

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 28 JULY 2009 AT THE
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr G Wilson (Chair), Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr D Smith,
Cllr T Woodward, Cllr P Woodward, Cllr S Watkins, Cllr P Vickers, Cllr Mrs S Grayston,
Cllr Mrs R Kerfoot, Cllr D Albone, Cllr R Skinner.
P C Ian Wilson – Bedfordshire Constabulary
Rob McGregor – Deputy Town Clerk/Works Manager
Juliet Brookes – Finance Assistant
Members of the Public – 5

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs R Forbes.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(a) Prejudicial interests - Cllr P Vickers registered an interest in items 8a and 8b as listed on the agenda.

(a) Personal Interests

Cllr P F Vickers registered an interest as a member of the Central Bedfordshire Management Development Committee in respect of planning applications listed on the agenda.

Cllr R Skinner registered an interest in item 10b as listed on the agenda.

Cllr D Albone registered an interest in item 11f as listed on the agenda.

Cllr Mrs W Smith registered an interest in item 10a as listed on the agenda.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Mayor's Announcements

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Derek Emmerson spoke to Members regarding item 10a on the agenda (Christmas Lights Appeal). He said that nothing new happens every year and with 5,000-6,000 dwellings in Biggleswade, it would equate to £1.26 per dwelling on Precept. This is nothing to do with the recession, and asked Council to build the cost into the next years Precept, so that it isn't just local traders that help finance the lights.

Mr Strachan asked that members speak to help in the deliberation to ensure the future of the Christmas Lights.

5. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

PC Ian Wilson reported that crime figures have been steady for the last few months. The general public now have access to the Police website, where a report can be printed.

Criminal damage has gone down, and there were two arrests made recently as a result of shoplifting. PC Ian Wilson also reported that there had been another 2 further arrests made due to a result of stone throwing at HGV vehicles.

The figures for Theft are staying at a steady level. The Retail Radios are working well and more arrests have been made with the help of CCTV footage.

PC Wilson informed the meeting that there had been a serious road traffic collision involving a cyclist and a van recently.

The first tazer had been used in Biggleswade which sends 50,000 volts through the body. It was felt that this was justified and an arrest was made.

Anti-social behaviour and vehicle nuisance had increased during the summer, but the police are working on the situation.

PC Wilson said that Interviews are taking place to appoint a new officer in the next few weeks to assist in the Biggleswade area.

PC Wilson asked if the Council would consider a reward scheme to help reduce criminal damage. This was a new idea that would need to be discussed.

Cllr Mrs S Grayston said it would be a good idea to take into schools as an educational item.

6. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received and adopted Minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 June 2009 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. Members received and adopt Minutes Planning meeting held on 14 July 2009 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- c. Members received and adopt Minutes of the Personnel meeting held on 17 July 2009 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

7. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 June 2009 - none
- b. Minutes of the Planning held on 14 July 2009 – Cllr P Vickers requested that on item 5a listed on the agenda, the last sentence be amended to read ‘ Cllr P Vickers felt that 2 wards with 2 Councillors would be more appropriate that 4 Councillors per ward, as it was at the June election’
- c. Minutes of the Personnel meeting held on 17 July 2009 – See Confidential Business

8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/09/05331/ADV – Site 2 Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Advertisement Consent: Free-standing v-plan board and 14 flags on poles.

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

- b. **CB/09/05286/ARM – Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Revised Matters: Residential development of blocks 17,18,22,23,& 24 of development South of Potton Rd for 140 new dwellings & associated areas pursuant to outline planning permission 03/01205/OUT dated 13 November 2006 for residential development of approximately 1450 dwellings, construction of Eastern relief road, local centre, primary school public open space, structural landscaping, infrastructure including surface water balancing facilities & associated works. Demolition of 128 Potton Road to facilitate vehicular access. (All matters reserved except means of access)
All documents for above are available for viewing before the Meeting in the office.

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

- c. **CB/09/01192/FULL – 38 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade.**
Full: Change of use to ‘dog grooming shop’

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

9. ACCOUNTS

- a. **Financial Administration**

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 30 June 2009.
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 30 June 2009

10. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Biggleswade Chamber of Trade Christmas Lights appeal

Cllr Peter Vickers told Members that he had attended the Chamber of Trade Annual Meeting where it was decided that the town may not have any Christmas Lights this year, which dismayed Members, Traders and all who were at the meeting.

Cllr Vickers asked that Town Council continue to give financial support. The final decision will be made at the end of August as to whether the scheme continues as costs have risen considerably with Health and Safety etc. The total cost of scheme is £12,000. Large retailers don't support the scheme at all, more small businesses contribute.

Cllr D Lawrence suggested that Town Council take over organising the Christmas Lights.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said that if Council does take over the lights, 3 quotes should be obtained from different suppliers.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Councils financial support be increased to £4,000 toward 2009 Christmas Lights.

b. Safer routes for Horse riders of Biggleswade

Members consider correspondence requesting safer routes for the Horse riders of Biggleswade and asking if Town Council would consider upgrading some of the public footpaths to Bridleways.

With traffic becoming more prolific and much faster, the less road riding, the safer it would be all round.

There are some unsuitable bridleways that cross the A1 and they are requesting that these be re-routed.

It was **RESOLVED** that this request be supported in principle **BUT** that it be referred to Central Bedfordshire Council.

c. Dan Albone Car Park

Woodfine Solicitors have contact Town Council regarding the lease for Dan Albone Car Park. In accordance with paragraph 2 of the schedule of the lease, the landlord wishes to exercise the right to review the annual rent which is to be £9,000 payable from 31 January 2009 and have requested confirmation of agreement by Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that Stimpson Eves be contacted to negotiate on Town Councils behalf.

d. Biggleswade Sequence Dance Club

Members considered correspondence from Biggleswade Sequence Dance Club informing Council that the club is starting its 60th season starting September 2009 through to May 2010 and are they hoping to hold special occasions throughout this time including 'theme' nights.

They are asking Council to consider making a donation to the club to help with the cost of organising these events.

It was **RESOLVED** that a reply be sent to the Club to ask them to apply for a donation in February when all grants are considered by the Council.

e. **Street naming – 42 The Baulk and Church Street**

North Herts Homes has contacted Town Council asking for ideas for names for the two new developments of affordable homes at 42 The Baulk and Church street.

The Baulk development will comprise of 2 one bedroom apartments, 8 two bedroom apartments, and 5 two bedroom houses. 5 of the two bed units will be offered for shared ownership.

It was **RESOLVED** that the name **KIDMAN COURT** be proposed.

The site at Church Street will consist of 14 new homes, 1 one bedroom apartment, 3 two bedroom apartments and 10 two bedroom houses. 6 of the two bedroom houses fronting Church Street will be offered on a shared ownership basis. When completed the homes will form a part road fronting and part courtyard type development.

It was **RESOLVED** that the name **WELLS COURT** be proposed.

f. **St Andrews Country Fayre**

Members considered correspondence informing Council that St Andrew's Church Country Fayre will take place 19 September 2009 when they will be raising money for Mercy Ships and East Anglian Air Ambulance. Simultaneously with the Fayre, the Church will be staging an exhibition containing work from local schools and societies. This year they are looking for displays for the exhibition on the theme of 'Lifelines' showing how people help and support each other, and they are inviting Town Council to take part and to put up a display for them.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council produce a board to publicise the roles and functions of the Council, to be manned by Councillors on a rota basis.

11. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Planning Decisions**

Council Decision

i. CB/09/00900/FULL – 3 Furzenhall Rd.	APPROVED	No objection
ii. CB/09/00779/FULL – 20 Boddington Gardens	APPROVED	No objection

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

b. **Thank you letter from Ivel Sprinter**

Members received correspondence from East Beds Community Bus Ltd, who operate the Ivel Sprinter, thanking Town Council for their donation of £2,500 towards the cost of a new vehicle. They are hoping to reach their target and make a purchase in the next few months.

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

c. **Stratton Upper School**

Members received correspondence from Stratton Upper School thanking Town Council for the loan of sandbags for their World War One trench build that was part of their More Able Experience Week.

The event proved very popular and was so successful that students had to be turned away to keep numbers down.

They plan to stage a similar event in 2010 and hope it would be acceptable to ask for help once again if needed.

The school supplied several photographs which are on display in Council Chamber.

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

d. **Hertfordshire CCTV Newsletter**

Councillors received a copy of Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership newsletter, 'Camera Shy' and a copy is attached to this agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted. It was also noted that a camera had been installed in Mill Lane.

e. **Biggleswade Sports Meeting**

Members received correspondence from Biggleswade Sports to send thanks for the use of Fairfield Pavilion for their recent meeting.

People commented on how nice the inside of the pavilion looks and asked to send thanks to Town Council.

They had a record number of cyclists, the best ever for many years.

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

f. **Proposed Temporary Road closure – Drove Road, Biggleswade**

Central Bedfordshire Council have contacted Town Council informing of a proposed temporary road closure at Drove Road, for 7 days between 0900hrs – 1530hrs from 17 to 25 August, to enable surfacing work to be carried out.

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

g. **Bedfordshire Highways Major Roadworks – From 11 July 2009 – 2 week programme**

Notification was received from Bedfordshire Highways informing Council of major roadworks from 11 July 2009 – 2 week programme and a copy is attached to this agenda.

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

h. **Members Service Bulletin for period 1/06/09 – 28/06/09**

Members Service Bulletin was received from Highways Dept to inform Council of complaints received from Biggleswade residents from 1 June 2009 to 28 June 2009 and the action taken by them.

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

i. **Minutes of Biggleswade Town Plan Steering Group meetings**

Members received Minutes of Biggleswade Town Plan Steering Group meetings held on 19 May and 22 June.

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

j. **Bear Update**

Members received an introduction and update has been received from Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling (BEaR). The BEaR project has been set up to delivery a long term residual waste treatment contract on behalf of Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Council.

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

k. Update from Planning Meeting held on 9 June 2009

Martin Pratt, Assistant Director of Specialist Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, had replied to Town Council's letter regarding Hitchmead School stating that there seems to be some misunderstanding of their position as no decision has been made on the future of Hitchmead School.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said that she was disappointed with the reply and did not think there had been any misunderstanding regarding making a decision before any consultation had been completed.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence said that the available documents offered only a limited set of options and that there should have been a general consultation.

It was **RESOLVED** that the reply from Central Bedfordshire be noted.

12. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Mr Simmons said that people felt very passionate about the Christmas Lights and he would encourage a possible change of ownership, as Ampthill had done 5 years ago.

Mr Emmerson thanked Town Council for considering taking responsibility for the lights. He said he would be happy to discuss further and thanked Town Council for their continued support and recognized the current economic climate which is very poor at present.

Mr Emmerson said that he was delighted that Cllr Peter Vickers would be attending the next meeting to discuss the lights, as Town Council should be represented. Cllr Vickers could then advise Town Council of the outcome.

The question was also asked with regards to shop keepers paying business rate, could they ask Central Bedfordshire Council for some financial support. Peter Vickers advised that he had already looked into this, and donations to community projects no longer exists with Central Bedfordshire Council.

Mr Strachan asked if the 'Chairman of the Council' board could be amended, as there were a few errors.

1988 should read Mrs M A Armstrong

1989 should read Mr C J Cook

Also, could the title also be changed to "Chairmen" and not "Chairman", so as to match the original board.

He was advised that this matter would be looked into and rectified.

13. 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.

