preferred locations and the governments proposed offer to potential new town locations. It is also consulting on a New Towns Planning Policy. A Strategic Environmental Assessment has been produced, and this is also included in the consultation. The response deadline for the consultation is 19th May 2026.

Council appointed Ian Campbell and me to attend a meeting on 17th April called by Richard Fuller MP and Cllr. Adam Zerny about the proposed new town at Tempsford and the possible response from the area. The meeting was attended by town and parish councillors from the area, some ward councillors and Ian Sollom, MP for St. Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire, and was chaired by Cllr. David Sutton, Chairman of Tempsford Parish Council.

A copy of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for Tempsford New Town was given to all attendees. The map on the front – see Appendix A – gave a stark picture of the possible impact of 40,000 homes on a wide area. The south of the area includes Sandy and Sutton, both of which border Biggleswade parish. It is thought that the main focus for development will be the area between the East Coast Main Line and the A1, with the highest density around a new station at Tempsford where the proposed East/West railway will cross the East Coast Main Line.

(A consultation has just closed about establishing a Greater Cambridge Development Corporation to enable more development in the Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council areas. This was only mentioned at the meeting and not discussed but the area appears to overlap with the east side of the Tempsford broad area.)

The MPs and Cllr. Zerny were of the view that it would be ineffectual to try to oppose the New Town and it would be better to try to work with the proposal if it is confirmed, which may not be until late summer. We were told that, unless and until, it is a firm proposal there will be no direct political involvement from the Government although the two MPs hope to have private talks with Matthew Pennycook, the Housing Minister.

All those present agreed with trying to work with the proposal not against it.

As a first step, it was agreed that all local councils should respond to the Strategic Environmental Assessment and that councillors as individuals should also respond. There was a lot of discussion about what the issues will be, particularly roads, flooding, supply of fresh water and heritage, with reference to the Tempsford airfield and Gibraltar Farm Memorial.

It is not clear whether there may be a Development Corporation for Tempsford or whether other structures for planning may be put in place. Neither is it clear what input existing principle and local councils will have nor what the governance arrangements might be in future.

Finally, it was agreed that the group should meet periodically as more information about the Government's intentions becomes available.

Since the meeting, I have been through the Strategic Environmental Assessment in detail and have responded as a private individual. There are also questions about the Planning Policy and Government Offer but the information on these issues is very high level.

The attached Appendix B is a proposed draft response from the Town Council. Ian Campbell has contributed to the draft particularly with regard to economic development and I am grateful to Cllr. Inessa Agnew who has commented on the draft overall.

The format of the questionnaire allows for responses on all or some of the proposed locations, but it is recommended that the Town Council respond only to the proposed Tempsford New Town.

Recommendations

It is recommended that decisions are made as follows:

1. To note the report of the meeting.
2. To approve the response at Appendix B.
3. To authorise the response to be submitted to Government by the closing date of 19th May 2026 and to be copied to Richard Fuller MP, Cllr. Adam Zerny, Leader CBC and Cllr. David Sutton, Chairman Tempsford Parish Council.
4. To agree that Cllr. Russell and Ian Campbell attend any future meetings of the group.

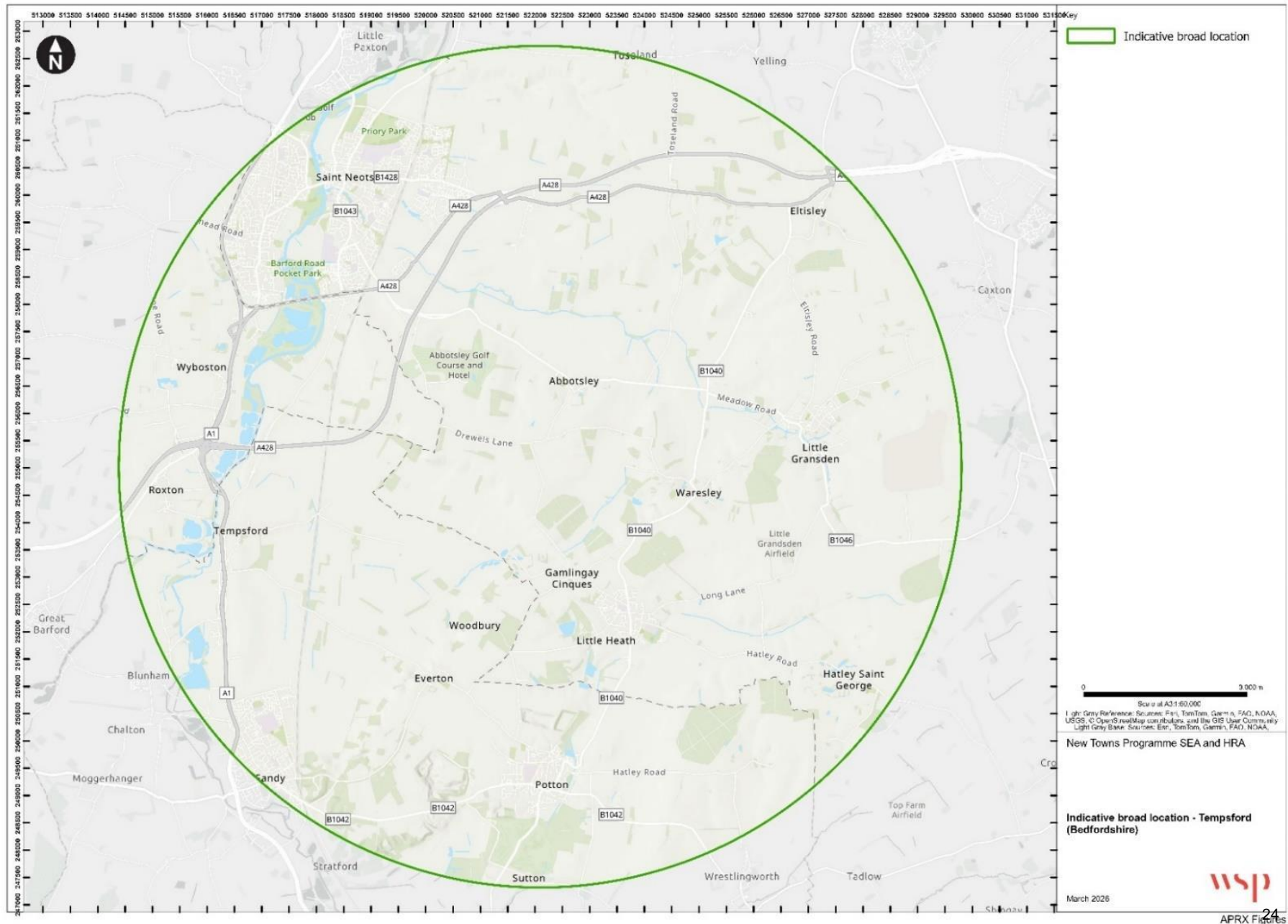
Cllr. Madeline Russell

Appendices:

Appendix A - Broad Area for Development

Appendix B - Draft Response to the Consultation

Appendix A: Broad Area for Development



Proposed Response to the Consultation on the New Towns Draft Programme

(The preliminary questions will give information about the Town Council and indicate that the Council is responding solely to the New Town proposed at Tempsford.)

Section 3.1 – Assessment of Locations

Q7. What do you believe are the positive features of the location that you have selected?

Transport links both north/south and east/west are good and improving.

The location is served by the A1; the A421, dualled through to the M1; and the A428 to Cambridge. It is also served by the East Coast Main Line via stations at Biggleswade, Sandy and St. Neots.

The proposed East/West Rail will cross the ECML in the location but does not yet have a Development Consent Order so is some years away.

The A428 is currently being upgraded so that it will be dual carriageway from the A1 through to Cambridge.

The drawback is the A1 through Bedfordshire which is not motorway standard and has four roundabouts. The Black Cat is being upgraded – grade separation at three levels – but the roundabout at Sandy and the two in Biggleswade both already cause delays at peak times. In addition, the A1 divides several communities – Beeston; Sandy; Tempsford; and Wyboston. Heavier traffic will exacerbate both these problems and no ideas for mitigation have yet come forward.

The Universal Studios development at Kempston Hardwick will create 28,000 jobs and an influx of workers. Whilst good for the economy, housing for employees will be needed. Tempsford could provide some of that need, but the negative is that it would add to congestion on the A421 and could drive up house prices in the area.

Q8. Do you think any of the thirteen locations listed face barriers which could hold back delivery of the New Towns Programme objectives?

As above, the A1 with heavy congestion and poor air quality.

Air quality has already been a problem in Sandy for some time and will worsen when the Black Cat is free-flowing, meaning that there will be heavier delays at Sandy.

When there are roadworks or accidents on the A1 Biggleswade bypass, the town experiences massive traffic jams due to the official diversion of the A1 traffic through Biggleswade. Construction of a New Town will potentially add to this.

The construction phase will certainly add to congestion on the A1 and overload the wider traffic infrastructure.

The problem of separation of communities by the A1 should not be ignored. It is a barrier to Active Travel and impacts community cohesion.

Flooding from surface water run-off - both the River Ouse and the River Ivel have been seriously affected by developments upstream and the water now rises much

faster and stays higher for a longer time.

There are concerns about fresh water supply. The area is already 'water stressed'.

What will be the impact of a new station at Tempsford on existing stations, particularly Sandy and Biggleswade. Will there be more 'station hopping' where trains don't stop at every station to shorten the journey time. Will the services at other stations be severely reduced?

Is the sewage capacity sufficient? Anglian Water are already objecting to planning applications because of lack of capacity and need to upgrade their facilities.

Q9. Do you have any comments about whether the SEA report has identified the main environmental issues relevant to the thirteen locations?

The report minimises the impact on health in terms of healthcare.

The area already suffers from a severe lack of primary care facilities with residents travelling to Bedford or Stevenage, and sometimes Welwyn, to get treatment that should be available in GP practices.

The report indicates that there are six hospitals within 15km. 15 km of where? The location is served by Bedford, Hinchbrook and Addenbrookes, which now includes Papworth on its site. Lister Hospital in Stevenage is more than 15km away. Which others are included in the six?

With regard to hospitals, apart from the A1 corridor, the area is rural. There is an issue about how much time it takes to get to these hospitals in an emergency.

Historic environment - particular care needs to be taken with Tempsford airfield, from where the SOE operated during the Second World War. There are numerous Saxon and Roman sites. The SEA itself concludes that Tempsford is assessed as having a significant negative effect on the historic environment.

The Greensand Ridge walk is very popular and must be protected, as must Sandy Heath; the RSPB Sanctuary and Biggleswade Common.

Parts of the east of the area are very rural. The type of housing will be critical - hopefully not high rise. Construction should also respect the local vernacular.

Q10. Is there any additional environmental information about these locations that the SEA should take into account?

Employment opportunities around the A1/A428 junction and a new station at Tempsford will inevitably increase traffic on the A1, where there are huge problems due to the roundabouts. The A1 is not coping with existing development and there is already other development with planning permission.

Air pollution is already a problem in Sandy and could arise in Wyboston, Beeston and Caldecote, where new housing has recently been built within a few hundred yards of the A1.

Toxic highway run-off will continue to damage aquatic ecosystems in the area. It is already significantly higher than the average for England due to the heavy road usage.

Higher traffic volumes will increase the risks of flooding, water management and stress on local habitats.

Q11. Do you have any suggestions for practical mitigation measures to address any effects identified in the SEA report?

Re-route the A1 so that the section through Bedfordshire becomes local traffic only. (This should have happened in the 1990s when a possible route was put forward. With all the development in the last 25 years, it is now more difficult to find an alternative route and certainly much costlier.)

Improve water infrastructure so that water can be piped from the north where rainwater is more abundant.

Create a new reservoir for Anglian Water.

Q12. Do you have any other feedback on the SEA report, including the issues and effects identified therein?

The overall language in the report downplays some of the effects.

Section 3.3 – Proposed New Town Locations

Q13. Do you think the seven locations proposed for the new towns programme are the ones most likely to meet the programmes objectives?

Tempsford may be a possibility to meet the objectives but will only be a success if sufficient Government funding is available to provide the necessary infrastructure that housebuilders cannot and will not be able to fund if any development is to remain viable.

Section 4.1 – Government Offer

Q14. Do you agree with the overall Government offer for proposed new town locations?

It is not yet clear exactly what the Government offer is. There are fine words about placemaking and necessary infrastructure, but will the funding be available for what is absolutely needed?

Will the necessary infrastructure be put in place before the houses are built?

Will local people be listened to? They are usually dismissed as NIMBY but often only want the mitigations to ensure that any development is done in the best practical way. The best way to achieve local buy-in would be by properly resourcing and enabling a community representative body alongside any development corporation. This would enable existing communities to meaningfully engage and contribute to the development process as significant stakeholders with power and influence.

If any New Town is to be successful, social cohesion needs to be developed with a sense of place and cultural identity, a sense of community and belonging. There needs to be recognition of history, heritage and local cultural groups and their contribution to the social economy.

Q15. Do you think there are any additional interventions that Government should consider to ensure design and placemaking quality in new towns?

Quality of build is essential - room sizes, outdoor space, recognition of local vernacular.

NOT Pete Seeger's 'Little Boxes' from the 1960s song and certainly not made from 'ticky tacky'. We have experienced too much of that in recent development in East Bedfordshire.

A few years back, Homes England had a Garden Villages concept. This and Roger Scruton's proposals would be useful references. Also appropriate might be the design code for the new Wychavon Town. This sets standards for how buildings, streets and public spaces should look and feel, divided into multiple geographic areas to reflect the varied character across the region.

Government should mandate independent design review panels throughout the development lifecycle. As above, a community representative body should be involved.

Designs should include integrated green corridors; flood-resilient design; local energy generation and possible district heating networks.

Statutory requirements for transport, utilities, schools and healthcare to be delivered before or alongside housing.

Local public transport is key to get to shops and other facilities and also to the strategic network. One idea to consider is the use of minibuses buses – smaller, scheduled vehicles operating in the designated smaller areas.

Section 4.2 – New Towns Planning Policy

Q16. How clear do you find the proposed planning policy?

There is no detail on how the planning policy will work in practice.

We expect that there will be Development Corporation rather than the local planning authorities being responsible. This makes sense because the site is across two counties and four local planning authorities.

However, how much input on individual planning applications will there be from local communities through the town and parish councils, who are statutory consultees for local planning authorities? (Recognising that development is needed, Biggleswade Town Council has encouraged development in the parts of the parish where it is most sustainable.)

How much will the Secretary of State override the proposals of the Development Corporation (or LPA)?

Q17. Do you think establishing placemaking principles in the proposed planning policy is an effective way to implement the placemaking ambition of the programme?

It will be effective only if the principles are followed through and there is sufficient local input about our 'places'. This includes a community representative body (as above) and local town and parish councils as statutory consultees.

Q18. Do you think the proposed planning policy provides sufficient flexibility to new town locations to meet the placemaking principles?

It is not clear how easy it will be to meet placemaking principles. There certainly should be flexibility. There cannot be a homogenous policy as parts of the proposed development area are very different in character, from the A1 and A428 corridors to very rural areas.

Q19. Is establishing a 40% target for affordable housing an effective way of delivering an ambitions number of affordable homes?

The target should not be more than 30%.

Will housebuilders build with such a high percentage of 'affordable'? If they do, will the houses be built to a decent standard? Much depends on the land value. If land is bought at market-inflated prices, a higher density becomes undeliverable through viability challenges and/or would lead to reduced design quality.

It is a blunt instrument and is more likely to result in minimal target achieving solutions, the worst kind of cheap development. The area around the proposed Tempsford station is particularly vulnerable to a very high density.

Who is going to manage all these affordable homes? It would seem that many housing associations are reluctant to take on more so what will be the longer-term plan for management? Will we be back to local authorities managing housing stock or will there be a faceless management company with no responsibility to the community?

The affordable housing should include a good proportion of shared ownership since, if enough houses are available at an affordable price, many people would prefer to buy their own home.

Q20. Is the proposed policy on giving substantial weight in decision-making to the social and economic benefits of new towns clear?

What does the policy mean in real terms? The benefits accrued should be for both existing residents and incomers.

What mechanisms are envisaged to enable social and economic benefits and social and environmental capital to be delivered in partnership with the existing communities?

Q21. Do you agree with the Government's approach to decision-making policy on the Green Belt?

Existing Government policy is anti-Green Belt so cynicism creeps in but it is so important to preserve important green spaces for the mental and physical health of the population.

Part of Green Belt policy is to prevent towns from merging. What Tempsford New Town will lead to is the coalescence of St. Neots, Sandy and Biggleswade.

The introduction of the concept of 'Grey Belt' could also be an issue.

Q22. Do you think the proposed planning policy is sufficient for the purposes of safeguarding land for development as new towns?

Safeguarding land? Does this mean compulsory purchase to avoid inflated land prices affecting viability? If so, there needs to be a fair price for all landowners

Something like a development corporation approach is needed to plan holistically across the area.

Q23. Do you think any additional planning policies are needed to support the delivery of the programme objectives?

As above, the detail is not clear. How will it all actually operate? Who will be overall managing the development?

The importance of social and economic factors needs to be strengthened, along with the input of the existing community both to ensure social cohesion and lay the foundation for social capital capacity building.

Local Planning Authorities must immediately start to consider the implications of Tempsford New Town when any larger, new planning applications come forward and with any revision of a Local Plan. However, they will be operating in a vacuum until the New Town proposals become clearer.

Q24. Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the New Towns Draft programme on people or groups with protected characteristics?

Access lifts to all platforms have just been installed at Biggleswade station. Disability access should be a major consideration across all infrastructure development in Tempsford New Town.

SEND education facilities are inadequate in the area. The Ivel Valley School in Biggleswade takes pupils from a wide area but desperately needs expansion and better facilities.

An aging population is more dependent on public transport to access shopping, medical and other key facilities.

There will be a negative impact on local farming families and other rural minorities who may lose their cultural and community ties.

Long-term construction may impact the health of children and others with respiratory or mobility conditions.

On the positive side, housing could become more affordable for young people and facilities may be built closer to some existing communities.

Q25. Is there anything else you would like to tell us that you think is relevant to this consultation but has not been covered in previous questions?

Tempsford is a rural area with the A1 corridor on one edge. The rural character should be respected - no high rise, no high density.

The development should not be rushed but should allow time for all the impacts to be properly assessed and mitigated where possible.

Apart from the response to Q.9 about hospitals, primary care facilities are already desperately inadequate and the main source of concern among residents in the area.

Young people should be catered for both in terms of sports facilities but also infrastructure for youth groups including uniformed organisations such as scouting and cadet groups.

Existing leisure centres at Biggleswade Recreation Centre and Sandy Sports Centre have previously operated above comfortable capacity. There is a clear lack of swimming facilities. Rural areas between bigger towns rely on town-edge facilities.

Primary schools incorporating pre-school provision would make it easier for working parents, as would nursery provision.

Local centres are needed for convenience shopping, including chemists with prescription services.

Successful place making and building social capital are essential to the creation of a functional new town. Social Enterprise hubs, managed workspace, business centres and supporting enterprise agencies will encourage economic development and growth. This should be aligned to education and vocational training facilities. A construction industry training college would help to address current shortages in the industry. All this will require resourcing and infrastructure.

What is envisaged post development in terms of governance? Will the existing towns and villages continue with their local councils? This level of governance brings communities together and allows them to gel, as we have experienced in Biggleswade with a population which has grown from 15,000 to nearly 25,000 in under 20 years.

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Annual Statutory Meeting 12th May 2026
Item 16c: Local Council Awards Scheme Update Report

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: GOOD GOVERNANCE: Ensure that the Town Council continues to operate within legislation, regulation, ethical guidelines, and best practice.

Finance: Not applicable. Approved by the Interim Town Clerk and RFO.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

The town council applied for and obtained its 'Foundation' level from the Local Council Awards Scheme (LCAS) over nine years ago. 'Foundation' level demonstrates that the council met the minimum standards.

Summary

Officers have included the LCAS guidance in appendix A. The BTC 'Foundation' level no longer exists and has been replaced by new levels of bronze, silver, and gold. There are many benefits to being on LCAS including;

- *Celebration of achievements*- the scheme recognizes and celebrates the achievements of parish and town councils, highlighting their efforts and improvements
- *Structured framework*- It provides a structured framework to empower councils to enhance and realise their full potential
- *Peer evaluation*- Councils are evaluated by their peers, which helps in demonstrating adherence to sector standards and fostering continuous improvement
- *Support for improvement*- The scheme offers support and encouragement to councils at the start of their improvement journeys
- *Recognition of excellence*- It promotes and recognizes councils that are at the cutting edge of the sector, encouraging collaboration and sharing best practices.

These benefits contribute to the overall improvement and development of local councils, ensuring they meet high standards of governance, community engagement, and development.

Over the last five years, Officers have achieved large quantifiable improvements across all areas of governance, finance, projects delivery, customer service, and have significantly professionalised the council. Members have also contributed to the wide-ranging improvements. Improvements have been made to deliver the stated aspiration for the council to be high performing, applying the very best practices across the sector.

As a result of the above efforts, Officers assessed that the council could apply for and obtain silver level at an application fee of £100. The working assumption is that the council is already largely operating at silver level and even if it were deemed to be slightly below, it would be straightforward for Officers to improve the council's performance to attain silver level. Once achieved, Officers would in due course look to achieving gold level which would turn the council into a beacon organisation.

Recommendation

That Members;

- Note the wide-ranging improvements made on council operations in recent years, and,
- Resolve to enable Officers to apply to LCAS for silver level and to work to deliver silver level with LCAS.

Karim Hosseini
Interim Town Clerk

Ernest Bour
Head of Finance & RFO

Appendices:

Appendix A - Local Council Awards Scheme- guidance.

What award level to apply for

We offer a structured framework designed to recognise and promote excellence among parish and town councils of all sizes. These awards – the Bronze Award, the Silver Award, and the Gold Award – provide a clear pathway for councils to demonstrate their commitment to high standards of governance, community engagement, and continuous improvement.

Bronze Award-Cost £80

The Bronze Award is tailored for councils aiming to showcase their adherence to essential standards, ensuring effective delivery for their communities. Achieving this award necessitates the council demonstrating that it possesses the necessary documentation and information to operate lawfully and in accordance with established practices. Furthermore, the council must have policies in place for training its councillors and officers, laying the groundwork for future improvement and development initiatives.

This award serves as a benchmark for evaluating your council's performance. It challenges you to meet the minimum standards and prompts thoughtful consideration of ongoing development and improvement. It provides a structured framework for councils to establish a solid foundation, fostering a commitment to excellence in their operations.

Silver Award-cost £100

The attainment of the Silver Award signifies that a council excels in governance, community engagement, and continuous improvement. Distinguished by going beyond mere legal obligations, quality councils emerge as leaders within their communities, consistently seeking opportunities to enhance and develop further.

To secure the Silver Award, a council not only fulfils all the requisites of the Bronze Award but also provides additional evidence showcasing exemplary governance, effective community engagement, and notable council improvement initiatives. Given the elevated level of this accomplishment, a council bestowed with the Silver Award may also qualify to exercise the general power of competence, underscoring its commitment to exceptional standards and proactive leadership.

Gold Award- cost £200

The prestigious Gold Award signifies that a council stands at the pinnacle of best practices, attaining excellence in governance, community leadership, and council development. Distinguished by their forward-thinking approach, Gold Award councils not only provide exemplary leadership for their communities but also foster unity, exhibit outstanding business planning processes ensuring optimal value for money, and consistently pursue innovative solutions and opportunities for improvement.

These councils serve as beacons of the highest standards achievable within our sector, showcasing the epitome of what can be accomplished for our communities. The Gold Award represents their unwavering commitment to exceptional performance and continuous advancement.

Important update: Have your say on the future of Central Bedfordshire

The latest news from Central Bedfordshire Council

Share this news update



We're inviting residents, businesses and organisations to take part in our **Local Plan scoping consultation** and help shape how Central Bedfordshire will grow in the years ahead.

The Local Plan is an important document that sets out the vision and framework for future development across Central Bedfordshire up to 2050. It will help plan for the homes, jobs and infrastructure the area needs, while making sure growth is supported by the right facilities and services and the environment is protected as much as possible.

Without a Local Plan, development will still happen, but it is more likely to take place in locations we would consider unsuitable. A Local Plan still means development, but it gives the council and communities more say over where, and how, that development happens.

In 2024, we asked residents what was important in making somewhere a great place to live and what they wanted to see included in the Local Plan. This new scoping consultation is another opportunity to have your say before the plan is written.

At this stage, we are not making decisions about specific development sites. Instead, we are asking for views on the key issues facing Central Bedfordshire and whether the priorities identified so far are the right ones.

Your feedback will help us test and develop the plan to make sure it reflects the priorities of communities across Central Bedfordshire, including housing, the environment, infrastructure and climate change.

Find out more and take part in the scoping consultation

Find out and take part



Item 16d: Appendix A: CBC Local Plan Scoping Consultation Questionnaire

Our adopted Local Plan was structured around the following six key themes, and we used this to shape our early consultation in 2024:

1. **Homes** - High-quality, well-designed homes for every stage of life
2. **Jobs and businesses** - A range of jobs that are easy to get to
3. **Unique character** - Respecting and enhancing the unique character of our towns and villages
4. **Transport** - Excellent transport options, including walking and cycling
5. **Local facilities and infrastructure** - Such as roads, schools, shops and parks
6. **Green space and nature** - Access to outstanding new and improved green space and nature

1. Are these themes still relevant?

Prefer not to say

Yes

No

Are there any themes you would change or add?

The Local Plan must allocate land to deliver the new homes required to meet our needs from 2025-2050. The way this need is calculated is set by the Government using a 'standard methodology', and we can't set a lower number of homes. The Local Plan can influence the type of homes we build and will set our requirement for the amount and type of affordable housing. It will include policies to ensure we provide a variety of homes that meet the needs of all of our residents and suit different stages of life, from starter homes and family homes to homes for older people looking to downsize and accessible/adaptable homes to cater for those with disabilities. The plan will also set the standards for design to make sure all new development is high quality, respects the unique characteristics of our towns and villages and responds to the climate change crisis by avoiding areas of flood risk and providing walking, cycling and wheeling access to local services.

Understanding what is most important to you will help inform where we focus new homes in the new Local Plan. Through previous consultations we've already heard that we should be prioritising the use of previously developed (or brownfield) land within existing towns and villages, before we look at using land around our towns and villages. Creating new towns or villages with their own infrastructure and locating growth where there are gaps in infrastructure was also preferred. There was less support towards locating development where infrastructure and services are already at capacity; where it would lead to the loss of green spaces and agricultural land; and where it would impact on the character of existing settlements. Our next consultation will set out our preferred strategy and will need to allocate a range of different sites to meet our housing need. We are keen to understand where we should focus the new growth in the first instance, and whether it should be on previous developed land and creating new towns and villages before extensions to towns and villages, as we heard previously.

The Local Plan will need to allocate a range of different sites to meet our housing need and we're keen to understand where we should focus the new growth in the first instance, and whether it should be on previous developed land and creating new towns and villages before extensions to towns and villages, as we heard previously.

2. **Where do you think we should put new homes and businesses? Please prioritise the following options in order of preference using the arrow buttons or by typing the number in the box.**

<input type="text"/>	 	Locate homes on extensions to the edge of villages
<input type="text"/>	 	Locate homes on extensions to the edge of towns
<input type="text"/>	 	Locate homes where there are gaps in infrastructure so that housing can contribute to improvements
<input type="text"/>	 	Locate new homes in vacant spaces within towns and villages (brownfield sites)
<input type="text"/>	 	Create new towns/villages with their own infrastructure

3. **Previous engagement tells us that providing affordable homes for those in need is a high priority to our residents. Do you agree or disagree?**

Prefer not to say

Agree

Disagree

4. **Do you think we should be seeking to provide more affordable housing in locations where there is a greater level of need?**

Prefer not to say

Yes

No

Affordable housing includes homes for sale or rent and is for people whose needs are not met by the private market.

5. **Do you have concerns about new development in Central Bedfordshire?**

Prefer not to say

Yes

No

If you answered yes, what are your main concerns? Please prioritise the following options in order of preference using the arrow buttons or by typing the number in the box.

<input type="text"/>	 	Impact on wildlife and habitats
<input type="text"/>	 	Over development of communities
<input type="text"/>	 	Reduced access to the countryside
<input type="text"/>	 	Impact on the road network
<input type="text"/>	 	Lack of local services and facilities
<input type="text"/>	 	Poor design of new development
<input type="text"/>	 	Other
<input type="text"/>	 	Risk of flooding
<input type="text"/>	 	Impact on local heritage

We want to build on the Council's Economic Strategy to plan for a range of jobs and help to create an environment where our businesses can prosper. We want our residents to have choices about where they work and how they get there, ideally with the ability to travel to work more sustainably, so location and transport options are key. The Local Plan is required to allocate land to provide space for new and expanding businesses which will boost the local economy and enable more people to work close to where they live. It can also specify the types of jobs that we'd like to provide and prioritise green businesses that help address climate change.

Through the previous engagement we heard that residents want the Local Plan to make the most of Central Bedfordshire's location within the Oxford to Cambridge corridor and support jobs and investment in high-tech, innovation, computing, science and technology industries. There was support for providing more jobs than we needed, in locations which reduce the need to travel, to help minimise the impact on the road network and on the local environment. There was also a preference towards the scale of employment development being proportionate to the community in which it is located, and smaller employment units to support start up and growing businesses. We also heard that commercial buildings should be well-designed and integrated into existing towns and villages, with the necessary infrastructure in place such as broadband and 5G. There was also support for employment opportunities within mixed use developments to retain local spending and support services and facilities.

6. How important to you is providing jobs within Central Bedfordshire to enable people to work close to where they live?

- No view
- Very important
- Quite important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Quite unimportant
- Not at all important

7. The Local Plan is required to allocate land for employment. There is an option to allocate more land than is required to make the most of our location and future opportunities. To what extent would you support higher levels of employment land being delivered? (tick all that apply)

I would fully support high levels of employment land across Central Bedfordshire

I would support high levels of employment land if it could be located on previously developed land (not on greenfield sites)

I would support high levels of employment land located near existing employment locations

I would support high levels of employment land if it was located near new housing development to provide jobs close to where people live

I would not support more employment provision than we need

8. Since the previous engagement on the Local Plan in 2024, the Government has given planning consent for the new Universal Theme Park and Resort near Bedford. This proposal is expected to create 28,000 jobs, contribute to the delivery of new rail stations and provide some upgrades to the road network. What other opportunities do you think the Universal Theme Park proposal could specifically bring to Central Bedfordshire?

The rural nature of our area, along with our market towns and villages, is one of the things that makes Central Bedfordshire such an attractive place to live. The Local Plan enables us to shape what new developments look like and will include policies that ensure developers build homes that are in keeping with the heritage and character of the area. It can also protect green spaces between existing towns and villages to help stop them from joining together, keep their individual identities and protect the rural character of the area. Approximately 38% of Central Bedfordshire, mainly in the south, is Green Belt and the Local Plan will need to consider whether the Green Belt is protected completely, whether some could be released to enable opportunities for growth in the south of Central Bedfordshire, and whether new Green Belt should be created.

We heard that growth should be sustainable, respect architectural context and promote and preserve heritage while supporting current-day needs for housing and infrastructure. There was also a call for stricter requirements for good design and the use of high-quality materials to ensure new developments reflect local character and don't look out of place, alongside support for integrating diverse architectural styles and not restricting modern architecture. It was commented that building heights should be limited to two or three storeys to protect the character of small towns and villages.

9. The Local Plan can include policies that help ensure new developments are designed to be of the highest quality. The design of new development is not just about what buildings look like; it's also about how they function and whether they are a good place to live. How important is the design of new development and new homes to you?

No view

Very important

Quite important

Somewhat important





















Neutral

Somewhat unimportant

Quite unimportant

Not at all important

10. Which of the following is most important to you when thinking about the design of new developments? Please prioritise the following options in order of preference using the arrow buttons or by typing the number in the box.

<input type="text"/>	 	Parking
<input type="text"/>	 	Other
<input type="text"/>	 	Having a variety of house sizes and number of bedrooms
<input type="text"/>	 	Having a suitable amount of space both inside the home and in the garden
<input type="text"/>	 	Inclusive and accessible design to cater for those who require specialist accommodation (older people, those with disabilities etc)
<input type="text"/>	 	Being able to access services and facilities (i.e. jobs, shops, schools, healthcare)
<input type="text"/>	 	Having access to green spaces
<input type="text"/>	 	The appearance of the development (buildings and layout) and respecting local character.
<input type="text"/>	 	Having access to play facilities
<input type="text"/>	 	Sustainable design to reduce the impact on climate change (i.e. energy efficient homes, renewable energy, reducing flood risk)

If other, please specify

11. The Local Plan must allocate land to provide new homes and jobs in Central Bedfordshire. However, there may be opportunities to reduce the amount of land that we need to use by requiring new development to be built to a higher density. This means fitting a higher number of homes onto a piece of land, for example by building flats instead of houses, and increasing building heights. The Government already wants us to build higher density developments near train stations, and we have an opportunity to require higher density development in other sustainable locations, for example near services and facilities. Would you support higher density development in Central Bedfordshire?

Prefer not to say

Yes, on all developments

Yes, in sustainable locations, such as near services and facilities

No

Please explain your answer

Central Bedfordshire already has great road links with the M1 and A1. We also have three railway lines running through our area as well as Luton Airport close by. The prospect of an East West Rail link will also improve east west connectivity across Central Bedfordshire. Through the Local Plan we can ensure new development takes advantage of our connections and improve the way we travel by locating new homes and jobs on sustainable transport routes. We can create 'walkable neighbourhoods' by creating more walking, cycling and wheeling routes to local facilities; and support existing bus services by locating growth along existing routes and encourage new routes and connections into new developments. This will give people a genuine choice and encourage them to change how they travel as much as possible. This also helps reduce the impacts of climate change and tackles some health and wellbeing issues caused by rural isolation, loneliness and inequality.

During previous engagement there was support towards increasing the number of bus routes and improving their frequency and reliability, particularly between towns and villages and to and from railway stations and other key facilities. Concern was expressed about the impact of new housing developments on road capacities and the availability of parking. There was support shown for sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and wheeling); car free zones; pedestrianised areas; and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. It was clear that residents want to walk to community facilities but walking and cycling infrastructure needs to improve.

12. How important is it to you that local facilities can be accessed by walking, cycling or wheeling?

- No view
- Very important
- Quite important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Quite unimportant
- Not at all important

Our previous engagement identified the following services and facilities as the top 5 people felt were most important to be able to walk, cycle or wheel to daily:

1. Local Shops
2. Healthcare Facilities
3. Green Spaces (including parks, play areas and playing fields)
4. Schools
5. Pubs/Restaurants

13. Do you agree with the top 5 facilities/services?

- Prefer not to say
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Are there any other services and facilities that you use daily that you think should be within a walking, cycling or wheeling distance of homes? Please specify and explain why
























14. What are the key transport outcomes you would like the Local Plan to deliver?

By planning for growth, we can look to bring the necessary facilities needed to support existing and new homes, such as schools, parks, shops, community facilities and roads. The Local Plan can help make facilities more accessible, by providing new or improved sustainable routes to existing infrastructure, or by providing new infrastructure in more accessible locations. Housing developments in and around existing villages and town centres can help to support the existing services, potentially preventing closures of well-loved facilities like shops and pubs and helping to support local schools. The Local Plan can also make sure buildings are provided for health facilities. However, Central Bedfordshire Council cannot provide the

GPs or other medical professionals, this is the responsibility of the local NHS. We continue to discuss this with them and champion the need for more health provision in our area.

Through previous engagement, we heard concerns about inadequate community facilities to support new housing developments and the need for essential infrastructure to be provided before or alongside new housing. There were concerns raised about some services being overwhelmed, including healthcare services and schools and insufficient leisure facilities in Central Bedfordshire. Although most people felt they have enough good quality green space, some people still felt that there was a lack of accessible green space.

15. The Local Plan will need to set out the infrastructure requirements to support new development. What do you think we should be prioritising through the Local Plan? Please prioritise the following options in order of preference using the arrow buttons or by typing the number in the box.

<input type="text"/>	 	School places
<input type="text"/>	 	Affordable housing
<input type="text"/>	 	Walking, cycling and wheeling routes
<input type="text"/>	 	Public art
<input type="text"/>	 	Play facilities
<input type="text"/>	 	Highway improvements
<input type="text"/>	 	Leisure facilities
<input type="text"/>	 	Community buildings (i.e. community halls, village halls)
<input type="text"/>	 	Green spaces
<input type="text"/>	 	Other (please specify below)
<input type="text"/>	 	Healthcare (i.e. GPs, pharmacies, hospitals)
<input type="text"/>	 	Libraries

If other, please specify

16. We're keen to hear about the infrastructure outcomes you would like the Local Plan to deliver. How could the new Local Plan support towns and villages and their communities to grow and thrive?

17. Would you support some development within villages and small towns if this could support existing services and facilities to remain viable?

Prefer not to say

Yes

No

Please explain why

18. Would you support some development within villages and small towns if this provided investment in new walking, cycling and wheeling provision, or other infrastructure improvements?

Prefer not to say












Yes

No

Please explain why

By considering the environment and biodiversity from the outset we can ensure new developments include green space for recreation and nature. Having a variety of green space to exercise, play football, have a picnic, walk the dog etc. helps to make somewhere a desirable place to live and provides for a high quality of life and wellbeing. Protecting and enhancing green spaces and nature also helps to contribute towards our sustainability, climate change and health and wellbeing objectives. Through the Local Plan we can ensure green spaces are integrated within new developments and between towns and villages to help to limit the impact of development and create great places. We can also deliver the aims of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which defines opportunities to protect and enhance nature across Bedfordshire. The LNRS and the areas identified within it will help to inform some decisions about future development. New development could also contribute towards the delivery of measures that will help to protect and enhance nature. We can also protect, enhance and improve access to important areas like the Greensand Ridge, the Forest of Marston Vale, the Ivel Valley and the Chilterns National Landscape, and support the delivery of the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park project which aims to create a waterway link from Bedford to Milton Keynes.

19. We are keen to hear what the Local Plan should deliver in relation to green space. If you had to choose which of the following would you prioritise? Please prioritise the following options in order of preference using the arrow buttons or by typing the number in the box.

<input type="text"/>	 	Delivering green space that is protected for wildlife and biodiversity
<input type="text"/>	 	Delivering high quality accessible green space for people to enjoy
<input type="text"/>	 	Having enough green and open space that there is a sense of rural nature and open space
<input type="text"/>	 	Other (please specify below)
<input type="text"/>	 	Delivering as much accessible green space as possible for people to enjoy
<input type="text"/>	 	Protecting green spaces in communities that are important (known as Local Green Spaces)

If other, please specify

We would like to hear from as many of our residents, businesses and other stakeholders as possible when preparing our plan, so the next few questions ask for your views on how we can do this most effectively.

We would like to hear how you would prefer to be kept informed about the Local Plan.

We already host all the information about our Local Plan on our website, and we also send out updates and notices about consultations using:

- Email updates to everyone who has registered to be kept informed on our website;
- Emails to our Councillors, Town and Parish Councils and MPs, so that they can inform their residents through their own channels;
- Social media posts (e.g. Facebook, X and LinkedIn);
- Press releases that are sent to local newspapers;

20. Are there any other ways you would like us to communicate? Please specify

21. How did you hear about this consultation? Please specify

22. How much information do you need to feel able to respond effectively? (tick all that apply)

High-level summaries of information

Detailed technical documents or more detailed information

Visual summaries (maps, diagrams, infographics)

Anything else (please specify)

23. Is there a group or community you are part of, or are aware of, that find it harder to participate? If so, what steps could we take to ensure you/they can get involved in an inclusive and representative way? Please specify

24. What do you think prevents people from taking part in Local Plan consultations?

Lack of Time

Lack of awareness

Not being kept informed

Complexity of information

Difficulty accessing online information

Language or accessibility needs

Lack of interest

Not being heard

Too much consultation

No barriers prevent me from taking part

Other (please specify)

25. If there are barriers, what could we do to reduce or remove them? Please specify

26. Is there anything else you would like us to consider in the Local Plan, which you have not had a chance to share with us yet? Please specify

Outcome of CBC Planning Applications						
Date	Application No.	Location	Description	BTC Objection	Outcome from CB	Notes
10/02/2026	CB/25/03949/FULL -	20-22 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL	Conversion of basement and ground floor from a vacant Bank to a Bingo Hall with the insertion of a new entrance and new doors	The Town Council OBJECTS to this application, on the basis that this application has the potential to cause significant impact to the community.	Awaiting Outcome	Earliest Decision Date (Consultation Period Expires):03 / 03 / 2026 Target Date for Decision:17 / 03 / 2026
10/02/2026	CB/25/03978/FULL -	20-22 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL	Conversion of the first floor offices (Use Class Ec) to, 2 residential flats (Use Class 3a), with the creation of a cycle store to part of the ground floor. Elevational alterations including replacement upvc windows to first floor and new entrance door at ground floor.	The Town Council OBJECTS to this application on the grounds of overdevelopment and the associated implications for safety.	Awaiting Outcome	Earliest Decision Date (Consultation Period Expires):06 / 03 / 2026 Target Date for Decision:19 / 03 / 2026
10/03/2026 (Previously considered at the 10/02/2026 TC meeting).	CB/25/03978/FULL -	20-22 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL	Conversion of the first-floor offices (Use Class Ec) to, 2 residential flats (Use Class 3a), with the creation of a cycle store to part of the ground floor. Elevational alterations including replacement UPVC windows to first floor and new entrance door at ground floor.	The Town Council OBJECTS to this application on the grounds of overdevelopment and the associated implications for safety. Members further OBJECT to this application on the basis that the first floor windows have been replaced with white uPVC, which are out of keeping with the Town Centre Conservation Area.	Awaiting Outcome	Earliest Decision Date (Consultation Period Expires):09 / 04 / 2026 Target Date for Decision:19 / 03 / 2026

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Annual Statutory Meeting 12th May 2026
Item 20a: Quarterly Bank Reconciliations

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: GOOD GOVERNANCE: Ensure that the Town Council continues to operate within legislation, regulation, ethical guidelines and best practice.

Finance: Compliance with Financial Regulations.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

According to the Council's Financial Regulations on a regular basis, at least once in each quarter and each financial year end, Officers shall report the conclusion of the banking reconciliation activity including exemptions to the full Council (Finance Committee). In addition to this, bank statements can be viewed by Members at the Council office at any time.

The bank statements and reconciliations for the quarter ending 31st March 2026 were shared with Councilor Guilcher on 14th April 2026 and were signed in accordance with the Financial Regulations. All documents have also been signed by the Responsible Finance Officer.

Recommendation:

That Members note this report.

Ernest Bour
Head of Finance and RFO

Appendices:

Appendix A: Unity Trust main current account – Rialtas reconciliation and Unity Trust bank statements (Available via SharePoint).

Appendix B: Unity Trust salary current account – Rialtas reconciliation and Unity Trust bank statements (Available via SharePoint).

Appendix C: Unity Trust Instant Access Account – Rialtas reconciliation and Unity Trust Bank Statement (Available via SharePoint).

Appendix D: CCLA account number one and two – Rialtas Accounts statement and CCLA bank statements (Available via SharePoint).



[Asda Support] Case #: 04867472: ASDA Car Parking Restrictions



Your Case #: [REDACTED]
RE: ASDA Car Parking Restrictions

Dear Asia

I have now heard from our Car Park and Property Team and they have advised that we haven't made any recent changes to how our Biggleswade car park operates, and it remains one of the few free short-stay options in the town centre. We're now aware that signage installed earlier this year may have caused some confusion and we are reviewing it to ensure it displays the correct information, and accurately reflects the agreed arrangements with the Council.

Once again, thank you for contacting us and if there is anything else that I can help you with, please let me know.

Thanks,



