

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2010 AT
THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr G Wilson (Chair), Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr D Smith, Cllr T Woodward, Cllr D Albone, Cllr R Skinner, Cllr P Woodward, Cllr P Rook, Cllr P Vickers
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Juliet Brookes – Finance Assistant
PC Jon Woodroff – Bedfordshire Constabulary
Sam Vernon – Biggleswade Chronicle
Julian Seymour – Sainsbury's
Geoff Wilson – Sainsbury's
Claire Fielder - Sainsbury's
Members of the Public - 1

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr S Watkins, Cllr Mrs S Grayston 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 P Woodward registered an interest in Item 6 and would leave the meeting when this item was to be discussed as he is having further meetings with Alistair Burt on this item, he also registered an interest in item 12a as he is a Governor of Stratton School.

Cllr Mrs W Smith registered an interest in Item 11J as a member of St Andrews PTA.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr George Wilson informed the meeting that 2010 is the 10th anniversary of Biggleswade Twinning with Erlensee and on 30 April Erlensee Mayor and party will attend Biggleswade Town Council offices where they will be welcomed by the Mayor and any Councillors who wish to attend.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items discussed during the public open session.

5. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

PC Jon Woodroff reported that the average number of crimes in this area had increased by 6.4%.

Jon rang through the breakdown of each sheet circulated and advised that these figures were readily available via the internet.

1 local offender had breached his Asbo so was now facing 20 weeks custody

There had been an incident outside the Red Lion where a local man has been charged with 2 offences affray/common assault for attacking 2 doormen.

The handbag robbery at Drove Road, has led to a local man being arrested.

Business Watch Radio Link is working extremely well and more stores have recently signed up They are also In the process of lending a radio to the Community Safety Group.

Main areas to focus on over the next few months
Nuisance vehicles
Dan Albone Car Park
Criminal damage off Rose Lane – Claremont Court
The Red Lion Pub

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, asked why Biggleswade had been recognised as “Red Hot” and had the highest crime in Biggleswade. PC Jon Woodroff advised that this was not the case, but a slight increase in one particular area which could feature on the crime sheets that are circulated could make a vast difference to the statistics. He advised that Biggleswade did not have a high crime rate. Cllr Mrs J Lawrence asked if this message could be broadcast more for the General Public interest.

Cllr P Woodward asked if the Sat Nav crimes had decreased as this was previously an area of concern. PC Jon Woodroff advised that prolific car crime around this area has decreased.

Cllr D Lawrence asked whether we could have a more detailed breakdown of the areas in and out of the “Alcohol Zone”. PC Jon Woodroff advised that PC I Wilson was currently putting some information together on this.

6. INVITED SPEAKER

At this point Cllr P Woodward left the Chamber.

Cllr George Wilson informed Geoff Wilson that many people from Biggleswade and surrounding areas are upset that Sainsbury’s will not be selling LPG and asked if he would be willing to discuss with Alistair Burt MP and Cllr Peter Woodward regarding this issue. Mr Wilson (Sainsbury’s) replied that it is a matter for Sainsbury’s head office to respond and he will ask them to contact the Town Clerk, Mr Rob McGregor, to arrange an appointment.

Julian Seymour, Claire Fielder and Geoff Wilson from Sainsbury’s gave a brief overview of the construction at the store in Biggleswade.

The Café will be moved upstairs, which will have more impact visually, there will be more groceries on offer, and hot food including fresh pizza will be available at back of the store. There would also be more clothing and a better electrical store. The width between each aisle will remain the same.

The new Petrol Station is well under way and is due to open Mid April, the old Petrol Station is due to demolished. There will be a new car park, picnic area and new access and once these are completed major road works will commence.

There will be an interruption to the Café, with temporary toilets and car park whilst the works are completed. Online groceries will be a new service that Sainsbury’s will be offering.

The works are expected to finish early October 2010.

Cllr D Albone asked about LPG fuel and was told that unfortunately LPG would not be offered at the new Petrol Station due to lack of demand, as the uptake was not as expected at the current Station.

Cllr P Woodward returned to the meeting.

7. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received and adopted Minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 January 2010 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. Members received and adopted Minutes of the Precept meeting held on 2 February 2010 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 February 2010 at the offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 January 2010 – none.
- b. Minutes of the Precept meeting held on 2 February 2010 – Item 1 – Apologies – Cllr Mrs W Smith to be added.
- c. Minutes of the Planning meeting held on 9 February 2010 – Item 2b – Cllr Mrs S Grayston declared an interest in item 5d as listed on the agenda.

9. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/10/00415/FULL – Land at Nursery Close, Biggleswade.**

Full: Erection of 6m high ventilating pipe.

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

b. **CB/10/00333/FULL – 185 Mead End, 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.

10 **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Internal Audit Report (Interim) 2009/2010**

Members received a copy of the Internal Audit Report and agree the recommendations on the Action Plan. Although requested a letter be sent to address a couple of the items featured.

b. **Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2009 (Previously Circulated & copy enclosed)**

- i. Members approved and adopted the Accounts and Statement of Accounts contained in the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2009.
- ii. Members approved and adopted the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year for the year ended 31st March 2009
- iii. Members approved and adopted the specific answers 1-9 to Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2009.

c. **Annual Audit 2008/2009**

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

d. **Financial Administration**

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31st January 2010
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31st January 2010

11. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Biggleswade Town Council – Sign to front of building**

There is no signage at present on the outside of the Old Court House to inform members of the public where the Town Council offices are located. Three different signs have been designed and members are asked to consider which of these best suits the front of the building.

Sign No 1 was **AGREED** - to be oval shape with racing green background, all font to be centered and to read as follows:

Biggleswade Town Council
Council Chamber
Council Offices
01767 313134

b. An Official calendar for the Biggleswade Town Council

Local Authority Publishing produce calendars for Town Councils at no cost to the Council and they are delivered to every household within the town. Two samples will be on display for Members to view.

Members **AGREED** to the production of a Biggleswade Town Council 2011 calendar.

c. Kitelands playing field

Correspondence has been received from a Biggleswade resident regarding the play equipment at Kitelands playing field. The bottom of the large slide has a dip of 25/30mm approx 1500mm from the exit where water lies making the slide unusable. They are requesting that this problem be rectified as soon as possible for everyone to benefit from its use. The cost of repair will be obtained before the Council Meeting for Members to consider. The resident also mentions a day burning light at Kitelands Park; this has been reported several times to Highways Dept by Town Council.

As it would cost £2,000 + to rectify the slide, in the current climate, it is not viable, but it was **AGREED** that all play areas be reviewed on this year's walkabout.

d. World Scout Jamboree 2011

Members considered correspondence from a young person who has been chosen to represent Bedfordshire at the next World Scout Jamboree 2011, due to be held in Sweden. The event will be attended by 30,000 other Scouts representing 160 countries. They will be involved in Community Projects and will be working with people from other countries and finding different ways of working together when English may not be a common language.

To attend the Jamboree every Scout must raise £2200.00 to pay for teambuilding time pre-jamboree, the camp in Sweden including travel, food, tents, equipment and two or three days hospitality in a neighbouring country as they filter in and out of the event.

Any sponsorship over £30 entitles you to become a 'friend of the Jamboree' for which progress emails will be sent, a postcard from Sweden and a full report on their return to England.

It was **RESOLVED** that this item be discussed at the Council meeting in March when all the Grants are agreed.

e. Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)

The above document is being published for consultation for six weeks starting Monday 25 January 2010. The document sets out the Council's chosen sites for allocating housing, employment uses and green space in the former Mid Bedfordshire area. It also allocates the key Employment sites and Important Open Space designations across the area. A copy of the document is available for Members to view.

The deadline for the return of comments is **5pm on Monday 8 March 2010.**

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Councillors will comment individually **BUT** would like to point out that no development should be allowed to go ahead to the North of Potton Road in Biggleswade until the East of Biggleswade development has been completed.

f. Proposed Raised Junctions, St Johns Street and Potton Road.

Central Bedfordshire Council has replied to Town Councils letter dated 25 September 2009 objecting to the raised tables proposed for St Johns Street and Potton Road.

The raised tables, the mini roundabout at Sun Street and the alterations to the junction of Potton Road with Drove Road are works that the various developers of Land East of Biggleswade are obliged to implement as part of the various planning permissions for that area.

Residents of the new development would have the option of going north on the new Eastern Relief Road and using Potton Road and St Johns Street to get to the A1. It was agreed that this route and the use of the Town Centre should be discouraged and all traffic from the development should be encouraged to go

south to join the A1 at the London Road junction. To facilitate this, the developer is also obliged to provide an improved junction with the A1 at the London Road junction. The speed tables in Potton Road and St Johns Street are intended to discourage traffic from using this route to get from the new development to the A1 at Hill Lane. If the raised tables were removed from the

scheme there would be nothing within the works to discourage traffic from using this route. The mini roundabout at the Sun Street/Shortmead Street junction, without the speed tables along the route could, in fact, encourage its use and would result in a saving for the developer. It would not release any money for works elsewhere.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Councils views had not changed from the objection that has already been lodged, and that it was felt that it should be possible to utilise the Section 106 monies to carry out proposals that had originally been discussed with Central Bedfordshire Council. These proposals were to prioritise traffic movement, engineer the junction with Potton Road to dissuade traffic from entering and improve the junction of Sun Street and Shortmead Street.

g. Request from H Harris & Sons

Correspondence has been received from H Harris & Sons requesting to hold a Fun Fair for the Biggleswade Carnival 2010. They would like to set up at 6pm Monday 21 June until 26 June 2010.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **AGREE** to this request.

h. Credit Union - Biggleswade

MBDC agreed to fund a Credit Union project to enable people from this area to take advantage of this service offering low cost loans and ethical savings. This service is part of the Bedford Credit Union who extended their common bond in 2008 to cover this area.

In order to attract more people to the service it was decided to open a further collection point in Biggleswade and Kathy Lewis from Preen Furniture Scheme agreed to lend support by offering a room near the Preen Furniture Scheme, to run a collection paypoint.

An official launch is planned for March and they would be very grateful if the Mayor of Biggleswade, Cllr George Wilson, would facilitate the opening of the new service. They would also like to extend the invitation to local Councillors. The date proposed is 9 March at 12.30pm but if that is not convenient, they have suggested 2 alternative dates of 16 March or 30 March.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr George Wilson and Cllr Rex Skinner attend the opening on 9 March 2010.

i. Planned Bridge Works at Crab Lane, Biggleswade

Amey have contacted Town Council to inform of some planned bridge works at Crab Lane, Biggleswade. A weakness in the edges of the bridge that carries Crab Lane over the Railway close to the junction with Rose Lane has been identified, and although the structure has been assessed and found to be capable of carrying current vehicle loads over the main carriageway the edges of the bridge are not capable of sustaining full 40 tonnes vehicle loading.

It is not economically viable to strengthen the existing bridge at this time due to the high costs involved in working above the rail tracks and with the diversion of numerous utility service ducts and pipes that run across the edges of the bridge. Several options to protect the edges of the structure have been considered but since the available width of the existing bridge is limited it will be necessary to reduce the carriageway to facilitate the installation of large anti vehicle kerbing, this will result in alternating one way traffic over the bridge controlled by traffic lights linked to the signals at the Rose Lane junction. The new road alignment will allow for improvements to the Southern footway over the bridge and the traffic lights controlling the vehicle flows will be combined pedestrian crossing to the South East of the bridge. A road closure will be required to facilitate all the works and the sheet piling work is scheduled to start on site on 15 March 2010.

Members are asked to contact the Bridge Operations Manager, Penny Turner penny.turner@amey.co.uk tel 0208 978 7579, if they have any queries or require any additional information.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted **BUT** that a letter be written to ask if the bridges in Potton Road and the High Street had been inspected recently.

j. **Churches Together Walk of Witness**

Members considered correspondence from Churches Together requesting permission to use Biggleswade Market Square power point and for them to assemble in the Market Square for the annual Good Friday gathering. They would like the use of the power point from 10am to set-up, the Walkers will arrive at 11am and should be finished by 12.30pm.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **AGREE** to this request.

k. **Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**

Central Bedfordshire Council has contacted Town Council to ask Members to consider a theme for the above development.

It was **RESOLVED** that the theme be 'Planets' and the suggested names are;

Apollo, Gemini, Neptune, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter

l. **Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade – Eastern relief road**

Central Bedfordshire Council has contacted Town Council to ask Members to choose a name for the Eastern relief road.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Eastern relief road be called '**Baden-Powell Way**' with a commemorative plaque to mark Centenary of Scouting movement and that names for remaining roads will be discussed at a future meeting.

12. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Reply from Stratton Upper School re item 11b from Council meeting 26 January 2010**

Town Council has received a reply from Stratton Upper School regarding item 11b from Council meeting held on 26 January 2010 – problems with parking in and around school grounds.

It was **RESOLVED** that a follow up letter be written to clarify questions asked in their letter.

b. **A1 Trunk Road, Bedford; Drainage Survey Works**

CarillionWSP on behalf of Highways Agency have written to Council informing that they will shortly be starting overnight survey weeks at two locations on the A1. The works will involve surveying and jetting of the drainage system between Girtford and Beeston and on the Biggleswade bypass.

The work will commence on the evening of Monday 22 February 2010 and will take approximately 5 weeks and will be carried out between 8pm and 6am.

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

c. **Planning Enforcement Policy**

Central Bedfordshire Council adopted a Planning Enforcement Policy on 10 November 2009 and a copy of the document can be viewed at Council offices.

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

d. Waste Services – Structure Changes

Central Bedfordshire Council Waste Services is undergoing restructure taking effect on, or soon after, 1 April 2010. Steve Whittaker will be leaving on 31 March 2010 and the Assistant Director responsible for Waste and other activities carried out by the team will be Jane Noakes. Assisting Jane will be Head of Waste, Tracey Harris who will be supported by two Service Managers, yet to be appointed.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted and that a letter be written to Steve Whittaker sending Town Councils best wishes for an enjoyable retirement.

e. Bedford River Valley Park

An invitation is attached to this agenda for Members to attend an event on 4 March 2010 at the Harpur Suite, Bedford to find out more about the Bedford River Valley Park.

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.