

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26 JUNE 2012 AT THE
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr T Woodward (Chair), Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr P Vickers, Cllr S Watkins, Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr D Albone, Cllr B Briars, Cllr R Skinner
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Louise Wilcox – Deputy Town Clerk
Gill Boyden – 4YPUK
Patrick Geoghegan – Chief Executive - SEPT
Richard Winters – Executive Director - SEPT
Helen Smart - SEPT
Members of the public - 5

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr P Woodward, Cllr G Wilson and Cllr Mrs W Smith.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(a) Prejudicial interests – there were no prejudicial interests declared.

(a) Personal Interests- Cllr 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 R Skinner declared an interest in item 11c as listed on the agenda.

Cllr D Lawrence declared an interest in item 12a as listed on the agenda.

Cllr I Bond declared an interest in item 11c as listed on the agenda.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor announced that he would be suspending the Standing Orders to enable Members to ask questions of the invited speakers.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items discussed during the public open session.

5. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

There was no report received from Bedfordshire Constabulary.

6. INVITED SPEAKERS

Gill Boyden – Director 4YPUK advised Members what the organisation does for young people in Biggleswade.

They have a contract with CBC to support 16 – 19 year olds to help get them into education, employment or training. They help with career advice and application forms as well as sorting out benefits, housing and grants.

We produce a job vacancy list each month that is sent out to young people, schools, libraries etc.

Cllr Mrs M Russell asked where the referrals come from.

Ms Boyden replied that they come from the job centre, social services, schools, home education team and self-referrals.

They have been up and running for 1 year, helping 71 young people in Biggleswade who have attended 282 appointments.

They receive funding from CBC for the project, but receive no funding for room hire.

Cllr D Lawrence said that transport issues could get worse for students as subsidised bus passes are to be withdrawn.

Cllr D Lawrence asked if CBC Councillors could receive feedback.

Cllr D Albone asked what barriers is the organisation facing with limited funding, it would be difficult to expand the business when funding only exists for minimal work and service delivery.

Ms Boyden replied that the sponsorship is to continue to produce the jobs list, printing costs are prohibitive.

They have an information stand in Biggleswade Library which could be extended.

They hope to develop a charitable arm to support young people e.g. to help with fares to attend interviews.

Cllr H Ramsay asked what was the success rate for youngsters gaining employment.

Ms Boyden said that across Central Beds 875 appointments had been carried out – 52% moved into a positive outcome, the other 48% are taking longer.

Cllr R Skinner asked if assistance is provided to help with CV's.

Ms Boyden replied that help is available to help with CV's.

Their original target was 375 new clients per quarter, but really it is not about numbers but getting a successful outcome with young people.

The Mayor thanked Gill Boyden for attending and informing Members.

Patrick Geoghegan – Chief Executive - SEPT- thanked all those who attended last week's presentation regarding the proposed closure of Biggleswade Hospital. 85 people had attended.

Mr Geoghegan said that SEPT wants to clear up rumours about Biggleswade Hospital.

They have no plans to close Biggleswade Hospital; we want to keep as much going as possible, keeping people in jobs.

The Commissioners would have to agree to a closure.

Nationally there has been increased investment in community care, care in the community or in the home.

In the last 6 – 9 months there has been much investment in community services.

There are new rehabilitation schemes for Central Beds and Luton, to stop 'bed blockers', new teams offering choices for patients. The majority want to be cared for at home, impacting nationally on hospitals like Biggleswade.

At the moment there are 3 patients in Biggleswade Hospital; most people want to be at home. 8 people were discharged 2 weeks ago, all chose to go home.

We need to ask the commissioners about the future of the hospital and the strict criteria for admittance.

There is no respite care (not part of the contract) and up to 6 weeks rehabilitation.

The commissioners are reviewing all beds, to look at future mapping for patients.

The commissioners need to do their review and consultation with the public, local Councils, something to decide the way forward.

SEPT has no blueprint to close the hospital but wish to have discussions with the commissioners.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked who runs the Halsey Centre with out of hours GP's. The commissioners should ideally review all services and asked what the criteria are for admission, is it for the elderly.

Mr Geoghegan replied yes is it for the elderly.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked what else could be put on the site and asked about suitability of wards for purpose.

Mr Geoghegan said that there is to be a new unit built at Bedford Hospital later in 2012.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked if there were any unmet needs and is there is an opportunity for other needs to be met. The planned new surgery has no physio available.

Mr Geoghegan replied that there is a list of what could be provided. John Rook, Chief Operations Officer of the commissioners should be invited to speak at a Council meeting.

Cllr D Albone said we need to enter into discussions with the commissioners regarding the strict rehab criteria and find out what could be offered in the future.

Mr Geoghegan said that it could possibly provide stroke service and head injury care; a debate is needed with GP's, technicians and commissioners regarding demand, and to include public and local government input.

It is preferred that some services continue to be provided and do as much as possible for the community.

Cllr D Lawrence said that the presentation in the library should address patients. Carers and relatives are not mentioned, carers are not coming through strongly enough in your presentation.

Mr Geoghegan replied that they cannot go against the patient's wishes, unless mental capacity assessment are completed and determined. Patients can be adamant with their wishes, the carer may have a different view. There are more and more challenges, but they cannot override patient's wishes.

There is a need for local hospitals. Respite care is not being provided. Overriding some barriers and policies, more pooled budgets at a local level is needed.

Cllr P Vickers said he was concerned about the 6 weeks ruling.

Mr Geoghegan said that it could be 8 or 10 weeks, patients are continually reviewed and not turned out at 6 weeks, their stay is based on a clinical need.

Cllr R Skinner said that the existing hospital is an ideal site for trauma victims; it has good access from surrounding villages making it less stressful to patients and families. The out of hours doctors operate from there.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence said that it's a very polished presentation that has been given here, and that she knows of people who would wish to be in Biggleswade. It would cause difficulties for a partner and carers to visit other hospitals and would be a huge patch for the out of hour's doctor. Some people would find it difficult to get to Bedford.

Paid carers are asked to do more and there are hardly any district nurses. It's not viable if you take away users – Steppingly Hospital is a typical example.

The priorities must be thinking locally and made viable, with a doctor present out of hours.

Mr Geoghegan replied that there were no plans for closure but criteria set are preventing patients being admitted, they are being asked what is going to be done to regenerate the site – continuing as it has been is not viable to run with minimal or no patients.

Mr Geoghegan said that a plan is prepared and needs to be taken forward as quickly as possible. Mis-communication is affecting staff and the community. SEPT is looking at the whole picture and demographic growth which goes beyond Biggleswade. Public purse monies could be better used than on empty or half filled units.

Cllr B Briars asked if there is a timescale.

Mr Geoghegan said that John Rook is pushing for a timeframe; it will be circulated to interested parties to process.

Cllr D Lawrence asked if quick capital gains were on the agenda.

Mr Geoghegan replied that he is not aware of this.

Cllr B Briars said that John Rook should be asked to attend the next meeting. Cllr Mrs M Russell reiterated this.

Cllr T Woodward thanked the invited speakers for attending the meeting.

The Town Mayor reinstated the Standing Orders.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received and approved Minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting held on 8 May 2012 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. Members received and approved Minutes of the Planning meeting held on 12 June 2012 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- c. Members received and approved recommendations of the Public Land and Open Spaces meeting held on 12 June 2012 at the offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Items as listed on the Public Land and Open Spaces meeting held on 12 June 2012:

4.1) ELECTION TO THE OFFICE OF VICE CHAIR

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Cllr I Bond be appointed the office of Vice Chair of the Public Land and Open Space committee for the period 2012/2013.

4.2) MINUTES OF MEETINGS

a) Members received and approved the minutes of the Public Land and Open Spaces meeting held on 27 March 2012.

b) MATTERS ARISING – Public Land and Open Spaces meeting held on 27 March 2012

Item 5b – Installation of Parkour

The Town Clerk advised Members that there is still one quotation outstanding.

Item 5e – Biggleswade Cricket Club

The floodlights still have not been removed.

Rob McGregor said that the Football Club that was supposed to take down the lights, was restricted with the hire of a crane. Rob McGregor had advised them of a local company who had quoted £1600 to take the lights down, the Football Club would make contact with this company.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said that if the contractor does not remove the floodlights within the next week, Town Council would remove them.

Item 5h – Installation of Street Snooker

This item was deferred for future discussion.

Item 6a – Land East of Saxon Drive, Biggleswade

CBC has replied to Town Council and they are not interested in Town Council purchasing the land. CBC has been contacted again and Town Council will keep chasing for a reply.

Item 6d – Drove Road Cemetery

It was **RECOMMENDED** that once all the quotations have been received, they go to full Council for consideration.

5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

5a) Biggleswade Bowls Club

Members considered quotations received for the resurfacing of the roadway leading into Drove Road Recreation Ground car park.

Quotations were attached – A, B, C.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that quotation **B** is accepted and that this be presented to full Council on 26 June.

5b) Grasmere Recreation Ground

Members received correspondence from Miss J Gunstone, regarding Grasmere Recreation Ground.

Members received a report from the Deputy Town Clerk summarising the issues with the provision of play equipment at Grasmere Recreation Ground.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that in the short term, the play equipment be fenced off and warning signs be erected. The play equipment is to be removed and possibly relocating. New equipment and location of replacements will be discussed at a later date.

5c) Jubilee Fun Day

Members discussed the success of the Jubilee Fun Day held at Eagle Farm Road and to considered the possibility of organising an annual fun day

Members agreed that the Jubilee Fun Day had been a resounding success and thanked Town Council staff for all their hard work.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the possibility of Town Council staging an annual Fun/Family day be discussed at full Council.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting held on 8 May 2012 - Item 9b – Declaration of Interests – Cllr Mrs M Russell and Cllr Mrs J Lawrence did not declare an interest in item 14b as listed on the agenda.
- b. Minutes of the Planning meeting held on 12 June 2012
- c. Minutes of the Public Land and Open Spaces meeting held on 12 June 2012

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications.

10. ACCOUNTS

a. Financial Administration

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 30 April 2012
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 30 April 2012

- b. Members received and adopted the following accounts:
- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31 May 2012
 - ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
 - iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31 May 2012
- c. **Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2012 (attached)**
- i. Members approved and adopted the Accounts and Statement of Accounts contained in the Annual Return for 2011/2012.
 - ii. Members adopted and approved the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year 2011/2012.

11. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Request for a Bus shelter at Sainsbury's roundabout.**

Correspondence was received from a resident of Northgate Court, asking that consideration is given to the provision of a bus shelter on the western side of the Sainsbury's roundabout.

Town Council originally received this request in 2010 when it was discussed on 22 June 2010 and it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council support this request and write to Central Bedfordshire Council, also the residents' letter will be forwarded to them.

Since then nothing has ensued and the resident is asking for Town Councils support in asking CBC to install this bus shelter before the winter.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council write to CBC in support of provision of the bus shelter.

b. **Request to display Berkeley Cars**

Correspondence was received from Berkeley Enthusiasts Club requesting permission to display their cars on market square on 15 July.

They are holding the Ian Mantle memorial run during the morning, they would like to stop on the market square for a few hours again this year and invite former employees and their families to have a look around the cars that they help build in the 50's.

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

c. **Biggleswade History Society**

Biggleswade History Society has applied to Town Council for financial assistance. Due to the unexpected closure of Millennium House they have incurred extra expenditure as the rental of their new meeting place is higher, as well as cost of the move and redecorating.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council award the History Society £200.

d. **Biggleswade Hospital**

Members considered the proposed closure of Biggleswade Hospital. This item was discussed earlier in the meeting. Cllr T Woodward reiterated that John Rook be invited to speak at a Council meeting.

e. **Aldi Stores Limited**

Members considered the response from Aldi Stores following a meeting held on 14 May 2012. A copy was attached to the agenda.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the letter is addressing parking capacity and management as well as covenants.

Their statement about the letter from BBW was not agreed at the meeting.

With regards to the covenants for the north part of the car park, Town Council needs to write to CBC requesting they take this forwards, look at improving the covenants and enforcing.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence asked where the 3 hours max stay had come from as there is a need for workers to have car parking.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that there are enough spaces for shoppers.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that ALDI had manipulated the meeting that took place.

It was **RESOLVED** that a letter be written to CBC.

f. Replacement of Kubota

The final payment of 36 monthly payments is due on this vehicle in July 2012 and it is recommended that this vehicle be replaced with another Kubota RTV900.

Members were asked to consider the 3 quotations attached; A,B,C.

It was **RESOLVED** that quotation **A** be accepted.

12. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board

A plan of **Watercourse Maintenance Programme for 2012/2013** in the Parish of Biggleswade is on display in the Chamber for Members to view, which shows watercourses in this area that have been identified as requiring maintenance.

The proposed works will be similar to that of previous years consisting of; flailing, clearing, weed cutting, pollarding and dredging, as necessary. These works will improve flow in the watercourse by removing obstructions and hence reduce flood risk.

Further information about the Bedford Group of Drainage Boards is available on their website; www.idbs.org.uk

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

b. Thank you letters received

Thank you letters were received from recipients of Grant cheques and copies were attached to this agenda.

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

c. Maintenance of public paths – Partnership Bedfordshire Probation Trust

Correspondence was received informing Town Council that CBC Rights of Way Team has again organised a works team under the Community Payback scheme to carry out a mix of surface and side vegetation clearance on a number of internal village public paths including Biggleswade Footpath no 21.

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

d. Further to Planning meeting 10 April 2012 -Proposed redevelopment of London Road, Biggleswade

Responses have been received regarding the above item, copies were attached to the agenda.

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

13. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A member of the public said that they had not received a reply from questions submitted at the Annual Assembly.

The Town Clerk said they would receive a reply in the next 2 weeks.

Cllr D Albone said that the formatting of the Annual Assembly and issues arising needs to be altered.

Cllr T Woodward replied that this would be considered when the Standing Orders are reviewed.

Cllr B Briars said that the Annual Assembly is a public meeting not a council meeting, its nothing to with the Standing Orders.

Cllr T Woodward said that matters arising wouldn't automatically come onto a Council agenda, but the matters arising will be on the next council agenda.

A member of the public asked if there is any update regarding the Town Council's website.

Cllr T Woodward replied that Town Council is now trying to find other companies, any suggestions would be welcomed, and the criterion needs to be fulfilled.

14. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be moved that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council resolve to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.