



**MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 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. D Albone (Deputy Mayor)  
 Cllr. I Agnew  
 Cllr. G Barrett  
 Cllr. M Foster  
 Cllr. J Jones  
 Cllr. S Sajid  
 Cllr. D Strachan  
 Cllr. C Thomas

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
 Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships  
 Mr E Bour – Head of Finance & Deputy RFO  
 Mr I Campbell – Community Development Manager  
 Miss A Green – Committee Clerk

Members of the Public – 1

**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. P Guilcher, Cllr. M Knight, Cllr. M North, Cllr. S Patel, Cllr. M Russell, 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 noted the successful Mayor's Charity Quiz, held in support of Magpas Air Ambulance and Biggleswade Good Neighbours, and acknowledged the positive outcome of the event.

- b. 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:
- Unveiled a Biggleswade Heritage Plaque alongside the Biggleswade History Society
  - Attended St Andrews Church country fair
  - Attended High Sheriffs legal service in Bedfordshire
  - Attended the launch of Tritax Phase Three, alongside Councillors Thomas, Barrett, Russell, and Albone.
  - Assisted in awarding bronze Duke of Edinburgh awards to students at Ivel Valley College.
  - Welcomed Mr Ben Newman, also known as 'Spudman', to Biggleswade. The Mayor noted the event as a great success.
- c. The Mayor thanked Deputy Mayor, Cllr. Albone, for chairing the recent Social Enterprise meeting, noting the success of the event in bringing together local social enterprise groups within the town.
- d. To conclude his announcements, the Mayor reminded Members of the forthcoming Remembrance Day Parade, scheduled for Sunday, 9th November. He informed Members that the Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Susan Lousada, will be in attendance.

#### **4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

##### **a. Ward Councillor for Biggleswade East – Councillor Grant Fage**

Cllr. Fage addressed Members regarding agenda Items 13a and 13b.

He noted that item 13a should be presented for consideration rather than for information.

Regarding item 13b, Cllr. Fage informed Members that the ongoing consultation on Ivel Valley School had been paused as of the date of the Town Council meeting, 14th October 2025. He noted that it was unclear whether the item would appear on the agenda for the next meeting as it is unclear when the consultation will be resuming.

#### **5. INVITED SPEAKER**

- a. There were no invited speakers.

#### **6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were no Members' questions.

#### **7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. No amendments were made to the minutes.

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

- b. Members **NOTED** the minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

## 8. **MATTERS ARISING**

### Minutes of Town Council 9<sup>th</sup> September – 6a. Members' Questions

Members enquired whether a response had been received from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), following the request for the Town Clerk to write to CBC, Councillor Zerny, and the Member of Parliament for North Bedfordshire regarding the ongoing issue of rubbish in Bonds Lane.

The Clerk confirmed that no response had been received to date.

The Head of Governance added that Officers had separately contacted Environmental Health Services, who acknowledged the issue and confirmed that they had been engaging with local businesses regarding responsible waste disposal. Upon further enquiry, Officers were informed that the matter is being investigated.

The Mayor enquired as to whether Cllr. Fage further information on this matter as he is a Ward Councillor.

Cllr. Fage informed Members that he and two other ward councillors had been working to progress the issue of rubbish in Bonds Lane with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC). He noted that clearance of the waste is now expected.

Cllr. Fage informed Members that he would follow up with Central Bedfordshire Council to request a timeline for the clearance of rubbish in Bonds Lane and would update the Clerk once further information is received.

He also raised concerns regarding the closure of a FixMyStreet reports submitted in which are marked as aged and closed without investigation. It was noted that this issue has been escalated to the Chief Executive for further review.

Members **AGREED** to allow Cllr. Fage and other Ward Councillors to progress the waste issue with CBC further with the Town Clerk following up with CBC again expressing a final demand that the waste be dealt with promptly. An update be brought to the November meeting for members to discuss further and potentially decide on further action as a town council.

Members **AGREED** to allow Councillor Fage and other Ward Councillors to continue to progress the waste issue with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC). The Town Clerk will also follow up with CBC, issuing a final request for the waste to be addressed promptly. An update will be brought to the November meeting for Members to consider further and, if necessary, determine any additional action to be taken by the Town Council.

## 9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### a. **Martyn's Law Report**

The Community Development Manager presented the report to Members, outlining the implications of the recent Martyn's Law legislation and its relevance to Town Council operations.

Officers acknowledged that Biggleswade hosts several large-scale public events. In recognition of this, the Council has opted to prepare under the Enhanced Tier of Martyn's Law, which applies to premises and events with attendance exceeding 800 people. This reflects the scale of most Town Council-led activities.

Officers suggested that the Town Council should be considering further safety and security enhancements, including:

- Employment of SIA-accredited security personnel
- Review and redesign of street furniture to incorporate defensive architecture
- Ongoing maintenance of evacuation routes and first aid procedures
- Additional staff training
- Rehearsals and further planning for emergency scenarios

Officers confirmed that health and safety and fire evacuation plans are already in place for all Council buildings and open spaces, and these align closely with Martyn's Law requirements.

Members thanked Officers for the report and raised the following queries:

- Where does Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC) responsibility as freeholder end, and where does Biggleswade Town Council's (BTC) responsibility begin in such matters?
- Are CBC's responsibilities under Martyn's Law equivalent to those of BTC?

In response, the Head of Governance clarified that while CBC is the freeholder of the Market Square, responsibility for safety and compliance lies with the event organiser—in this case, BTC—for any Council-led events. Both authorities share broadly similar responsibilities under the legislation.

BTC is actively collaborating with CBC, who have acknowledged the Council's current operational plan (Appendix A). This partnership will continue to evolve, with further enhancements being explored, including the potential redesign of the Market Square to improve resilience through the use of appropriate street furniture.

Members queried whether BTC's current approach was sufficient and sought clarification on the implementation timeline and the role of the Safety Advisory Group (SAG).

The Community Development Manager confirmed that BTC has up to two years to implement the necessary measures, although work is already underway.

Officers advised that the SAG will play a key role in reviewing event plans, particularly for events exceeding 800 attendees. BTC will be required to submit detailed documentation, including risk assessments and security plans, for SAG review. It was also suggested that BTC may request SAG input on the Market Square as a venue, outside of specific events, to support broader planning and preparedness.

Officers further advised that, in line with Martyn's Law provisions, additional road closures will be implemented for future events. For example, during the Christmas Lights Switch-On, the entire High Street, in addition to existing closures, will be inaccessible to vehicles. This will be the first event to implement the new approach.

Members sought clarification on whether the High Street would be closed for all future events. Officers confirmed that this is the intention, to enhance public safety.

Members also raised concerns regarding the clarity of responsibilities, particularly around funding for infrastructure such as barriers. It was confirmed that the event organiser bears this responsibility, and that future budgets should reflect anticipated compliance costs. Concerns were expressed regarding the wording of the report, particularly the emphasis on reputational risk. Members requested that the report be amended to better reflect the Council's primary focus on public safety and duty of care.

Further clarification was sought on Appendix A, with Members requesting more specific detail on the measures proposed, to ensure informed decision-making and alignment with previous accessibility improvements.

Members noted that while the Market Square is a key focus, other areas of the town also attract large gatherings such as the green open spaces and must not be overlooked. To focus solely on the Market Square would be negligent.

Members **REQUESTED** that a more detailed report be brought to the Town Centre Management (TCM) Committee, encompassing all Town Council capital assets, with a further report to be brought back to Full Council in due course.

b. **Update to Financial Regulations**

The Head of Finance outlined the report to Members.

Following a brief discussion of the Officers report, Members **APPROVED** the Financial Regulation policy document **RESOLVED** and enable Officers to publish it on the Town Council website.

c. **Applications to Vary Rights at Biggleswade Common**

Members **NOTED** the application.

d. **Premises Licence Application - Friends of Stratton School PTA**

Members **NOTED** and posed **NO OBJECTION** to the Premises Licence Application.

e. **CBC Consultation: Defining the High Street Areas for High Street Rental Auctions (HSRAs)**

Members considered correspondence from Central Bedfordshire Council regarding its consultation on the designation of areas within Biggleswade where High Street Rental Auction (HSRA) powers may be applied.

The purpose of the consultation is to identify locations within the town centre where vacant commercial properties could be brought back into use through rental auction schemes.

Members noted that several vacant premises exist in and around the High Street. Members discussed the scope of the consultation and the geographical area covered, which includes High Street, Hitchin Street, Shortmead Street, Station Road (up to Back Street), Church Street, Saffron Road, and parts of Mill Lane.

It was highlighted that the consultation area extends beyond the core Town Centre, and Members expressed the need to review whether the defined area is appropriate.

Concerns were raised regarding the proposed auctioning of vacant premises for rental purposes. Members questioned how the process would work in practice, particularly regarding the types of businesses permitted and the potential impact on the character of the town centre.

Members expressed that they would like the Town Council should be consulted on individual lettings prior to formal agreements being made.

Members **RESOLVED** that the consultation be referred to the Town Centre Management Committee for detailed consideration, with a report to be brought back to Full Council in due course.

f. **CBC Waste Strategy Consultation**

Members **NOTED** the consultation.

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/25/02750/VOC - 12 Pople Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8GJ**

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

b. **CB/25/02733/FULL - Flat, 130 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0BH**

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

c. **CB/25/02784/FULL - 13 Holme Court Avenue, Biggleswade, SG18 8PF**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments. However, Members have asked that further consideration be given to the size of the proposed extension.

d. **CB/25/02407/ADV - Land to the south of Stratton Business Park and north of New Spring Farm Cottages, London Road Biggleswade SG18 9SY**

The Town Council raises **NO OBJECTION** to this application, provided that the two non-illuminated post-mounted signs are in place for a period not exceeding two years. Should the applicant wish to retain the signage beyond this period, a formal application for an extension must be submitted.

e. **CB/25/02810/FULL - 8 Binder Place, Biggleswade, SG18 0RU**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application. However, Members request that the Planning Officer note their support for the Parking Officer's recommendation that a parking survey be undertaken prior to any approval being granted.

f. **CB/25/02909/FULL - 46 Binder Place, Biggleswade, SG18 0RU**

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

g. **CB/25/02976/FULL - 30 Jupiter Way, Biggleswade, SG18 8EW**

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

h. **CB/25/02707/FULL - 162 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EH**

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

i. **CBC Development Management Committee Planning Item: CB/25/00421/REG3  
Land to the North and South of Dunton Lane, Biggleswade**

Members **AGREED** that the previous objections still reflected the council's position, but no Members would be attending the DMC.

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

Members **NOTED** the report.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

**Financial Administration**

a. **Financial Management Report for August 2025**

The Head of Finance outlined the report to Members.

The projected outturn after five months indicates a potential year-end deficit of £14,437 for 2025/26. If not offset by underspends within the approved budget, this shortfall will be met from general reserves.

Efforts are ongoing to increase income through long-term lettings, event sponsorship, and new product offerings at the Orchard Centre, which may positively influence the final financial position.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Bridleway No. 11 Public Path Diversion Order and Footpath No. 16 Public Path Extinguishment Order**

Members noted that the deadline for submitting a formal response to Central Bedfordshire Council had passed.

Members expressed disappointment regarding the recent diversion of the bridleway and the extinguishment of the footpath. It was felt that these changes reduce accessibility to open spaces and disadvantage residents who previously relied on these routes for convenient travel across town.

Councillors highlighted that the revised route adds approximately one kilometre to journeys across the bridge. While the safety rationale is acknowledged, Members noted that the increased distance may discourage use—particularly among those engaging in sustainable travel or seeking to access green spaces.

The removal of the pathway and diversion of the bridleway were viewed as a setback in promoting accessible and environmentally friendly movement around Biggleswade.

Members **RESOLVED** that a response be submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council conveying Members' concerns, despite the consultation deadline having passed.

b. **CBC Consultation: Ivel Valley School**

Members **NOTED** the consultation and agreed that it would be considered at a future Town Council meeting, subject to confirmation that the consultation has been resumed.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

a. **Ward Councillor for Biggleswade East – Councillor Grant Fage**

Members noted that the land referred to under Item 13a is being promoted by the landowner for allocation in current Call for Sites.

It was further suggested that the Joint Committee may be an appropriate forum to discuss Martyn's Law, given its relevance and the committee's ability to invite senior representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council for input.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Exempt minutes of the Town Council Meeting 9th September 2025**

No amendments were made to the exempt minutes.

The exempt minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

b. **Exempt minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting 16th September 2025.**

Members **NOTED** the exempt minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 16th September 2025.**

c. **Exempt minutes of the Personnel Meeting 19th August 2025**

Members **NOTED** the exempt minutes of Personnel Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 19th August 2025.**

d. **Drove Road Report**

**Members considered the report presented by Officers.**

Members **RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be authorised to sign and seal the lease, witnessed by the Town Clerk.

e. **Market Square Report**

Members considered the report presented by Officers.

Following brief discussion, Members **RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be authorised to sign and seal the licence, witnessed by the Town Clerk.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **pm**