



**MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 09<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 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 P Guilcher  
Cllr M Knight  
Cllr M North  
Cllr S Patel  
Cllr M Russell  
Cllr S Sajid  
Cllr D Strachan

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships  
Mr E Bour – Head of Finance & Deputy RFO  
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**

**a. Apologies for absence were received from the following:**

Cllr. J Jones, Cllr A Skilton, Cllr. C Thomas.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared.

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

No disclosable non-pecuniary interests were declared.

### **3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. The Mayor thanked all Town Council staff for their hard work in delivering a successful Christmas Lights Switch-On event on Friday, 28 November. He noted that the event was well attended by residents, charities operating stalls, and local traders, and he emphasised that there had been lots of positive feedback received from those who attended.

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

- a. **Cllr. G Fage - Ward Councillor for Biggleswade East**

Councillor Fage addressed Members regarding three items on the agenda.

First, in relation to item 10B (Planning Application at 35 Stratton Way—Post Office), he highlighted concerns about the absence of off-street or allocated parking for the proposed residential dwelling and noted he had submitted comments on the planning portal.

Second, in relation to item 10C (18 Stratton Way), he advised he had called the application to the Development Management Committee and expressed concern that an annex arrangement was not clearly stated in the application, with design changes following his feedback.

Third, in relation to item 9D (proposed changes to Ivel Valley School), he stressed the significance of the decision, the public preference for option 4 despite higher cost and potential land disposals and suggested that a January timetable would allow further reflection and a coordinated response across ward councillors and the Town Council.

### **5. INVITED SPEAKER**

- a. **John Tizzard, Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner**

Before beginning his address, Mr Tizzard remarked that he was impressed by the Christmas lights. He outlined his role as the public's voice into the police, not vice versa, and confirmed this was his second visit to Biggleswade Town Council since his election. He explained his statutory responsibilities for setting policing strategy and budget and holding the Chief Constable to account for an effective and efficient service.

Mr Tizzard highlighted the summer "Safer Streets/Safer Town Centres" campaign in Biggleswade, which increased police visibility and involved Central Bedfordshire Council enforcement and Trading Standards officers. He reported reductions in antisocial behaviour and retail crime during the campaign, while acknowledging recent issues in the town centre and bus hub.

He noted financial challenges but assured members that local policing would be sustained. The Biggleswade community team operates from the former Station Road police station, supported by specialist officers when required. His priorities for the remainder of his term include crime prevention (such as knife crime and child exploitation), improving victim support across the justice system, and maintaining public confidence.

Members raised questions on several issues:

- Delivery against objectives: Mr Tizard cited the summer campaign as evidence of improved visibility and reduced crime, and he hoped these improvements would continue.
- E-scooters: He confirmed that privately owned e-scooters are illegal and outlined enforcement measures, including confiscation and crushing. He warned parents against purchasing e-scooters as Christmas gifts.
- Antisocial behaviour: Mr Tizard stressed that antisocial behaviour is taken seriously and is not “low-level crime,” but acknowledged resource prioritisation challenges. He invited members to share details of any cases where police response was inadequate.
- Local policing base and the closure of Biggleswade Police Station: He stated that the Station Road building is not fit for purpose and could not guarantee its retention but committed that Biggleswade would continue to have a policing presence.
- Facial recognition technology: Mr Tizard explained that Bedfordshire Police has two Home Office-funded vans equipped with live facial recognition (LFR) technology, currently deployed in Luton and Bedford due to higher footfall. He described the process, including watchlists, officer verification, and rapid deletion of non-matches, and assured members that privacy safeguards are in place. He distinguished LFR from national proposals for one-to-many database searches, which he agreed raise broader concerns.

## 6. **MEMBERS’ QUESTIONS**

- a. Concern was raised about a reported disruption to recycling collections in Central Bedfordshire following a fire at the waste treatment facility, with social media suggesting that the facility was rejecting recycling; Members asked whether weekly collections would be affected, noting increased recyclable waste over the Christmas period.

The Town Clerk stated that the Council had not been formally notified and would seek clarification from Central Bedfordshire Council.

A councillor reported that Central Bedfordshire had issued information indicating that recycling collections were suspended until further notice, with food waste and residual (black bin) collections continuing, and referenced dispute over repair cost responsibilities at the treatment plant.

It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk would make enquiries of Central Bedfordshire Council and arrange for verified information to be shared on the Town Council website.

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

- a. Mayor noted a typographical error, on page 10 of the 11<sup>th</sup> November minutes the minutes should read “Chair of Governors” rather than “school of governors”.

Subject to these amendments the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025**.

- b. No amendments were made to the minutes.

Subject to these amendments the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025**.

- c. Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Public Land & Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025**.

- d. Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Town Centre Management Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025**.

## **8. MATTERS ARISING**

- a. **Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11th November 2025 - Item 9g: Parking on Hitchin Street**

Members requested clarity on the Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) for Hitchin Street, including exact restrictions and signage locations, recognising resident complaints and enforcement questions.

Officers had received a general response from Central Bedfordshire Council stating that signage was in place at appropriate intervals and that the restriction was enforceable but had not been provided with the specific TRO documents or mapping.

Members **REQUESTED** that the Town Clerk follow up with CBC Officers requesting the definitive TRO documentation and a map showing signage positions along Hitchin Street from Central Bedfordshire Council and circulate these to Members.

## **9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. **Standing Orders**

Members discussed the proposed Standing Orders.

Members noted that historically the Council had updated its own Standing Orders by incorporating legal changes rather than wholesale adoption of the model. Concerns were raised about drafting inconsistencies, ambiguities (including speaking times), and local practice differences.

The Town Clerk acknowledged that no formal Council resolution had required moving entirely to the NALC model.

Members **AGREED** to form a small working group to refine the draft, reconcile local practice with statutory requirements and best practice, correct typographical issues, and return a clean version for Council consideration.

- b. **Scheme of Delegations**

Members discussed the proposed Scheme of Delegations

Members discussed whether "Town Centre events" should be broadened to "Town events," which was agreed, noting an ongoing discussion about the committee's title and remit.

Members further **AGREED** that "Martyn's Law" must remain under the Full Council remit due to their overarching impact across Council activities.

Members **AMENDED** the wording relating to the Orchard Community Centre. Members agreed that the committee's role should be stated as "to oversee the financial management of the Orchard Community Centre," with operational management remaining an officer responsibility.

It was also **AGREED** to remove a reference placing the Clerk's appraisal under the Personnel Committee, since the Council's policy specifies that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Chair of Personnel conduct the appraisal.

Subject to Members changes, the Scheme of Delegations was **APPROVED**.

### **Interim Internal Audit**

Members **NOTED** the report and expressed appreciation for the accounts staff.

### **CBC Consultation: Proposed changes to Ivel Valley School**

Members held a detailed discussion on Central Bedfordshire Council's consultation concerning Ivel Valley School.

Members thanked Ivel Valley for facilitating Member visits to the site.

Members expressed strong concern about split-site options due to safeguarding, operational movement between sites (including across a bridleway), disruption from building works during term time, and impacts on pupils with profound physical disabilities and sensory needs.

While several Councillors considered option 4 (a single new site) to be the optimal educational and operational solution, the Members recognised financial and land-disposal implications and **AGREED** that more information on costings, site access, utilities, scope, and potential collaboration with Land East developers was essential.

The Council also **AGREED** that a ranked response setting out unacceptable options and preferences would be more robust than endorsing a single option, given its consultee status.

Members **DEFERRED** a final consultation response to the Full Council meeting on 13 January 2026 and **AGREED** to conduct an information-gathering exercise (including liaison with Ward Councillors and Officers), followed by a Members' working discussion a few days prior to 13 January to produce a ranked, evidence-based position.

### **CBC Consultation: Council Tax Support Scheme**

Members **NOTED** the consultation.

### **CBC Consultation: Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy**

Members reviewed the consultation on sustainable travel to school, emphasising that rural contexts inevitably involve greater reliance on cars due to distance and limited public transport, and that allied enforcement (e.g., parking enforcement around schools such as Biggleswade Academy— on Kitelands road and Mead End) must be aligned with any strategy.

Members noted that primary schools removing catchment areas may increase cross-town movements. The Council agreed to include comments urging realistic rural recognition and joined-up enforcement in its response.

Members **REQUESTED** that the Town Clerk draft a response reflecting rural considerations, enforcement alignment, and cross-town movement factors and circulate to members prior to submission.

### **CBC Consultation: Active Travel Strategy (2024-2040)**

Members discussed the Active Travel Strategy and **AGREED** to advocate for an A1 underpass between Caldecote and Biggleswade as a safe active travel route to reduce car dependency for short trips, facilitate safer travel to schools and town facilities, and alleviate congestion on Mill Lane caused by current access constraints.

Members proposed requesting that Central Bedfordshire Council adopt the underpass as policy and commit Active Travel England funding to a feasibility study, including geotechnical, water table, National Highways engagement, and design assessments.

The Council also **AGREED** to state that the Town Council's response should clearly state that it is BTC's position that no element of an active travel policy should encourage e-scooters, which are illegal.

Members **RESOLVED** that Officers respond to the Active Travel Strategy consultation urging formal policy adoption of an A1 underpass, commissioning of a feasibility study using Active Travel England funds, and explicit exclusion of e-scooter promotion from active travel measures.

### **CBC Confirmation Notice: Biggleswade Public Bridleway No. 11 & Biggleswade Public Footpath No. 16**

Members **NOTED** the confirmation notice.

## **10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### **a. CB/25/03128/FULL - 56 Collings Crescent, Biggleswade, SG18 0PZ**

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

### **b. CB/25/02837/FULL - 35 Stratton Way, Biggleswade, SG18 0NS**

The applicant withdrew this application prior to the Town Council meeting; therefore, Members did not make any comments on it.

### **c. CB/25/03283/FULL - 18 Stratton Way, Biggleswade, SG18 0NS**

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

### **d. CB/TCA/25/00488 - 1 Ivel Mill, Mill Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8AZ**

The Town Council has **NOTED** this application

### **e. CB/25/03378/FULL - Unit B, Normandy Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8QB**

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

### **f. CB/25/03391/FULL - 1 Holbrook Grove, Biggleswade, SG18 8UG**

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

g. **Planning Appeal Outcome: The Plough House**

Members **NOTED** the planning appeal.

11. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

This report was **NOTED**.

12. **ACCOUNTS**

**Financial Administration**

a. **Position & Accounts for October 2025.**

The Head of Finance and Deputy RFO outlined the Financial Management report for October 2025.

The projected outturn after seven months suggests a deficit of £15,327 at the end of the financial year 2025-26.

The projected deficit at year-end will be offset by the Council's general reserves if it is not covered by underspend within the existing agreed budget.

Members **NOTED** the report.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. There were no items for information.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

a. **Cllr. G Fage - Ward Councillor for Biggleswade East**

Councillor Fage informed Members that, in the case of the battery storage planning application Members had previously objected to, the Town Council's objections were considered by the Development Management Committee. This resulted in enhanced landscaping commitments on the southern section of the site and an undertaking to engage with the Town Council and the ward member, with neighbourhood plan policies helping to secure this outcome.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Exempt minutes of the Town Council Meeting Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025.**

No amendments were made to the exempt minutes.

Subject to these amendments the exempt minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

**Exempt minutes of the Town Council Meeting Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

No amendments were made to the exempt minutes.

Subject to these amendments the exempt minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

**Exempt minutes of the Public Land & Open Spaces Committee Meeting Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025**

Members **NOTED** the exempt minutes of the Public Land & Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

**Exempt minutes of the Town Centre Management Committee Meeting Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

Members **NOTED** the exempt minutes of the Town Centre Management Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

**Risk Register**

Members **NOTED** the report.

**Play Areas PWLB Improvements Update Report**

Members **RESOLVED** to proceed with Options A and B as proposed by Officers.

**S106 Update**

Members **NOTED** the report.

**HR Update**

Members **NOTED** the HR update.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **8:43 pm**