

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER
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 P Woodward, Cllr P Vickers,
Cllr S Watkins, Cllr Mrs S Grayston, Cllr Mrs R Kerfoot, Cllr R Skinner, Cllr P Rook,
Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr T Woodward
PC Ian Wilson – Bedfordshire Constabulary
Rob McGregor- Works Manager/Deputy Town Clerk
Juliet Brookes – Finance Assistant
Members of the Public – 2
Laura Hutchinson + 1 – Biggleswade Chronicle
Dave Simpson – Biggleswade Town Football Club
Mike Jarvis – Biggleswade Town Football Club

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr D Smith and Cllr Mrs R Forbes

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(a) Prejudicial interests - There were no prejudicial interests declared.

(a) Personal Interests

Cllrs P F Vickers registered an interest as members of the Central Bedfordshire Management Development Committee in respect of planning applications listed on the agenda.
Cllr Mrs S Grayston registered an interest of Item 11b as a resident of Holme Court Avenue.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Mayor's Announcements

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items discussed during the Public Open Session.

5. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

PC Ian Wilson informed Members that crime figures for August were reduced.

He advised that a persistent offender for crime mainly theft had been arrested, via PSCO and Retail Radio Link. Also, working alongside CCTV.

The Biggleswade Community Safety Forum which was recently held, did not receive a brilliant turn out. From this meeting the new priorities would be nuisance vehicles mainly at Sainsbury and Dan Albone Car Park and Anti Social Behaviour at The Baulk.

P C Wilson advised that he has received numerous requests for a Pedestrian crossing at London Road, for Stratton School pupils whilst coming out of EFR.

He also advised that they have been carrying out speed checks along Holme Court Avenue and from these Friday evening speed checks there was evidence that there is a real issue with speed, due to the number of vehicles stopped.

Cllr G Wilson congratulated PC Wilson that there were currently no apparent problems at FRG and asked whether he felt that CCTV at Franklins Recreation Ground had acted as a deterrent. PC Wilson also advised the Anti Social Behaviour in the Town Centre had a 40% reduction from the months of May – August 2009.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, advised that a few months ago that speed checks had been taken along Shortmead Street, and what was the outcome. The amount of speeding vehicle along this road is appalling, most of the time crowded and very dangerous. PC Wilson advised that the outcome was out of the 1000 speed checks taken only 5 where speeding.

6. Invited Speaker – Biggleswade Town Football Club

Dave Simpson, Community and Commercial Officer for Biggleswade Town Football Club came to advise the Town Council of the plans for Biggleswade Town Football Club. He advised Members that the Club is extremely proud of their newly refurbished facilities and was aware that a few members of the Town Council had visited their premises.

Their Development Plans are to provide training facilities for youth teams, which could be anything from football, netball, and hockey. They are looking at providing 5 multi surface pitches with floodlights. They have had confirmation from Central Beds of agreed funding towards these lights. They will also be trying to encourage this facility for school use. They would like to open the doors to wider community and make this a real asset for Biggleswade.

They are open to suggestions and would like the support of Town Council

Cllr G Wilson, asked whether any teams have shown an interest to which he replied that they had had interest from the following groups:

BUFC Youth Teams
Potton Colts
Arlesey Teams

They would be holding a forum to invite teams nearer the time. There would be 3 slots per evening Monday – Friday 5pm-8pm, allowing 30 teams to use the facility per week. The facility would not be big enough to cater for everyone. They had no bookings at present.

Cllr G Wilson also asked what areas they were wishing to cover he replied that they were looking to cover quite a wide span beyond 20 minutes drive for some teams. He is aware that this would cover approximately 122 youth teams.

They have no plans to run Youth Teams as a club, they don't want to undermine current set up.

Their objective is to cater for all to use with offering a competitive rate. He also advised that they had the County and FA inspecting their ground within the next few days.

The next phase after the above would be to look at other pitches to left hand side of the facilities, to cater for Saturday and Sunday morning matches. They would also like to look into coaching courses and would like to work closely with Central Beds to implement schemes within school holidays.

Cllr Mrs W Smith asked whether they had any plans to increase parking facilities, as she was very surprised to see how small the current area is. He advised that they do have parking stewards at present, and that there are currently in talks with regards to securing more land which would be used for additional parking, they do try to encourage people to walk to the facility rather than drive.

Cllr G Wilson thanked them for their presentation.

7. Minutes of Meetings

- a. Members received and adopted minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 August 2009 – subject to the amendment as listed below.
- b. Members received and adopted minutes of the Planning meeting held on 8 September 2009.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 August 2009 – Cllr Mrs S Grayston requested amendment to the minutes. Public Open Session to read ' Mr Emmerson asked Cllr Rook to apologise for his letter in the Chronicle as some people believed that the content of the letter that Cllr Rook wrote was true'
- b. Minutes of the Planning meeting held on 8 September 2009 – there were no matters arising.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. **CB/09/05845/FULL – 2 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade.**

Full: Conversion of 2 Shortmead Street into 2 no. 1 bedroom live/work units. Augmentation of 2B Shortmead Street into 1 no. 2 bedroom flat on the ground floor & 1 no. 2 bedroom flat on the first floor. Retention of small corner shop & 1 no. 2 bedroom flat above.

It was **Resolved** that the Town Council **Object** to this application as it is an overdevelopment of the site, it is not conducive to the street scene and there would be no amenity facilities for future residents.

b. **CB/09/05875/FULL – Land to the East of, Bells Brook, Biggleswade.**

Full: Replacement petrol filling station as amendment to site layout approved by planning permission MB/08/01714/FULL, including the provision of above ground fuel storage tanks.

It was **Resolved** that the Town Council raise **No Objection** to this application

c. **CB/09/05729/FULL – Biggleswade United Football Club, Fairfield Road, Biggleswade.**

Full: 144 seater viewing stand with 6 disabled bays.

It was **Resolved** that the Town Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council and ask what is actually proposed and why haven't they inspected the site.

d. **B/09/05933/FULL – Unit 3, London Road Trading Estate, Biggleswade.**

Full: Change of use from B1 use to A1 retail non food.

It was **Resolved** that the Town Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council and ask for more detail in relation to the work that Town Centre Master Plan are doing in relation to retail in the Town before making a decision.

e. **CB/09/05926/FULL – 7 Thirlmere Close, Biggleswade.**

Full: Two storey side extension.

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.

f. **CB/09/05931/FULL – 3 Sabel Close, Biggleswade.**

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

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.

g. **CB/09/05957/FULL – 55 Stratton Way, Biggleswade.**

Full: Two storey and single storey rear extension.

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.

h. CB/09/05947/FULL – 45 Potton Road, Biggleswade.

Full: Continued use of vacant A1 shop & change of use of part of rear warehouse to A1 shop including external alterations.

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.

i. CB/09/05974/FULL – 17 Nursery Close, Biggleswade.

Full: Single storey front extension.

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.

j. CB/09/05980/FULL – Unit 1, 22 Market Square, Biggleswade.

Full: New air conditioning condensers to rear of building.

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.

10. ACCOUNTS

a. Financial Administration

Members received and adopted the following accounts

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31st August 2009
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31st August 2009

11. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Christmas Street Lights proposal – submitted by Cllr Rose Forbes

Cllr Rose Forbes has written to Town Council with a suggestion for raising the necessary funds for the Christmas Lights.

Cllr Forbes is suggesting that each local business be asked to take a collection box, in order for the general public to have the opportunity to contribute towards the cost throughout the year.

It was **AGREED** that suggestions be put forward to Novembers agenda due to Cllr Mrs R Forbes being unwell and unable to attend this meeting.

b. Letter from a resident of Holme Court Avenue

Correspondence was received from a Holme Court Avenue resident regarding excessive speed in a 30mph area.

Over the last few years the volume of traffic has increased and so has the speed. The installation of speed humps and an automatic illuminating 30mph sign has not reduced the speed of traffic. The speed humps are narrow enough for vehicles to drive straight over them without reducing their speed at all. The residents are worried there will be a serious accident and are requesting that wider speed humps be installed.

It was agreed to support these suggestions for traffic calming measures especially as the road is used by lots of school children as well as the elderly.

It was **RESOLVED** that a letter of support be sent to the Central Bedfordshire Highways Department.

**c. Central Bedfordshire Local Development Framework (North)
Site Allocations DPD: Site Assessment Criteria Consultation**

Central Bedfordshire Council is progressing work on the Local Development Framework (LDF) – the suite of policy and strategy documents that help shape and guide new development.

The Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) will identify specific sites for new homes and jobs up to 2026. Over 440 sites have been submitted by landowners and developers for potential development, of which only a small number will be required to meet government targets.

The Council is now developing a set of criteria to be used to assess these sites in order to identify the most appropriate sites to be allocated for development. They are seeking Town Councils views on the criteria for selecting sites for housing development specifically. Work to develop a set of criteria for assessing and choosing employment sites is ongoing and is not part of this consultation process. Some issues, such as development in the Green Belt or the Flood Plain, are already set out in Government guidance but Members are invited to suggest other criteria.

After this consultation the criteria will be finalised and used to select the most appropriate sites. These sites will then be subject to consultation early next year.

The list of criteria can be viewed at: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or at www.talktocentralbedfordshire.co.uk.

A copy is enclosed for Members consideration. Any comments need to be passed on to CBC by **23 September 2009**.

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

d. The Gambling Act 2005 – Review of Statement of Principles

Correspondence has been received Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the above item. As a new unitary authority they are required to consult with statutory consultees and interested parties on its new Statement of Principles. They have taken the opportunity to amend and update the existing policies, to cover the review that was due in January 2010.

A copy of the draft copy of the new statement was attached for Members consideration

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

e. **Central Bedfordshire Highways Five-Year Programme 2010-2015**

Members received correspondence from Amey regarding the above item.

Bedfordshire Highways maintains a five year programme of capital highway schemes which is rolled forward each year following consultation with Parish, Town & Central Bedfordshire Councillors. This letter is to commence the consultation process and to inform you of the process and timescales for producing the draft programme for 2010-2015.

Attached is an extract from the current five-year programme, showing all the schemes identified within Biggleswade. Also attached was a pro-forma for Biggleswade Town Council to suggest schemes for consideration and to identify any other requests that Highways are not aware of.

A copy is enclosed for Members consideration. Any comments need to be passed on by **30 September 2009**.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council write to Bedfordshire Highways with a list of items to be considered for inclusion on the Five Year Programme.

f. **Letter from Biggleswade Crab Lane Railway Embankment Committee**

Members received correspondence from Des Ball, secretary, asking the Town Council to call a meeting of interested parties to discuss improvements to, Crab Lane Embankment, Dan Albone Car Park and Biggleswade Common.

It was **RESOLVED** that a letter be written to Mr Ball to inform him that Town Council are currently negotiating with Fen Reeves with a view to taking over part of Biggleswade Common in 2010, and enhancing Dan Albone car park and also part of the Biggleswade Common.

g. **Biggleswade Sports Meeting – 60th Annual Athletic & Grass Track Cycle Races**

Correspondence has been received from the organisation above regarding use of the Fairfield sports field and pavilion on 10th July 2010 for their Annual Meeting.

They would also like to ask the Council's permission to use the new toilets and pavilion sometime in February or March 2010 for Cross Country Races.

It was **RESOLVED** that these facilities be available for summer months only

h. **Application for Premises Licence – Stratton Upper School, Eagle Farm Road**

Members were asked to consider a notice of application from Central Bedfordshire Council regarding a new premises licence for Stratton Upper School, Eagle Farm Road.

It was **RESOLVED** that permission be granted for this application.

i. **Letter from Biggleswade Town Bowls Club re additional storage area.**

Members received correspondence from Biggleswade Town Bowls Club seeking the Council's views with regards to providing a small unit in the vicinity of the clubhouse for storage.

The storage of the outdoor tables and chairs is at present in the main clubhouse and this, with other items, reduces the space for large gatherings and social events as well as being unsightly.

It was **RESOLVED** that Council agree to the additional storage **BUT** the location is to be agreed with Rob McGregor, Deputy Town Clerk.

j. **Proposed Raised Junctions – St Johns Street & Potton Road, Biggleswade**

Central Bedfordshire Council propose to construct Raised Junctions in St Johns Street, at its junction with Birch Road. Also Potton Road, at its junctions with Havelock Road, Furzenhall Road/Lime Tree Walk and Mountbatten Drive. These proposals will be an integral part of measures to reduce vehicle speeds and discourage use of the road by other than local traffic.

All tables are to be 75mm high with sinusoidal gradients of approximately 1.25 in entirety.

A copy was enclosed for Members consideration. Any comments need to be passed on to CBC by **2nd October 2009**.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to these proposals as it is felt that these are of no benefit to the Town and a letter is to Highways to this effect.

k. **Town Plan Steering Group Budget**

Members considered a request from the Town Plan Steering Group asking the Town Council if they will approve paying the shortfall of the final printing and distribution costs from the Town Plan Steering Group budget.

The Town Plan Steering Group are also asking the Town Council to clarify if the remainder of these funds can be used to cover the additional items stipulated in their budget.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council would give a further £338.00 for the Town Plan to be finalised to make their current required balance. This is based on the Town Plan not requesting any more funding from Town Council.

12. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Biggleswade United Football Club**

Members received correspondence from Biggleswade United Football Club to say thank you for the grant funding awarded to them.

They have now completed the major refurbishment of the facilities at Second Meadow and as a result they have been able to meet the facility requirements needed to enable them to continue to compete at Step 5 of the Football Pyramid.

They have been able to fully enclose the facilities thus eradicating the problems of underage drinking, vandalism, graffiti and anti-social behaviour by a small minority of nuisance youths.

The Club is proud of the new facilities and the ground is now recognised by the Bedfordshire Football Association as one of the best in the County, and the Association are to use the venue for their cup finals and youth representative matches against other County Associations – thus putting Biggleswade firmly on the national footballing map.

It was **RESOLVED** that a letter be sent to the Club to compliment them on all their hard work.

b. **Same Sex accommodation at Biggleswade Hospital**

Correspondence has been received from NHS Bedfordshire informing Council that there have been recent changes in legislation regarding same sex accommodation that aim to eliminate mixed sex accommodation in all hospitals in England by 2010. NHS Bedfordshire and Bedfordshire Community Health Services are currently set to deliver significant improvements to enhance the separate ward accommodation for men and women at Biggleswade Hospital.

These improvement works will commence mid-September 2009 and NHS Bedfordshire aims to have the works completed by end November 2009. Any disruption to patients and visitors will be kept to an absolute minimum. Further information and progress updates regarding the works will be available on the NHS Bedfordshire website at www.bedfordshire.nhs.uk.

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

13. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no items discussed during the Public Open Session.

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.

