

MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2013 AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD BIGGLESWADE

Present: Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr S Watkins, Cllr B Rix, Cllr R Skinner, Cllr B Briars, Cllr D Albone, Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr T Woodward, Cllr G Wilson, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr Bond
Cllr Mrs W Smith (Cllr Mrs W Smith left the meeting at 8.00pm).
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Louise Wilcox – Deputy Town Clerk
Peter Bigg -Taylor Wimpey North Thames
Members of the public- 7

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr M North.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item - Cllrs Mrs J and D Lawrence and Cllr Mrs M Russell declared an interest in item 12c as listed on the agenda.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay announced that Cllr S Watkins, Deputy Town Mayor, attended the Kempston Civic Service; Cllr Mrs H Ramsay visited Ivel Valley school, attended Drove Rd Cemetery Heritage Open day, and attended St Andrews Church Heritage Open day and also represented Biggleswade at the Civic Service held at St Pauls, Bedford.

4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr Mrs M Russell asked Councillors if they had seen the response from Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the Town Council offer to fund a TRO. Cllr Mrs M Russell informed Councillors that the TRO that has already been approved for part of Dells Lane has not been implemented yet.

Cllr Mrs M Russell informed Council that Central Bedfordshire Council were unable to part fund the survey for Sun Street / St Johns Street and that no response had been received on the part funding of crossings for London Road and Shortmead Street.

Cllr Mrs M Russell raised an incident that had happened on the Friday 20th September 2013; the Town Clerk had asked the driver of Central Bedfordshire Councils parking enforcement vehicle to deal with cars parked in the bus pick up drop off point Century House and to also deal with two vehicles parked on the pavement. The Clerk was told by the driver that he would not as he would be breaking the law by driving through the bus area; fortunately his boss has a different attitude.

5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Mop 1 - raised with Town Council that residents of Ivel Gardens had no knowledge of the proposed Walking Route Improvements - Shortmead Street, Biggleswade; they felt that no consideration had been given to the measures that were proposed for Ivel Gardens, they would if implemented restrict traffic flow.

Mop 2 – asked if Town Council had been consulted on the proposals and had the proposals been adopted.

Cllr Mrs M Russell informed Members of the public that Town Council had not been consulted and that the proposals had come to light at a meeting on the 18th September 2013 with Cllr Maurice Jones; Cllr Jones was trying to stop the proposed works to Ivel Gardens.

Mop 1 – asked if Council were aware of timings in relation to the proposed works to Ivel Gardens.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence informed members that she and Cllr D Lawrence had been corresponding on this matter and she would raise this when the item is discussed on the agenda.

6 **BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY**

Members received crime figures from Bedfordshire Constabulary.

Cllr B Briars raised concern at the increase in crime and asked if Cllr G Wilson would raise this at the next meeting with Sgt G Kidd.

Cllr G Wilson explained that he had held a meeting with Sgt G Kidd, however Sgt Kidd has been on three weeks leave, although Sgt G Kidd had returned to work he is now in Scotland for a week.

Cllr G Wilson and the Town Clerk are to contact Sgt G Kidd to arrange a meeting and raise Councils concerns.

7. **INVITED SPEAKERS**

Peter Bigg on behalf of Taylor Wimpey North Thames – re planning application CB/13/01969 – Land South of Potton Road.

Peter Bigg explained to members that he had come along to the meeting to find out what members objections were to planning application CB/13/01812/OUT.

Peter Bigg was aware that Council had objected to matters around the local centre however this application was for 66 dwellings and was entirely separate to the local centre application.

8. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received and **approved** the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 September 2013 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

9. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. **There were no matters arising** - Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 September 2013

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- a. **CB/13/01812/OUT – Land adjacent to: Biggleswade Hospital, Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Outline application: Development to provide a new public house, car parking, landscaping and new access to the B1040, Potton Road.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this planning application. Members expressed concern at the close proximity of the proposed public house to the Biggleswade Hospital, with potential late night noise and disturbance. Members also raised concerns at the creation of the new access on to Potton Road.

- b. **CB/13/03057/FULL – 134 Hitchin Street, Biggleswade, SG18 8BP**

Outline application: First floor front extension

It was **RESOLVED** that 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/13/01969/RM – Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**

Reserved Matters of appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and access for the erection of 66 dwellings at Blocks 35 & 41 pursuant to Outline consent reference MB/03/01205/OUT dated 13/11/2006 for Residential development of approximately 1450 dwellings, construction of Eastern relief road, Local Centre, primary school, public open space, structural landscaping, infrastructure including surface water balancing facilities and associated works. Demolition of 128 Potton Road to facilitate vehicular access. (All matters reserved except means of access) – Granted 13 November 2006

This application was considered by Town Council on 9 July when:

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this application as it is an overdevelopment of the area. Town Council requests that the relief road is high priority as well as S106 monies are applied for the buses to service the area.

The following reply was received from Central Bedfordshire Planning Officer:

The Town Council is fully entitled to object, of course. But the objection referred to overdevelopment at the site. This is an application for the approval of reserved matters (essentially, the detail). Consent was granted for 1450 units at the site with the 03/1205 consent and the number of units at the wider site is not part of the current application. I wonder if you might be able to reconsider the Council's comments on this application. Naturally, if you would like to maintain the objection, you are entitled to do so.

This planning application was considered by Town Council on 13 August when:

A vote was taken for Town Council maintaining the objection raised on 9 July:

In favour: 6 Against: 3 Cllr T Woodward abstained – therefore:

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council maintain the **OBJECTION raised** on 9 July.

Members are now asked to reconsider this application

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **WITHDRAW** their objection relating to the application for 66 dwellings. Council still **OBJECT** to the local centre.

Mr Bigg said that he would try to obtain a map showing the plot numbers and the builders concerned to help the Council to understand planning applications as occasionally the wording on the application is confusing.

- d. **CB/13/01874/MW – Former Plant Site, Warren Villas Quarry, New Road, Sandy SG19 1AW**
Change of use of land to an inert waste recycling centre by screen, crushing and washing together with retrospective change of use of land to a mix of fishing and nature conservation uses and associated engineering operations to create fishing swims.

This application was sent to Biggleswade Town Council to consider as this site is on the Parish Boundary.

This application was discussed by Town Council on 23 July 2013 when:

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this application. Members raised concerns about the increase in traffic on New Road and the access to the A1.

Further correspondence has been received to clarify the information on HGV traffic levels.

Members are asked if they want to comment on this information.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **MAINTAIN** their objection relating to this application, particularly with the addition of traffic from the new Tesco store.

- e. **CB/13/02892/OUT – Land South Of, Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Erection of a nursery, roads, sewers, landscaping and all ancillary works, all matters reserved except access.

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

11. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31 August 2013
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31 August 2013

12. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Donation from Motley & Hope Solicitors**

By way of thanks for valued support and to celebrate their still evolving 200 year history, Motley & Hope would like to enlist the help of the ten most proximate Town and Parish Councils, and to this end have made a donation of £200 for Town Council to decide how to spend it for the benefit of the Community. It could form part of a contribution of a large project or a small single purchase. The more inventive the better.

Members are asked to consider now best to spend this donation.

Members **RESOLVED** that a thank you letter is written to Motley & Hope thanking them for the donation; that a bench with a plaque is placed on the corner of Ivel Gardens and Shortmead Street, informing members of the public of the sight of the Memorial Hall; the history society are to be contacted regarding appropriate wording for the plaque.

b. **Quotations for work to Council Chamber**

3 quotations have been received for removal of the lift from the Council Chamber and replace with new stairs to match existing adjacent flight.

Quote A

Quote B

Quote C

Members **RESOLVED** that quotation A is accepted.

c. **Walking and Cycling route improvements**

Bedfordshire Highways (Amey) have supplied details of planned walking and cycling route improvements.

The drawings are attached to this agenda for Members to consider.

Members raised the following concerns; Ivel Gardens; There is already a crossing with dropped kerb and tactile paving at the end of the footpath along the Vicarage wall. With the wide vision splay each side, it is perfectly safe for pedestrians.

There have been no incidents with pedestrians or vehicles at the entrance to Ivel Gardens for at least the last 30 years.

Current width of road paramount in allowing vehicles of varying sizes to enter the road - narrowing the entrance will force vehicles into oncoming traffic.

There are over 100 cars belonging to Ivel Gardens residents

There are 30/40 cars arriving daily to park in Ivel Gardens (people who work in the town because there is a shortage of parking)

The Kingdom Hall car park holds 60 cars

The Parish Church car park holds 40 cars

Minibuses regularly enter Ivel Gardens with elderly and disabled going to the Church.

At busy times, it is very difficult to exit Ivel Gardens - with the wider mouth, it is at least possible for vehicles to turn left even when a vehicle is having difficulty turning right

Large vehicles, e.g. refuse vehicles, will mount the pavement as they turn into Ivel Gardens

There has been no consultation

Other Points; It would be ridiculous to do any work now with the Kingdom Hall being rebuilt - a major building site for the next year.

Walking cannot be encouraged at the expense of everything else

Pedestrian safety would be better served by a further zebra crossing between Brunt's Lane and the Methodist Church

The Biggleswade Masterplan has a policy of removing bollards – Town Council don't want bollards put in, as have been added to the crossing to the south of the Sun Street/Shortmead Street junction.

The whole project is a waste of Tax Payers money - the Town Council should have been consulted if there is money available to spend on encouraging walking and making walking safer. Town Council could have made several suggestions which would be much more useful to the town.

No studies have been carried out to identify the need for these proposals.

Biggleswade Central Bedfordshire Councillors have also raised concerns directly on this project and are also unhappy with the proposals.

Members **RESOLVED** that this project is stopped immediately, the areas of work that have already taken place remain, works underway on specific sites are finished and no further works are started. Cllr Albone abstained from this vote.

The Town Council would like a complete review of the scheme carried out in consultation with the Town Council in order that Town Council can put forward alternative suggestions and possible routes.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Planning application outcomes**

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

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

b. **Members' Customer Service Bulletins for period 05/08/2013 to 01/09/2013**

A copy of the above documents is available for Members to view in the Town Council office.

c. **Appeal by Pizza Express – CB/13/01108/LB**

The above application was considered by Town Council on 23 April 2013:

CB/13/01108/LB – 36 High Street, Biggleswade - Retrospective

Listed Building: installation of: 2 LED Light Lines to existing fascia signage on Victoria Place elevation 3 LED Light Lines behind glazing to window arches, retention of 5 spot lights up lighting wall, retention of existing light box.

*It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council raise a **STRONG OBJECTION** to this application*

CBC refused on 17 May 2013.

Pizza Express has now appealed against this decision and Town Council are invited to comment in writing by 24 October 2013.

A copy is attached to this agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that a letter is written to the Planning Inspector confirming Town Council objections.

d. **Appeal by Pizza Express - CB/13/01096/ADV**

The above application was considered by Town Council on 14 May 2013:

CB/13/01096/ADV - 36 High Street, Biggleswade

Advertisement: 1 set of externally illuminated text

Town Council has requested that this application be 'called in'

*It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this application as it is a listed building and, the advertising should be on the High Street not on Victoria Place.*

CBC refused on 12 June 2013.

Pizza Express has now appealed against this decision and Town Council are invited to comment in writing by 3 October 2013.

A copy is attached to this agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that a letter is written to the Planning Inspector confirming Town Council objections.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

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

Mop – 1 thanked the Town Council for listening to the concerns of the residents of Ivel Gardens.

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.

There were no exempt items.

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.