

Ref: Agenda/Council101213

4 December 2013

To: All Town Councillors

Dear Sir or Madam

I hereby give notice that a meeting of the **Biggleswade Town Council** will take place on **Tuesday 10 December 2013** at the **Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, 4 Saffron Road, Biggleswade** commencing at **7.00 pm** in order to transact the undermentioned items of business.

Yours faithfully



R.D.McGregor
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

- (a)** Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item
- (b)** Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item

Members may participate in and vote on matters before the Central Bedfordshire Council Development Control Committee on which they have already expressed a concluded view in their position as a Town Councillor so long as they declare their membership of the Town Council and the way they voted on the Town Council consideration of the application.

In addition, the decisions of the Town Council in respect of planning applications would not be binding on those members of the Council who hold office at the Town Council and the Central Bedfordshire Council Development Control Committee.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask questions that are pertaining to matters listed on this Agenda.

5. INVITED SPEAKER

Nikolas Smith – Central Bedfordshire Council to answer questions Town Council may have on Kings Reach development or on general planning issues.

6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. For Members to receive and approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 November 2013 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. For Members to **approve the recommendations** of the Finance & General Purpose meeting held on 19 November 2013.

Items as listed on the agenda:

6a) Council Tax Support Grant (CTS Grant)

Correspondence has been received from CBC regarding the CTS Grant for 2014/15. The Government has issued a provisional Settlement for 2014/15. This did not separately identify any amount for CTS Grant and overall the Settlement amount for CBC was £5.438m, or 7.7%, lower than that for 2013/14.

Since the publication of the provisional Settlement, the June Spending Review outlined a further 1% cut to Local Government funding. There are also other changes to funding currently being discussed, the impact of which is not yet known, but which may also be adverse for CBC.

Following helpful feedback on the Precept Request forms, the format of these has been revised and should be circulated to Town Council during November. The revised format has been designed to make as explicit as possible the full effect on Council Tax that Town Councils proposed precept would have.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council make no comment at this time.

b) Budgets

Members considered budgets for 2013/2014.

Cllr M North advised Members that Town Council may have to set the Precept at 8.49% increase, due to the reduced grant from CBC.

CBC has not met the target to provide the Tax Base figures.

There will be an F&GP meeting on 21 January to set the Precept and take to Council on 28 January, so the increase may change from 8.49%.

c) Financial Risk Assessment and Review

Members considered and reviewed the Financial Risk Assessment.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

Rob McGregor said that the Internal Auditor is satisfied.

Derek Kemp advised Members that Town Council needs to carry out a full Risk Assessment every year, prior to 31 March.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council accept the Financial Risk Assessment and Review.

- 7c. For Member to **approve the recommendations** of the Town Centre Management meeting held on 19 November 2013.

Items as listed on the agenda:

5a) Request for Tuesday market rent reduction in January and February 2014

The stall holders who support the Tuesday market have requested a reduction in rent during January and February 2014, as these are very difficult trading months, especially in the current economic climate.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the stall holders are offered a 50% reduction for January and February 2014 on the condition that the stalls and stall holders vehicles are not impeding the parking on the Market Square.

7a) Sun Street St Johns Street

Town Centre Management Meeting 20th August 2013; members **recommended** to write to C.B.C to enquire if the survey to investigate the feasibility of introducing a one way system Sun Street – St Johns Street could be jointly funded by C.B.C. (response from David Bowie attached to the agenda).

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that Town Council has been quoted £10k to carry out a survey into the viability of a one way system and has offered to pay £5k, splitting the cost with CBC, but CBC have nothing in the budget in 2013.

Cllr D Albone asked that this item is kept on the agenda for review at a later date.

Members **RECOMMENDED** that a letter is sent to CBC to remind them to budget for the survey in 2014.

8c) Bonds Lane

For members to receive an update on Bonds Lane; proposed multi story car park and retail unit.

Cllr Mrs M Russell informed members that she had met Mr Ruggieri at the CBC business breakfast meeting.

Mr Ruggieri needs to know what S.106 demands will be placed on the development; the design incorporates CBC planning departments input. There had been some issues with the footway and the service yard. CBC had also raised the issue of upgrading Bonds Lane to Hitchin Street standards.

There are design pressures re: access to the development from Hitchin Street; Town Council agreed to the reversal of Hitchin Street. The Traffic Management meeting at CBC will take place on the 21st November 2013 to consider the reversal of Hitchin Street and does not include the Town Council's decision in its committee papers.

The Masterplan of 2011 and the County Council Transport Study of 2006 both support the Hitchin Street reversal and recommend further investigation and consultation.

There is an option for the northern end of Hitchin Street becoming pedestrianized, which would allow some of the market stalls to be located there. If implemented, this would mean that no traffic would be entering the Market Square and, therefore, there would be no impact on Century House.

Reversal of Hitchin Street is needed now to support the trade in Hitchin Street.

The report to the Traffic Management Committee makes sad reading and we should reiterate Town Council approval on the reversal of Hitchin Street.

Members **RECOMMENDED** to write to the Traffic Management Committee chair, Cllr B Spurr and reiterate that the reversal of Hitchin Street is vital for trade, the development of Bonds Lane and the possible pedestrianisation of the Northern end of Hitchin Street.

8. MATTERS ARISING

a. From the Council meeting held on 26 November 2013

Page 4 – Item 13a – Planning Outcomes – CB/13/03253/ADV – 22 High Street (Halifax Building Society)

The Town Clerk wrote to CBC regarding the above planning application:

Planning Application CB/13/03253/ADV 20 – 22 High Street Biggleswade, SG18 0JL; the Town Council have asked that I contact you to express its disappointment at the decision to grant approval for part internal illumination of a sign on this property.

The Town Council for many years have a policy of non-approval of any internally illuminated signs within Biggleswade; the Town Council would like to understand why Central Bedfordshire Councils planning department have on this occasion approved such a sign.

The Town Council ask; that when considering signage in future applications that external illumination is the preferred option of this Council; the Town Council have fought hard over the years to ensure internally illuminated signs are not part of the street scene in Biggleswade.

The following reply has been received:

I am writing in response to your email received on the 2 December 2013 regarding the above application which was approved on 14.11.13 for:

Advertisement: 2 No. New 680mm High Non illuminated fascia signs with only the brand mark being internally illuminated.

1 No. New 400mm High Non illuminated projecting sign. 1No New Non illuminated ATM Collar. 1No New Marketing Unit.

The Council considers proposals for signage very carefully.

During the determination of the advertisement application the plans were revised and the extent of internal illumination is now very limited. Based on the revisions made, in particular the level of internal illumination was significantly reduced - being removed from the projecting sign and ATM, and with the fascias being Non illuminated except for the brandmarks it was considered that the scheme was visually acceptable.

The Council welcomes the Town Councils comments during the determination of the planning process.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/13/04012/RM – Land South Of, Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Blocks 54 and 55 of development south of Potton Road, Biggleswade consisting of residential development for 49 new dwellings and associated areas.
- b. **CB/13/02856/LB & CB/13/02860/ADV – New Inn Public House, 16A Market Square, Biggleswade**
Placement of 8 No signs including 2 No illuminated signs
- c. **CB/13/03197/FULL – Warehouse, Bonds Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8AY**
Conversion of Warehouse to 2 No. Residential Units

10. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Wildlife and Countryside ACT 1981 – Section 55 – The proposed mapping of the Biggleswade and Dunstable excluded areas**

When the former Bedfordshire County Council was tasked to survey and record all public rights of way in the county in 1950 it resolved to exclude four fully developed areas from the survey which eventually lead to the publication of the Definitive Map and Statement. These areas were the urban centres of Bedford, Biggleswade, Dunstable and Luton. These four areas are still excluded from the Definitive Map – despite later provisions in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 requiring them to be mapped.

CBC is planning to generate a map including its two areas, Biggleswade and Dunstable. The area to be mapped in Biggleswade is shown in pink on the extract attached to this agenda.

A second later phase will investigate any additional paths that come to light during the first phase – including any paths that the Town Council feels should be recorded.

b. Proposed introduction of Prohibition of Waiting and Loading on Verges and Footways in Central Bedfordshire

Correspondence has been received from AMEY, on behalf of Bedfordshire Highways, regarding the proposed introduction of Prohibition of Waiting and Loading on Verges in Central Bedfordshire, except for the M1 motorway, A1, A5 and A421 truck roads.

The Public Notice, Draft Order and statement of reasons are attached to this agenda.

Objections should be sent in writing to the Transportation Manager, Bedfordshire Highways, Woodlands Annex, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41 7NU or email centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk stating the grounds on which they are made by 24 December 2013.

c. Request from Bromford Support

Correspondence has been received from Bromford support to request the use of a room for half a day a week at Town Council offices for one of their drop-in sessions.

Bromford Support help vulnerable people across Central Bedfordshire by providing housing related support. They are a preventative service funded by CBC.

They offer support with form filling and encourage people to become involved within the community and help people manage physical, mental health, drug and alcohol problems and assist those wanting to access employment, education and training.

They currently run one session at Biggleswade Library on Mondays and hold many more across Central Bedfordshire.

Members are asked to consider this request.

d. Proposed Reversal of Hitchin Street

At a meeting of Central Bedfordshire Council Traffic Management Committee held on the 21st November 2013 the proposed reversal of Hitchin Street was considered; the decision of the Traffic Management committee is as follows;

Having taken all factors into account, (those set out in the report, the additional information contained in your email and the representations heard at the meeting), the decision Cllr Spurr reached with regard to the proposed reversal of the one way in Hitchin Street is to defer consideration until the wider impact of other activities is understood and can be taken into account. The decision in the Decision Digest is :

'The consideration of any changes to traffic management on Hitchin Street be deferred until the wider impact on adjacent streets and junctions as well as proposals for the Market Square including re use or redevelopment of Century House can be fully understood and taken into account.'

Members are asked to consider this response.

11. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Further to Council meeting 12 November – Item 10i – A6001 London Road, Biggleswade – Proposed 40mph Speed Limit Extension and Pedestrian Crossings

A copy of Town Councils **RESOLUTION** and the subsequent reply from AMEY are both attached to this agenda.

b. Temporary closure of Footpath No 34 and Footpath No 35

CBC has notified Town Council of the above Temporary closures of Footpath No 34 and No 35.

A copy is attached to this agenda.

c. Appeal Decision – 5 Apollo Gardens, Biggleswade

Correspondence has been received from the Planning Inspectorate to inform Town Council that the above appeal has been dismissed.

A copy is attached to this agenda.

d. Street Naming and Numbering – Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade

Further to Council meeting on 12 November when Members chose four more street names for the next phase of the development, CBC has now confirmed the following street names will be used:

Evans Grove

Maskin Drive

Hunt Road

12. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask questions.

13. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be moved that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

Exempt Item – 14a - Staff

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council resolve to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.