

MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2016
AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD BIGGLESWADE

Present:

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay (Chair)
Cllr F Foster
Cllr P Biernis
Cllr B Briars
Cllr M Foster
Cllr B Rix
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr T Woodward
Cllr G Wilson
Cllr M North
Cllr Mrs M Russell
Cllr I Bond

Mr M Thorn – Biggleswade Deputy Town Clerk
Mrs J Durn – Minute Taker, Biggleswade Town Council

8 Members of Public

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr R Kerfoot, Cllr S Watkins, Cllr D Albone

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a)** Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item:
Cllr B Briars, Item 11f: 1st floor refurbishments – 4 Saffron Road.
- (b)** Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item:
Cllr P Biernis, Item 7b Grant Application – Biggleswade Good Neighbours
Cllr B Briars, Item 7b Grant Application – Biggleswade Amateur Theatrical Society
Cllr G Wilson, Item 7b Grant Application – Royal British Legion
Cllr I Bond, Item 7b Grant Application – History Society

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Would any Councillors who have not yet responded to the Mayor's invitation to attend the Civic Service in February, please inform the Mayor's secretary as soon as possible.

4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr F Foster asked if there was any news on refurbishment of the Town Centre benches. The Deputy Town Clerk has nothing further to report as yet.

Cllr P Biernis queried the fact that although the Potton relief road has been open now for some weeks, there appears to be no signage to this effect. The Town Clerk has been in recent discussion with the Developers in order to resolve this issue.

5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Mr. Bacon (Biggleswade) made a case for objection regarding planning application CB/15/04854/OUT - Land side of 11 Palace Street, Biggleswade. Concerns include the state of disrepair of the cottage that this will be built on to. Lack of light, subsidence of the road due to lorries using that road, access problems and parking.

6. **INVITED SPEAKER**

There was no invited speaker.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. **Members received the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 12 January 2016 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.**

Following an amendment on page 4, item 11a to correct a typing error in the second paragraph to change "CNC" to CBC" the Minutes were approved and can be signed

- b. **Members received and approved the RECOMMENDATIONS of the of the Finance and General Purposes meeting held on 12 January 2016 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.**

Item 6a: Budgets 2016-2017

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council approve the Budgets for 2016-17 including the Precept Request of £764,331.

Item 6b: Local Community Solutions Ltd

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council approve the proposal that LCS support BTC in preparing a Strategic Plan.

Item 6c: Grants

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council approve the schedule of Grants.

Additional Items for consideration:

Item d: It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council approve the Sponsorship request from Biggleswade Town Cricket Club to sponsor match balls as in previous years at a cost of £10 per game for the amount of £50.

Item e: It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council approve the requested Grant funding of £500 for the local branch of RBL, under s137.

The grant request from Ivel Sprinter will be taken as Agenda item 10c.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 12 January 2016.

Item 11: Items for Consideration: Stratton Street bridge works

Cllr Strachan asked if we have received any updates on the Stratton bridge situation, or a reply from CBC to the Chairman's letter.

It was reported that there has been no further update, and the Chairman has not yet written to CBC.

9 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- a. **CB/15/04854/OUT – Land side of 11 Palace Street, Biggleswade**
Outline Application: Erection of new end of terrace dwelling.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **OBJECTION** to this Planning Application on the grounds of overdevelopment, access and parking. Cllr T Woodward is requested to call in this Application.

- b. **CB/15/04526/FULL – 13 Boddington Gardens, Biggleswade**
Single storey rear and side extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Planning 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/16/00021/FULL – 10 Courtland’s Drive, Biggleswade

Single storey rear extension with associated internal and external works.

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

d. CB/15/04729/FULL – 87 London Road, Biggleswade

Single storey rear extension and garage following demolition of existing garage and extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Planning 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. There is also to be provision of sufficient parking.

e. CB/16/00022/FULL – 20 and 21 Market Square, Biggleswade

Change of use to a first and second floor retail (A1) unit to 6 residential flats (C3).

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECT** to this Planning Application on the grounds of overdevelopment and the lack of off-street parking.

f. CB/16/00052/FULL – 9 Coopers Close, Biggleswade

Single storey side extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Planning 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/16/00072/FULL – 13 Wilsheres Road, Biggleswade

Front extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Planning 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. There should also be sufficient off-street parking remaining.

h. CB/15/04832/FULL – 210 London Road, Biggleswade

Two storey side and single storey side and rear extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Planning 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/15/04234/FULL – 95 High Street, Biggleswade

Demolition of single storey retail unit (no. 95 High Street) and erection of three storey building with retail to ground floor and 5 residential units to first and second floors.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECT** to this Planning Application on the grounds of overdevelopment, no access and inadequate parking and that this application is requested to be called in.

- j. **CB/15/04723/FULL – Baystrait House, Station Road, Biggleswade**
Change of use to D1 to Suite 8, Baystrait House.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Planning Application.

- k. **CB/15/04943/FULL – Land to rear of 90-96 The Baulk, Biggleswade**
Erection of one dwelling following demolition of barn.

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

- l. **CB/15/04438/RM – Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Reserved Matters: Landscaping, layout and appearance following outline application MB/03/01205/OUT for the creation of formal sports areas, ancillary open space comprising of football pitches, a range of play facilities and games areas.
(Amendments – revised application form and changes to the proposal).

This planning application previously went before council on the 15th December 2015.

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

10. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

Members received the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31 December 2015
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31 December 2015

Cllr M North, Chairman FG&P, requested that an item covering “excess reserves” be put on a future Agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council accept the accounts presented.

11. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Bedfordshire Constabulary**

Members received Crime Figures from Bedfordshire Police.

It was felt that these contained too many “unknowns”. The information was **NOTED**.

- b. **Works to trees within a Conservation Area: Remove one Bay & one Plum tree located along northern boundary wall.**
Location: Callaghan Partnership, Old School Factories, Church Street

CBC has notified Town Council that they have received an application to carry out work to tree(s) at the above property which is within the Biggleswade Conservation Area. A copy of the application is attached to this agenda.

The Town Council has no objection to this work being carried out.

- c. **Grant application – Ivel Sprinter**

Finance & General Purpose meeting 12th January 2016, Grant Application no 12 deferred to the Town Council meeting 26th January 2016.

To be able to replace the Ivel Sprinter minibus which is becoming unreliable and will fail to meet new emissions regulation coming into force in the near future. The bus service transports people around Biggleswade and the surrounding areas, and brings people into Biggleswade that have no other means of transport. The cost of a replacement bus is in the region of £75,000 of which they are able to contribute 40,000 from our reserves leaving a shortfall of £35,000.

Members were asked to consider a request for £10,000 towards the cost of a new minibus. Members have the power to make a grant under the Transport Act 1985, ss 22 -23 and s 106A, inserted by Local government and rating Act 1997.

This service, run by volunteers, is considered to be an extremely valuable asset to the town.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council approve the request for a Grant of £10,000 to the Ivel Sprinter to be paid from General Reserve.

d. **Works to trees within a Conservation Area: Prune a row of Sycamore trees to the western boundary of the front garden.**
Location: Thirlaways, 49 London Road.

CBC has notified Town Council that they have received an application to carry out work to tree(s) at the above property which is within the Biggleswade Conservation Area. A copy of the application is attached to this agenda.

The Town Council has no objection to this work being carried out.

e. **Market Town Regeneration Project**

A Proposal has been received from Carolyn Blake (Northill) asking the Town Council to support a proposal for an historic mosaic trail linking Biggleswade, Potton and Sandy to be put forward in a bid to the Market Towns Regeneration Fund.

Although this was considered by some Cllrs. to be a very interesting project, following discussion Members decided to defer a decision until more information has been received. They would like details on size, location and costs to be submitted in time to circulate with the next Agenda, and also to invite Carolyn Blake to speak on this item at the meeting.

f. **1st Floor Refurbishments - 4 Saffron Road**

Cllr B Briars left the Chamber before this item was discussed.

Members were asked to consider three quotations received for the refurbishment of the 1st Floor, 4 Saffron Road.

It was **RESOLVED** that quotation C for £13,584.80 plus VAT is accepted.

Cllr B Briars returned to the Chamber after this matter was concluded.

g. **H. Harris & Sons**

A request has been received asking Members to grant permission for H Harris and Sons, for use of the Biggleswade market square during Biggleswade Carnival week.

The request is for the Fun Fair to pull onto the market square Tuesday 28th June 2016, evening and pull off Saturday 2nd July 2016.

It was **RESOLVED** that this request was accepted

h. **Funding for a Community Agent for Biggleswade**

Members are asked to consider a proposal from Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) who are requesting financial support of £10,000 towards the cost of a 1-year pilot to fund a Community Agent for Biggleswade. Further details are attached to this agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council have no objection to supporting this project with a contribution of £10,000 for one year. However, they would like to receive reports from BRCC on activities and to review progress after 9 months.

i. Biggleswade Parking – Statutory Consultation Feedback

Following in depth discussion, Members asked that the following requests and comments be taken back to CBC:

- Zone D Osprey Road: Members asked that CBC re-canvas residents affected by parking issues in Osprey Road area as there were concerns that this area had not adequately been covered.
- Zone F Ivel Gardens: Cllr Mrs M Russell asked for additional double yellow lines on the south side of Ivel Gardens, alongside the raised bed where the yew trees are between the entrance to the church car park and the driveway of No. 1. This is for safety reasons because Ivel Gardens has a dog leg and there are visibility issues which have resulted in near misses with cars coming out of the church car park.

Cllr Mrs M Russell also requested an item for the next Agenda to request double yellow lines on Sun Street from the junction with Fairfield Road to the junction with Shortmead Street.

j. Rights of Way Changes – Stratton Business Park – Phase 5

Members are asked to consider proposed changes to the rights of way; Stratton Business Park phase 5. (proposals attached).

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to these proposals on the grounds that the information provided is inadequate, the map is not clear and more detail is required before a decision can be made.

k. A1 East of England Strategic Road Study

Members are asked to consider electing two members along with the Town Clerk, to attend the above meeting. The meeting is being held on the 12th February 2016 at Sandy Conservative Bowls Club Pavilion, the meeting will start at 1.30pm.

Members are keen to attend this meeting. Cllrs H Ramsay, I Bond, D Strachan and M Foster will attend as BTC representatives, along with the Town Clerk. Cllr Mrs M Russell and Cllr M North will attend as BATPC representatives.

12. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Planning application outcomes

A report detailing the outcome of recent planning applications is attached to this agenda.

It was reported that Cllr J Lawrence has called in the Planning Application for 15 Torquay Close as requested by Members at the Council Meeting held on 12 January 2016.

b. Budget 2016 – CBC Spending Plans

Central Bedfordshire Council Spending Plans, members are asked to consider filling in an online questionnaire, www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations

This was **NOTED**.

c. Police Council Tax Precept Consultation.

Bedfordshire PCC is asking members for views on the proposed 1.99% increase in the police council tax precept.

No views were put forward.

d. St Johns Street – Former Gas Works

National Grid Update on the former gas works site, St Johns Street, Biggleswade. (attached).

This information was **NOTED**

13. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask questions.

Mr Reynolds (Biggleswade) asked that cracked paving slabs in Hitchin Street be looked at as he felt them to be a trip hazard. Cllr Mrs M Russell will take this request to the Joint Committee Meeting on Wednesday 27 January.

Comment was also made on the redevelopment of Hitchin Street as in their opinion the poor quality work has made it a complete waste of money.

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.

Exempt Item 15a (minutes of meetings)

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.