

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 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 B Briars, Cllr D Albone, Cllr Mrs M Russell,
Cllr S Watkins, Cllr G Wilson, Cllr I Bond
Louise Wilcox – Deputy Town Clerk
Sgt Gary Kidd – Bedfordshire Police
Members of the public – 5

Also present: Cllr D Lawrence (sat in the public gallery)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr Ms S Mulchrone, Cllr M North, Cllr R Skinner and Cllr Mrs W Smith.

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

Cllr T Woodward asked that Town Council send best wishes to Cllr R Skinner, who is unwell.

4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr B Briars said that London Road street lighting is very dark and asked if the lowering works had been completed.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council expressing dissatisfaction at the level of lighting.

5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A member of the public asked if Sgt Gary Kidd could explain what action the police will be taking regarding commuter parking.

Cllr Kidd responded that he would discuss this matter within the next item on the agenda.

6. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Sgt Gary Kidd presented the crime figures.

He said that there has been an increase in crime, compared to the same period last year. There has been an increase in burglaries, and there is a trend of burglars closing curtains after entering properties.

Sexual offence – 1 is historic and occurred some time ago.

Criminal damage to motor vehicles - no pattern to incidents and there have been catalytic convertors thefts again. It's still larger vehicles that are targeted such as 4 x 4s, sprinters, discoveries and ford rangers.

Operations are being run in the town on Friday and Saturday nights with PCSOs and Special Constables.

There has been an arrest today re racial abuse in the New Inn.

Pride in Biggleswade day – 20 March. This is a multi-agency event, including the Police and will run from 10am – 4pm in ASDA car park. There will be a mobile Police Station working with the Community Safety Team to identify vulnerable vehicles – they will then write to the owners.

They will be providing tamper proof screws for number plates as well.

There will be a press release to highlight the details.

With regards to commuter parking problems, this is not a police priority, but Sgt Kidd said that he understands the importance to the local community.

PCSOs cannot enforce the law, only PCs can but has made the Specials aware and they have been asked to patrol. PCSOs have been asked to be visible in the area and have been instructed to send details of offending vehicles so that advisory letters can be issued.

Cllr G Wilson asked if the Specials have got powers with regards to parking in Dells Lane.

Sgt Kidd responded yes, that is what they have been asked to do. Specials have powers so can deal with this, but not as a priority.

Cllr G Wilson said there is an issue with area in front of Dan Albone car park and asked if that could be passed to the Specials to monitor.

Sgt Kidd said he would look into the Traffic Act 1972 and action the PCSO's to deal with.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that Town Council is looking at a parking policy with CBC, as there is not enough for the needs of the town. Dangerous parking is a real concern, and commuters parking all day, it would be appreciated if the Police could look at really dangerous parking.

Cllr B Briars said that there has been anti-social behaviour within the town, is it drink related and is there an increase of this with less police presence.

Sgt Kidd replied that there are quite a large number of licensed premises so there will always be problems. In the last month these offences are not connected with licensed premises. Friday and Saturday evenings are attended by the PCSOs and Specials. This is working very well within the town.

Cllr T Woodward thanked Sgt Kidd for attending the meeting.

7. **INVITED SPEAKERS**

There was no invited speaker.

8. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received and approved the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 February 2013 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. Members **approved the recommendations** of the Off Street Car Parking committee meeting held on 12 February 2013 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Items as listed on OSCP agenda:

7) **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a) **NEW INN WALKWAY**

For members to consider ongoing problems with the New Inn walkway

Members **RECOMMENDED** that in light of the decision made at full Council on the Planning application for the New Inn, that no further discussions take place on this item.

b) **STREET CLEANING**

Members considered a report from Craig Siddle Service Manager- Operations Waste Services.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council review and ask for another report in 6 months time.

c) **HITCHIN STREET**

Members received an update on Hitchin Street improvement scheme & considered a petition from traders in Hitchin Street asking for the reversal of traffic in Hitchin Street.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council support in principle the reversal of traffic flow in Hitchin Street, subject to cost and other issues that need to be considered.

d) **BIGGLESWADE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

Members considered the Biggleswade Christmas lights.

A copy of comments from some Biggleswade residents was attached to the agenda

CLlr Mrs M Russell said that Town Council was approached by the Chamber of Trade who said that they could not fund the Christmas lights and they asked Council to take them on. It was slightly less cost to Town Council as insurance was already in place.

Town Council, as with all contracts, needed to obtain 3 quotes for the Christmas lights.

A visual inspection was carried out on the old lights and they were found to be uneconomical and needed rectifying, there were unfit for purpose in their present state.

Town Council chose Lamps & Tubes blindly, as when the quotes are presented to Council, the name of the company is blocked out. Sandy Town Council chose the same company.

LED lights use less electricity but are more expensive to buy.

Town Council have entered into a 3 year contract, and it would not be possible to do too much other than add to the lights if necessary. The Committee will meet with Lamps and Tubes soon to look at 2013/2014 Christmas lights.

CLlr Mrs H Ramsay said that Town Council legally has to obtain 3 quotes. There were no lights in Hitchin Street as the roadworks overran. The power points are ready for the lights in the future.

CLlr D Albone said that the committee came to the right decision it was all that could be done at the time; but we do need to consider festoons in future years.

CLlr G Wilson said he thought the lights were bland but the Christmas tree looked superb; it was a shock as the lights were entirely different.

CLlr T Woodward thanked the Committee for all their hard work, if they had not stepped in, there wouldn't have been any Christmas lights. It's not ideal, but something had to be done.

CLlr D Albone said that we need to start planning for this year and try and keep people informed in what direction we are going.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that OSCP Committee hold a meeting with Lamps & Tubes and take the results of this to the next OSCP meeting.

Items e and f where deferred to the next OCSP meeting

e) **MARKETS**

For members to consider the introduction of specialist markets for Biggleswade.

This item was **DEFERED** to the next meeting of the Off Street Car Park Committee.

f) **CCTV PLAN**

For members to consider the CCTV Plan 2013 – 2017

This item was **DEFERED** to the next meeting of the Off Street Car Park Committee.

g) REQUEST FOR PARKING

The Town Council has received a request from contractors who will be carrying out renovation works to 36 High St, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL. The Contractors would like to pay for the use of two dedicated parking spaces in the White Hart car park while the renovation works are being carried out.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council refuse this request; that the Contractors offload and are advised that they can park in Rose Lane car park free of charge.

h) Request from Henry Harris

Correspondence was received from Henry Harris requesting permission to hold a Fun Fair on the Market Square, to arrive after 6pm on Tuesday 18 June and remain there until Saturday 22 June (Carnival Day).

The Farmers Market is due to take place on Wednesday 19 June.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that permission be granted and that the Farmer's market be moved to Wednesday 12 June.

i) Commuter parking in Dells Lane, Mead End and Tennyson Avenue, Biggleswade

Correspondence was received from residents of the above area regarding commuters who do not wish to pay the fee to park at the railway station car park, parking on these roads.

The double yellow lines added at the junction of Dells Lane and Mead have resulted in cars parking on the opposite side of the road causing major obstructions to traffic flow in Dells Lane and Mead End.

Cars are left overnight and on occasions for a whole week, visitors and tradesmen attending residents have nowhere to park.

The residents are requesting restricted parking enforcement such as have been implemented in Saffron Road.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council support the residents' requests.

MATTERS ARISING

a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 February 2013.

Cllr B Briars said that he had questioned the colours of the bricks that have been used in Hitchin Street and asked what the original plans had shown, and asked that this be added onto the minutes.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the 'Exempt Items' page was missing from the OSCP recommendations.

Cllr Russell added that Town Council is to ask CBC to reverse the one-way traffic in Hitchin Street and would like this to be taken forward.

Cllr B Briars voiced concerns about the reversal as it stands and suggested that part of Bonds Lane/Hitchin Street should be pedestrianised.

Councillors took a vote on supporting the proposal of reversing the traffic flow in Hitchin Street.

In favour: Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr B Briars, Cllr S Watkins, Cllr G Wilson and Cllr I Bond

Against: Cllr D Albone

There were no abstentions.

Cllr Mrs M Russell clarified that all Councillors are invited to attend the meeting with Lamps and Tubes.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/12/04452/REN – Land and Buildings on the North West Side of, Back Street, Biggleswade**
Renewal of Planning Permission: CB/09/6568/REN erection of 4 no terraced dwellings following demolition of existing garage block (Replacement of planning permission MB/04/01185/FULL dated 12 November 2004)

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council make no comment on this application.

- b. **CB/13/00481/FULL – 97 Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Removal of Condition No 2 of planning permission CB/12/02105/FULL dated 09/08/2012 ‘The external finish of the walls and roofing materials to be used for the extension shall match that of the existing building as closely as possible, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority’

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this application.

- c. **CB/13/00440/FULL – 30 Foxglove Drive, Biggleswade**
Replacing an existing conservatory with a masonry extension with tiled roof.

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.

- d. **CB/13/00561/LB – 2 Market Square, Biggleswade**
Erection of security shutters to existing shop front.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council consider this application at the next Council meeting on 12 March 2013.

- e. **CB/13/00038/LB – 36 High Street, Biggleswade**
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)

Amendments have been received to the above application. Specifically the following advertisements have been removed from the scheme:

- ***The two canopies on the High Street elevation.***
- ***The blue illuminated strip from the clock.***
- ***The vinyl stickers on the High Street & Market Place elevations.***

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council, whilst pleased with the revisions, still **OBJECT** to this application for the following reasons:

- Halo lighting on High Street elevation not in keeping
- Internally illuminated menus not necessary as already plenty of lighting and externally illuminated
- Signage on car park side to be removed

11. ACCOUNTS

- a. **Financial Administration**

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

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

12. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. The Bedfordshire Regimental Memorial Appeal

The organisation above is hoping to erect a memorial to the Bedfordshire Regiment in time for the centenary of the outbreak of the 1st World War.

They have been granted permission to use a site at the entrance to the Tyne Cot British Military Cemetery visitors centre at Zonnebeke in Belgium wherein lie the graves of 18 soldiers of the Bedfords along with names of a further 275 engraved on Tyne Cot memorial to the missing, which is an extension of the Menin Gate memorial to the missing at Ypres which carries the names of a further 477.

The memorial will be placed alongside a path which sees 1000's of visitors each year and will be alongside existing memorials to the Notts and Derby Regiment (the Sherwood Foresters) and the Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.

They need to raise the sum of £5,000 to have this memorial manufactured, taken to Belgium and erected and have written to Town and Parish Councils in Bedfordshire asking for financial assistance.

It was **RESOLVED** that they be invited to apply for a Community Grant for it to be considered at the end of March.

13. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Planning application outcomes

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

Cllr T Woodward said that he is disappointed that the ASDA appeal had been granted and that local views were not taken into consideration.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that Town Council strongly objected to the 2 Shortmead Street planning application, so it was disappointing to see that this was also granted.

b. Minutes of the Joint Committee meeting held on 16 January 2013

Members received provisional minutes of the Joint Committee meeting held on 16 January 2013.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the action over the street furniture is not recorded in the minutes, although the desires expressed at the meeting are being implemented.

c. Appeal decision – ASDA Stores Ltd, Church Street, Biggleswade

CB/12/02672/VOC - Variation of condition 3 (hours of opening) attached to planning ref: 05/01588/FULL for the construction of a retail store with catering facilities, bakery, pharmacy, dry cleaners, crèche & associated parking, store serving & access arrangements granted 29/11/2002 to read 'the premises shall only be open to customer between the hours of 7am & 11pm Mon to Fri & 7am to 10pm Saturday & Sunday' as apposed to the approved hours of opening that are 7am-10pm Monday to Sunday. Town Council **objected** to this application on 14/08/2012.

Town Council has been notified that planning permission has now been granted.

Town Councils disappointment has already been mentioned.

d. Further to OSCP meeting 12/02/13 item 7c – Hitchin Street

The Chamber of Trade has provided **revised** options available for the reversal of Hitchin Street.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

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

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

A member of the public said that he welcomed the Police comments regarding commuter parking and asked that Town Council liaise with the Police and issue a joint press release. This could also be added onto the Town Council website.

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.