

MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2013 AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD BIGGLESWADE

Present: Cllr T Woodward (Chair), Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr R Skinner, Cllr B Briars, Cllr D Albone, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr I Bond, Cllr Ms S Mulchrone, Cllr G Wilson
Louise Wilcox – Deputy Town Clerk
Members of the public - 3

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr M North and Cllr S Watkins.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – there were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – there were no Non-pecuniary interests declared

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor reminded Councillors that they need to submit a photo of themselves to be added onto the new website.

The Town Mayor also reminded Councillors that Cllr Peter Woodward's funeral is on Thursday 24 January at 11am at Harwood Park Crematorium, Stevenage.

4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no Members questions.

5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A member of the public MOP1 asked what had happened at the Joint Committee meeting with regards to the roundabout at Shortmead Street/Sun Street.

Cllr T Woodward replied that there has been a change of legislation re S106 and viability, the developer is now re-negotiating the S106.

A temporary roundabout has been requested. Amey has been asked to quote, but this would entail 75% of work to install a permanent roundabout.

Cllr B Briars said that CBC failure to pursue developer is adding to the issues.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the money was hoped to be forthcoming earlier, the developer has been invoiced, but they have the power to re-negotiate on grounds of viability. Forward funding was discussed, but there is a danger in doing this as the developer will back off and dispute whether the funding is needed.

Cllr D Albone said that it was stated that LXB improvement less necessary than Sun Street roundabout.

Cllr T Woodward said that they are separate developments.

MOP1 said that regarding item 12a on the agenda, parking restrictions, whilst these are welcome, asks for further restrictions within the vicinity on Dells Lane. He said that he welcomes a starting point, but this will exacerbate problems in neighbouring roads.

6. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

No report or apology was received from Bedfordshire Constabulary.

7. **INVITED SPEAKER**

There was no invited speaker.

8. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received and approved the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8 January 2013 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. Members **approved the recommendations** of the **Finance and General Purpose** meeting held on 8 January 2013 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Items as listed on the Finance and General Purpose agenda:

6) **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Budgets**

To consider budgets for 2013/2014.

Cllr D Lawrence had prepared the following proposal and this was handed out to all committee members:

1. We place the Precept Support Grant into a special reserve and call it down over a 3 year transition period at a rate of 20315 per annum.
2. We finance the 40630 deficit in the 2013/2014 budget from an increase in the precept of 7.5% on the 5538 Band D equivalent contributors
3. That during the next 3 years that we find additional savings from reduced expenditure of 20315 per annum
4. That if there are further Precept Support Grants from Government in future years that they are used in their entirety to reduce the then precept level

This proposition leaves all options that may be closed off to us if there is a precept freeze and no further Precept Support. It therefore represents sound management for Biggleswade Town.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that she is not comfortable with raising the precept by 7.5%.

Cllr Russell said that increasing the precept by 7.5% would bring BTC to the attention of Mr Pickles who would use us as an example of an inefficient Council and this could cause problems in the press and maybe local tv.

Cllr D Lawrence said he would welcome this.

Town Council is in the hands of CBC and government how the money is distributed.

Cllr Mrs M Russell proposed an increase of 1.5% and not to put aside the precept grant.

Cllr Russell said that there had been discussions on pink paper, that could not be discussed in a public meeting, but there are many things we can do for the Town with £80,000 re parking for instance. We need that money to improve the facilities in Biggleswade.

Cllr Mrs M Russell went on to say that there should be a small increase gradually over 3 years.

Cllr D Lawrence said that we are not capped this year, but may be next year.

Cllr B Briars seconded Cllr Mrs M Russell's proposal saying that it makes sense, especially with our reserves.

Cllr D Lawrence's proposal was not seconded.

At 8.17pm Cllr D Lawrence resigned as Chair of the Finance and General Purpose Committee.

Cllr D Lawrence and Cllr Mrs J Lawrence both left the Chamber.

Cllr Mrs M Russell asked the Town Clerk to confirm that the committee were quorate.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay took over as Chair for the remainder of the meeting. The proposal put forward by Cllr Mrs M Russell for an increase of 1.5% was seconded.

A vote was taken and all the Committee voted in favour of this proposal, therefore it was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council implement a 1.5% increase.

9. MATTERS ARISING

a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8 January 2013

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that the CCTV report headlines should have been – Arrests leading to Convictions. The report figures do not explain this.

Cllr D Albone said that the shared space in Hitchin Street is not working, this may lead to problems, and asked that this be reviewed at Joint Committee.

Cllr T Woodward said that the signage is still to go up.

Cllr B Briars said that he understood from the plans that there was to be a definition of footpaths and road – different colour slabs.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the street furniture is still to be added and that should hopefully she would be able to report to Council at the next meeting. The Chamber of Trade has offered funding for planters in Hitchin Street.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. CB/12/04498/FULL – Millenium House, 85 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade

Change of use of existing building with D1 (non-residential institution) to C3 (residential) use.

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.

b. CB/12/03517/FULL – 22 Brunswick Close, Biggleswade

Single storey front & 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.

c. CB/13/00037/ADV – 36 High Street, Biggleswade

Advertisement: 1 set of halo illuminated text to High Street elevation 1 set of non illuminated text to Victoria Place elevation 1 externally illuminated projected sign, 2 x internally illuminated menus, 1 x internally illuminated take away sign, 1 x internally illuminated roundel 2 x non illuminated awnings.

d. CB/13/00038/LB – 36 High Street, Biggleswade

Listed Building: Installation of signage, 1 light line to existing clock, painting to shop front, 2 x awnings to front, 2 non illuminated vinyls to shopfront (part vinyl, part sign written)

Items C & D – 36 High Street, Biggleswade

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **STRONGLY OBJECT** to **BOTH** of these planning applications for the following reasons:

- 'Fascia Panel x 2' – Town Council does not allow internally illuminated signs
- 'Text x 2' - Agree with this on front of building but **NOT** on Victoria Place elevation (car park side)
- Menu boards to be removed
- No vinyl scripts on windows
- **NO** to LED lights around the Drum Clock – **this Clock is property of Town Council**
- 'Take Away' sign – **OBJECT** - Town Council does not allow internally illuminated signs
- 'Awnings x 2' on front – **OBJECT** as this will detract from the building
- 'Roundel' – accept this but **NOT** to be internally illuminated
- This building is in a Conservation Area

e. CB/12/04402/FULL – 5 Apollo Gardens, Biggleswade

Conversion of part of garage (retrospective)

Previous application 12/02338/FULL went before Town Council 24/07/2012 – No Comment – CBC refused 28/08/2012

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this application as it adds to parking difficulties for residents.

f. CB/12/0444/ADV – The Yorkshire Grey, 140 London Road, Biggleswade

Replacement Advertisements: 1 x post mounted sign, 2 x entrance signs, 1 x corporate logo sign & 1 x door plaque

Original application stated:

Advertisement: replacement signage: 1 totem sign, 2 x entrance signs, 1 x corporate logo sign & 1 x door plaque.

Town Councils decision on 8 January 2013:

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to the totem sign but raise no objection the rest of this planning application.

Members were asked to consider the revised application.

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

11. ACCOUNTS

a. Financial Administration

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

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

b. Members received and adopted the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31 December 2012
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31 December 2012

Cllr T Woodward highlighted the bad debts page of the accounts.

Cllr Mrs M Russell proposed that they be written off.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay seconded this proposal.

12. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **CBC draft proposals to introduce waiting restrictions in Biggleswade, Clifton, Henlow, Langford, Potton, Sandy and Shillington**

CBC has allocated funding to introduce minor parking restrictions at various locations. These have mainly been requested by members of the public, local Councils and/or elected Members.

A copy of the draft document was attached to the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that, whilst Town Council do not object to these proposals, would ask that the scheme be extended to other areas of the town.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Planning application outcomes**

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

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

Cllr T Woodward thanked staff for this report.

b. **Road Closure notifications**

CBC has informed Town Council of the following road closures:

Teal Road, St Andrews St, Hitchin Street – 26 Jan for 7 days

London Road – 28 Jan for 5 nights

This is to allow resurfacing works to be carried out in safety.

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

c. **Street Naming and Numbering – amendment to postal numbers at the former County Tyres and Exhausts, Ivel Bridge, Biggleswade**

Correspondence was received from CBC to inform Town Council that four of the above postal numbers have been amended to relate to different plot numbers. The addresses remain the same as 5 – 18 Riverside Court, Biggleswade.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

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

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

MOP 1 said that an explanation of road closures would be helpful, including a diversion route map.

MOP 1 went onto to say that more information on Town Council reserves would be helpful in Finance papers.

15. **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(s) 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.

Cllr Mrs M Russell took this opportunity to advise members regarding the re-instatement of the gate at Kitelands Recreation Ground. This was discussed at the January Joint Committee meeting and will be actioned by CBC, with the original gate to be reinstated.