

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2010 AT THE
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD,
BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr Mrs W Smith (Chair), Cllr D Smith, Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr G Wilson,
Cllr T Woodward, Cllr P Vickers, Cllr Mrs S Grayston, Cllr D Albone, Cllr R Skinner, Cllr P Rook
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Juliet Brookes – Finance Assistant
Martin Thomas - Town Centre Master Plan
Madeline Russell – Town Centre Master Plan/Chair of the Governors Stratton School
Members of the public - 7

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs R Forbes, Cllr P Woodward, Cllr Ms R Kerfoot and Cllr Mr S Watkins

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(a) **Prejudicial interests in any agenda item** - there were no prejudicial interests declared.

(b) **Personal interests in any agenda item** - Cllr PF Vickers registered an interest as a member of the Central Bedfordshire Management Development Committee in respect of planning applications listed on the agenda and Item 4c.

Cllr Mrs W Smith declared an interest on the agenda item 4c
Cllr Mrs S Grayston declared an interest on the agenda item 4c

Cllr Mrs W Smith announced that when agenda item 5a was due to be discussed, the Council meeting would be adjourned for 15 minutes. This would enable the general public to have time to discuss this item. The Council meeting would then resume after this time.

Cllr Mrs W Smith advised the Council that while attending the Young People of the Year Award on Sunday she was pleased to see that a local Biggleswade girl, Jo Mayes received the top award. She asked that the Council send her a letter of congratulations.

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Mr Bacon asked the Council what the current situation was with regards to Palace Street, as the situation still has not been resolved. Cllr Mrs W Smith advised that the signs were currently in production and all was scheduled to be complete by the end of March 2011.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. CB/10/03786/SE73 – Land Rear of 144 to 146 London Road, Biggleswade.

Section 73: Variation of condition 2 to extend time period for a further 5 years on planning approval 07/01526/FULL dated 12 November 2007.

Additional paperwork received on 1 December.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council take no action on this application as it had been considered by C.B.C on the 8th December 2010. The Council would be writing an official letter to the property department of C.B.C asking why the previous parking arrangements in relation to the applicant have been withdrawn.

b. CB/10/04233/FULL – 64 Windermere Drive, 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.

c. CB/10/04127/FULL – The Lawns Early Excellence Centre, The Balk, Biggleswade

Full: First Floor extension

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

d. CB/10/04255/FULL – 27 Nursery Close, Biggleswade

Full: Single storey 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.

e. CB/10/04293/FULL – 44 Derwent Avenue, 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/10/04174/FULL – 1 Pegasus Mews, Stratton Business Park, London Road.

Full: Installation of Photo Voltaic Panels to roof & south elevation.

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

g. CB/10/04387/FULL – 75 London Road, Biggleswade.

Full: Proposed single storey front garage extension & porch.

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/10/04416/FULL – 23 Hitchin Street, Biggleswade.

Full: Change of use to hot food takeaway A5 & new kitchen fume extractor system.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECT** to this application as it is loss of a valuable retail unit of which there are very few in the Town Centre, there are residential properties in the vicinity which would be effected by smells, parking would also be a problem as there are double yellow lines outside and the road is quite narrow.

5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

Proposed Extension of 20mph Speed Limit, Traffic Calming Measures (flat topped humps, raised table zebra crossings, speed cushions) on London Road, Biggleswade and proposed junction improvements/SRtS Scheme at The Baulk

Madeline Russell and Martin Thomas were invited to speak as members of Town Strategy and Master Plan Group that will be affected by the SRtS project.

Madeline Russell said that regarding items 5a and 5b on the agenda, easy access is required to the Town Centre and the impact on the Town Centre must be considered. Road Safety is welcomed as London Road is used by many children attending other schools, in addition to Stratton School.

Martin Thomas advised that he was not opposed to improvements but felt that in the best interest of the town, the effect on commercial activities must be considered.

Both Madeline Russell and Martin Thomas commented briefly on the current proposals and the impact that these would have on Biggleswade Town Centre. They both felt that no choices had been offered.

Mr Buckley a resident of Holme Court Avenue was concerned that this road was becoming a diversion route and felt that the proposed plans would make the situation worse than as current. He strongly objected to this proposal

Mr Lawrence a resident of Dells Lane, confirmed also that Holme Court Avenue, Elm Road and Mead End were becoming a rat run. He also advised that Central Beds consultation was very misleading when he viewed the proposal at Biggleswade Library and strongly felt that this should be raised with Central Beds.

Cllr J Lawrence raised concerns with regards to the humps/zebra crossing/cushions and the roundabout at Elm Road. She felt that these again would cause traffic to use an alternative route.

At the previous Town Council meeting on 9 November 2010, she enquired with regards to the carriageway widths at The Baulk/London Road/High Street junction, and AMEY and CBC advised these would be adequate. Whilst studying a previous Bedfordshire County Council document, the widths given then were adequate but in the current plan they are clearly not.

Concerns were also raised as the proposed The Baulk//London Road/High Street area as this is main access for emergency vehicles.

a. Proposed Extension of 20mph Speed Limit, Traffic Calming Measures (flat topped humps, raised table zebra crossings, speed cushions) on London Road, Biggleswade

On behalf of CBC, Bedfordshire Highways have drawn up the above proposals and a copy was attached to the agenda.

The deadline for objections is 24 December 2010.

b. To consider responses to Town Council's comments of 9 November 2010 re The Baulk junction improvements/SRtS Scheme

Responses have been received from AMEY/Bedfordshire Highways regarding Town Council's comments on The Baulk/London Road/High Street junction improvements, and a copy was attached to the agenda.

Items 5a and 5b have been dealt with and a resolution agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk will write to CBC to raise the following objections for Items 5a and 5b:

Reduction in the road width by one third is such that it will cause **Traffic Congestion, discouraging** access to the Town Centre and a **reduction in Commercial Trade** within the Town. Easy access is required to the Town Centre.

No account has been taken of any blockages that may occur on the A1 forcing traffic to use the only alternative route, **London Road, High Street & Shortmead Street**.

Possible harm to property Values in the area of London Road.

No consideration has been given to loading and unloading of Lorries and vans near the shops.

The proposed changes are **not in accordance with** the Town Centre Partnership instructions.

It is being **opposed** by the Chamber of Trade, Town Centre Partnership members, Town Plan Steering Group members, School Governors, members of the public & other trade representations.

No provision has been made to enable safe access to Lawnside Lower, The Lawns Nursery, Sure Start Centre, Maythorns and Ivel Valley Primary Site.

Pedestrian ability to negotiate passage from the High Street to London Road on the East side has **not been catered for**.

No scale plans were provided for the consultation with the Town Council or the Library making it difficult to consider in detail the proposals.

No consultation or information was offered by Highways to shops in the area or the Chamber of Trade.

The High Street & London Road **is a major bus route** for entering and exiting the Town and will eventually play a **key role** for bus services to the East of Biggleswade.

Speed tables will cause **noise & vibration** for the adjacent properties and are over designed.

No consideration has been given to the Junction of London Road, Drove Road & Eagle Farm Road.

Concerns that Holme Court Avenue and Dells Lane will become a rat run if these proposals are implemented.

Asda's Delivery Lorries will **have** to negotiate an elongated slalom course when exiting via London Road.

No account has been taken of the roadside parking issues on London Road.

Objection to a mini roundabout at Elm Road.

No Choices have been given on this scheme, **no evidence** of accidents have been produced, **no plans** or **mention** of the Baulk Junction at the consultation, this could effectively bias the consultation.

A scheme for S.R.t.S for all schools should be devised and looked at as a whole scheme and then be implemented on a priority basis.

The plans are not coherent and should not have been brought forward.

c. Request for the 'Rave Bus' to park on Market Square

CBC have requested, that in relation to their 'Full of Life' campaign, permission to once again park the 'Rave Bus' on the Market Square for their latest campaign entitled 'Just Ask' Outreach project. The date requested is Friday 18 March 2011.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this request.

d. To consider maintenance rates for 2011-2012 Street Lighting

Members are asked to consider quotation for 2011-2012 Street Lighting maintenance from AMEY. The price quoted is £4961.75 which is reduction of £1917.65.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **ACCEPT** the above quotation

e. **To let the rear of 4 Saffron Road, Biggleswade**

For Members to consider proceeding with the recommendations as attached and approve the fee.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **ACCEPT** the recommendations and **APPROVE** the fee

f. **Commercial Business requests for the use of Market Stalls**

Members are asked to consider a policy for Commercial Business requests for the use of Market Stalls.

It was **AGREED** that Town Council would set up a Working Group to review the current Market Rules and that this item would then be discussed further.

g. **Request for stall as goods trader – Jehovah Witness**

Further to Town Council's decision (Council meeting 26 October) not to grant permission for the Biggleswade Congregation of Jehovah Witness to have a Charity Stall on the first Saturday of each month, they have written to Town Council to request a Market Stall on the Saturday Market.

It was **AGREED** that Town Council write to the above advising them that a Working Group would be meeting in the New Year and that we require more information from them. The Town Council needs clarification of what goods they intend to sell. This additional information would then enable the Working Group to discuss this matter further.

6. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Biggleswade History Society Newsletter**

Town Council has received a copy of the Biggleswade History Society Newsletter for November 2010, and a copy is attached to this agenda.

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

b. **Scope – house-to-house collections**

Correspondence has been received from Scope advising that they will be carrying out countrywide house-to-house collections between:

4 to 24 April 2011 and 2 to 22 April 2012

A copy is attached to this agenda.

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

c. **Thank you letter from The Royal British Legion**

Correspondence has been received from The Royal British Legion thanking Town Council for the excellent organisation of the Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday ceremonies.

A copy is attached to this agenda.

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

d. **Electoral Review of Central Bedfordshire**

Town Council has received the final recommendations of the Electoral Review of Central Bedfordshire and a copy is available to view in the Council offices.

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

e. **Message from Cllr Mrs Tricia Turner MBE**

Correspondence has been received from Cllr Mrs Tricia Turner regarding the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

A copy is attached to this agenda.

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

f. **Final Report on Town Plan Steering Group**

Cllr Mrs S Grayston will update Members on the Final Report on Town Plan Steering Group.

Cllr Mrs S Grayston advised Town Council that the Final Report had been printed and she would provide a copy for all Councillors to see. A copy of the Final Report and a Brief Summary Document was handed to Cllr Mrs W Smith

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

7. **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.

Mr G Lawrence requested that we endorse a body in the town that speaks for the town, a coherent voice. He was concerned with regards to previous issues that we had with Mid Beds Council and was concerned with the current issues we now have with Central Beds Council. At present everything is ignored. He feels that this would help with moving Biggleswade forward.

It was felt that, Town Council, Chamber of Trade and all other groups should meet as soon as possible to discuss this.

Martin Thomas was concerned that Biggleswade would be in danger if the current issues are not dealt with, as the Town could be damaged beyond repair.

Cllr P Vickers advised the Town Council that Central Beds have a Development meeting on 5th January 2011, and the proposed Windfarm and Saxon Sports Development applications would be featured on the agenda.

As Town Council has no other meetings planned before this meeting it was suggested that a representative be appointed to speak on behalf of the Town Council.

It was **AGREED** that Madeline Russell would attend this meeting and speak regarding the Saxon Sports Development Application.