

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23 JUNE 2009 AT THE  
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD  
BIGGLESWADE**

**Present:** Cllr G Wilson (Chair), Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr D Smith, Cllr T Woodward, Cllr P Woodward,  
Cllr Mrs R Forbes, Cllr Mrs S Grayston, Cllr D Albone, Cllr S Watkins, Cllr P Vickers  
Rob McGregor – Deputy Town Clerk/Works Manager  
Juliet Brookes – Finance Assistant  
Inspector T Coulling – Bedfordshire Constabulary  
Sgt R Glenister – Bedfordshire Constabulary  
PC Ian Wilson – Bedfordshire Constabulary  
Also present – Mr P Rook  
Members of the Public - 1

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs J Lawrence and Cllr D Lawrence

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

(a) **Prejudicial interests** - There were no prejudicial interests registered

(a) **Personal Interests** - Cllrs P F Vickers registered an interest as a member of the Central Bedfordshire Council Development Control Committee in respect of planning applications listed on the agenda.

Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr D Smith and Cllr G Wilson registered personal interests in item 11c as listed on the agenda.

**3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Town Mayor's announcements.

**4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Mr Bernard Briars asked if Public copies of the agenda could have attachments, letters etc.

Rob McGregor said he would investigate to see if it would be possible.

Mr Peter Rook asked if the political parties had been invoiced and had paid for their market stalls in the run-up to the elections in June.

Cllr George Wilson informed Mr Rook that both parties had been invoiced and that one party had paid.

**INVITED SPEAKERS**

Derek Kemp of RBS was present at the meeting to present and give an overview to members of the Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2009.

**6. ACCOUNTS**

**a. Internal Audit Report (Final Update) 2008/2009**

Members received a copy of the Internal Audit Report and agree the recommendations on the Action Plan.

**b. Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 (Previously Circulated)**

i. Members approved and adopted the Accounts and Statement of Accounts contained in the Annual Return for 2008/2009.

ii. Members approved and adopted the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year 2008/2009.

**c. Financial Administration**

Members received and adopted the following accounts for June:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009.
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 30 April 2009
- iv. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2009
- iv. Summary of Income & Expenditure
- v. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2009

**d. Annual Audit 2008/2009**

Members received and adopted external audit report for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 (copy of Certificate attached).

**7. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY**

PC Ian Wilson, Bedfordshire Police, reported that during May thefts from motor vehicles had reduced, although criminal damage had increased.

Brunel Drive and Berkeley Close had a problem with tyre slashing, but all was quiet now.

PC Wilson thanked Rob McGregor and his staff for their assistance in the dog at the aerial runway incident, and that as a result arrests had been made and fines issued.

There had been a recent shoplifting/theft, and with the help of a helicopter, 2 arrests had been made.

Speeding was still a problem in Shortmead Street and Hitchin Street and volunteers from the Community Safety Group were monitoring the situation with speed cameras.

The Highways dept were still negotiating with regards to the parking problems in Dells Lane.

Cllr Mrs W Smith stated that motorbikes were causing problems for residents in Ivel Gardens. PC Wilson replied that the Police were aware and keeping an eye on the situation.

**a. An introduction by Inspector Tania Coulling**

Inspector Tania Coulling introduced herself to Town Council. She is the new Inspector for Ampthill and Biggleswade and has been in the job 8-10 weeks. Previously Inspector Coulling spent 19 years as a Senior Officer at Northampton as well as serving in the Metropolitan Police based in Camden Borough.

She said she is looking forward to new challenges and encouraging team work and working together.

Inspector Coulling informed Members that the SNT capacity had been doubled for the Biggleswade area to support their commitment to improve Neighbourhood Policing.

Cllr George Wilson said that PC Ian Wilson had been on his own for some time, so the new posts would help his workload.

Cllr Wilson went on to ask as to why no Specials are operational in Biggleswade. Inspector Coulling replied that there is a strong team available and that 10 extra officers had been drafted in for the Biggleswade Carnival.

Cllr Tim Woodward said that he felt despondent about response times to emergency calls and felt that there were issues that the police needed to address.

Inspector Coulling replied that it depends on the nature of the incident and what information is relayed.

Cllr Mrs Sheila Grayston said that she had worked in North London, which is a slightly different concept with a minimal level of crimes, and at least Biggleswade had been assigned PCSO's.

Cllr Grayston praised the police for all their good work and felt that people do not appreciate all the hard work carried out by the Police.

## 8. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received and adopted Minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting held on 12 May 2009 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. Members received and adopted Minutes of the Finance and General Purpose meeting held on 26 May 2009 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- c. Members received and adopted Minutes of the Planning meeting held on 9 June 2009 at the offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- d. Members received and adopted Minutes of the Public Land and Open Space meeting held on 16 June 2009 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

## 9. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting held on 12 May 2009 - None
- b. Minutes of the Finance and General Purpose meeting held on 26 May 2009 - None
- c. Minutes of the Planning meeting held on 9 June 2009 - None
- d. Minutes of the Public Land and Open Space meeting held on 16 June 2009 -None

## 10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

### a. **09/01080/FULL – 1 Tulip Close, Biggleswade**

Full: Single storey side extension for storage

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations. In addition, the Council is to ensure that their guidelines on the size of the proposed extension to the principle dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

### b. **09/01021/FULL – 35 Stratton Way, Biggleswade**

Full: Loft conversion including dormer window to side elevation & roof lights & covered walkway.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations. In addition, the Council is to ensure that their guidelines on the size of the proposed extension to the principle dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents

### c. **09/0129/FULL – Unit 3, London Road Trading Estate, Biggleswade**

Full: Change of use from B1 use to A1 retail/warehousing

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application

### d. **09/01086/FULL – Land to the rear of 58 Brunel Drive, Biggleswade**

Full: Change of use of land to residential garden use & erection of 6ft fence

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **DEFER** the decision relating to this application until it can be confirmed whether this land is covered by the 106 agreement for amenity land for this site.

### e. **09/01131/FULL – 3 Sable Close, Biggleswade**

Full: Two storey side extension, single storey front extension and rear conservatory

Full: Loft conversion including dormer window to side elevation & roof lights & covered walkway.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations. In addition, the Council is to ensure that their guidelines on the size of the proposed extension to the principle dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

11. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **School Travel Plan Improvement – St Andrews Lower School, Biggleswade**

Members considered correspondence received from Amey to inform Council that Bedfordshire Highways have investigated and propose an upgrade to the existing uncontrolled crossing point located on Sun Street, Biggleswade, between its junction with Fairfield Road and St Johns Street to a Zebra Crossing.

The main purpose of the scheme is to improve the existing route for pupils to get to/from St Andrews Lower School, Biggleswade. This proposal to upgrade the uncontrolled crossing point to a Zebra Crossing is considered as the best long term solution in the absence of a school crossing patrol operative which has recently been removed from this location.

Construction of this scheme will commence on the last week on July 2009 and will extend approximately for 4 weeks.

Members were invited to apply for further information or make any comments.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said she welcomed the proposal for a crossing. The last few years this had become a real problem area, especially since the removal of the crossing patrol.

b. **East Beds Concert Band**

Members considered correspondence from East Beds Concert Band thanking Council for the grant awarded to them as the Band relies of support from outside organisations in order to buy new music and for the purchase and maintenance of instruments.

In recognition of the support given to the Band by the Town Council they would like to invite Members to be guests at their Christmas Concert on Saturday 5 December. They ask that the date is noted but will be in contact again nearer the time.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

c. **Vandalism at Biggleswade War Memorial**

The Royal British Legion has contacted Town Council regarding vandalism at Biggleswade War Memorial. It has been brought to their attention by one of their Committee members that children are frequently being allowed to clamber over the War Memorial causing damage to the lettering on the flat stones at the side and have been seen picking out the lead of the names.

The letter also states that the War Memorials in Hitchin, Langford and Henlow are all protected by metal fencing and locked gates and asks why Biggleswade cannot do the same.

Whilst being fully aware that it is desirable to allow access the Memorial for those who wish to pay their respects, ask that a way be found to stop this vandalism even if restricting access is the only answer.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted and that a letter of thanks be sent to The Royal British Legion.

Mr McGregor will feedback to Council after he had attended the seminar regarding security and repairs of the War Memorial.

d. **Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Section 247 proposed stopping up of highway(s) at land off Church Street, Biggleswade**

Department of Transport has written to Council informing of a draft order proposed under the provisions of the above Act and has included a map.

Members were asked to comment on the proposal before the end of the 28 day objection period specified in the public notice.

It was **RESOLVED** that Council raise no objection.

e. **Annual Bowls fixture – Town Council and Biggleswade Town Bowls Club**

Biggleswade Town Bowls Club has contacted Town Council with suggested dates for the Annual Bowls Fixture. The dates are: Thursdays, 23 July, 20 August or 13 August.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Bowls match be held on Thursday 23 July 2009.

f. **Request from Biggleswade Baptist Church**

Town Council considered a request from Biggleswade Baptist Church to hold a picnic in Kitelands Park on Sunday 28 June at 4.30pm. This would take place of a regular tea that is normally held at the church, which normally has about 40 – 50 people attending.

It was **RESOLVED** that permission be granted.

12. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Introduction from new District Commander, Bedfordshire Police**

Members received correspondence from Neil Wilson, the new District Commander for Central Bedfordshire, he will be based at Ampthill Police Station and also maintain an office at Dunstable. Over the past months the County Division has been restructured to ensure it is correctly aligned and meets the needs of the new partnership agreements arising from the newly created unitary authorities.

Inspector Tania Coulling has been appointed as the new Inspector for the Ampthill & Biggleswade area. Inspectors Berni White and Steve Barrett will remain at Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard respectively.

As part of the restructure two additional sergeant posts have been secured to support the commitment to improve Neighbourhood Policing. These Sergeants will be based in the Ampthill and Biggleswade area and will bring some support and supervision to the officers and PCSOs working the area. Negotiations are current taking place to co-locate the Safer Neighbourhood Team currently based at Ampthill to the Citizone Building, which will improve the Constabulary's visibility, accessibility and partnership working.

A substantial investment of resources has also been made in regards to CID. A new post has been created for Central Beds and DCI John Harwood has been appointed to lead the CID function across the district. Further to the CID Office based in Dunstable, further resources have been secured to enable establishment of a CID office in Ampthill. This office will be dedicated to the investigation of serious and priority crime within the former Mid Bedfordshire area.

Further to this, additional Sergeant posts have been created within the Prisoner Handling Unit based at Dunstable Police Station. This is to enhance the supervision of investigations, which in turn will speed up the criminal processes, increase the number offences brought to justice and reduce the time it takes to bring offenders to court.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

b. **Introduction letter from new Area Inspector for Ampthill and Biggleswade**

Correspondence has been received from Inspector Tania Coulling, the new Area Inspector for Ampthill and Biggleswade informing Council of the restructuring of the County Division.

As part of the restructure additional sergeant posts were established to support their commitment to improve Neighbourhood Policing. Details of these Sergeants are as listed:

Police Sergeant 778 Lisa Johnson covering Ampthill/Cranfield/Flitwick/Shefford/Woburn area Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

It is planned to recruit a second Sergeant to assist with covering Ampthill area.

Police Sergeant 5289 Russell Glenister covering Biggleswade and Potton area Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

Police Sergeant 5309 James Shotbolt covering Sandy/Stotfold/Arlesey area Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

**c. Thank you letter from Biggleswade Rail Access Campaign**

Members received correspondence from Biggleswade Rail Access Campaign thanking Council for their grant allocation which is to be put towards the cost of setting up a website. Such a facility will enable them to inform people of their meetings and the longer term aims of the group, which are to have lifts for all platforms to enable greater use of the rail service for both able bodied and disabled people.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

**d. Thank you letter from the Pasque Charity**

Members received correspondence from the Pasque Charity thanking Council for their grant allocation which will be used in meeting the operating costs of Keech Cottage Children's Hospice. Less than 30% of Keech Cottage's budgeted running costs of £2.3m in 2009/10 are expected to be met from statutory sources. As a result, the income needed to continue providing vital support for the children and their families can only be found with the continued commitment of the community as a whole and through the voluntary gifts of the very many grant-giving, charitable trust, corporate and individual donors that recognise the significant value of the work carried out at Keech Cottage.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

**e Planning Decisions**

**Council Decision**

- |   |          |              |
|---|----------|--------------|
| i. MB/09/00410/FULL – The Lodge, The Baulk                  | APPROVED | No objection |
| ii. MB/08/00488/FULL – Ivel Bridge, County Tyres & Exhausts | APPROVED | No objection |

It was **RESOLVED** that these be noted.

**f. Thank you letter from Ivel Stroke Club**

Correspondence has been received from Ivel Stroke Club thanking Town Council for their £200 grant awarded to them.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

**g. Newsletter from Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership – May 2009**

Town Council has received a copy of May 2009 Newsletter from Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership and a copy is attached to this agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

**13. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Mr Bernard Briars congratulated Cllr George Wilson on becoming Town Mayor. He went on to say that there are 4 bins outside Ask Restaurant, in White Hart Car Park, that have not been granted planning permission.

He complained that the wall outside Stratton House is overgrown with weeds and that the Cemeteries need tidying up, pathways and edges need clearing, as the edge of the path cannot be seen. We should be proud of our Cemeteries.

Mr Briars asked if Town Council were aware that there had been an incident with a youth in the cemetery who had to be taken to hospital in an ambulance, and also asked if the Police could wander through the cemetery from time to time to keep an eye on things.

He asked whether these points would be acted on.

**14. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.