

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 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 (arrived 5 mins late), Cllr M North, Cllr G Wilson, Cllr S Watkins, Cllr Ms S Mulchrone, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr I Bond, Cllr D Albone, Cllr B Briars, Cllr P Woodward, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant
Sgt Gary Kidd – Bedfordshire Police
Members of the public- 8

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr R Skinner and Cllr Mrs W Smith.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- (a) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – there were no pecuniary interests declared.
- (b) **Non-pecuniary interests** - Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay and Cllr G Wilson declared an interest in item 12d.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor formally welcomed Cllr Michael North to the meeting as the newly appointed Councillor for the town.

The Mayor announced to Members that the new Town Council website has now gone live.

4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no member's questions.

5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A member of the public – re item 12g – Drove Road Cemetery Chapel – asked for assurance that the Christmas lights that are stored at the Chapel, will be safe whilst works are carried out and that he was not aware that the lights stored in the Cemetery Chapel are not to be used this year.

Cllr T Woodward replied that the existing lights were tested and found to be unsuitable.

The member of the public said there are lights that are LED and purchased with funds raised only 3 years ago.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that no one had told the Off Street Car Park Committee about these lights.

Cllr T Woodward said the Town Council will take care of the Lights in the Cemetery Chapel.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that there had been an article in the Chronicle regarding the Christmas lights.

The member of the public said that to clarify the article in the Chronicle did not indicate that the old lights were not to be used.

A member of the public said that he was appalled that Town Council were not aware of these lights.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that Town Council have only just taken over funding of the lights from the Chamber of Trade and was not aware of these lights. This information wasn't disclosed at our meeting, but now that we know these lights exist we will try to use them for next year.

A member of the public asked that as well as naming a street after Cllr Vickers could Council bear in mind that another former Mayor, Cllr Mrs Armstrong who had recently passed away.

The Mayor said that with the agreement of Members, items 6 & 7 would be treated as one item.

6/7 BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Sergeant Gary Kidd ran through the latest crime figures which showed the following compared to the same period in 2011:

	Recorded Crime % change	Detections % change
Violence against the Person	-40%	-72.7%
Sexual Offences	-100%	0%
Robbery	+100%	-100%
Domestic Burglary	-57.1%	-50%
Burglary other	+20%	+100%
Vehicle crime	+0.0%	+100%
Other Theft	-30%	-25%
Fraud and Forgery	+0.0%	-100%
Criminal damage	-68.8%	-100%
Drugs	-100%	+0.0%
Other Notifiable offences	0%	0%
TOTAL	-40.5%	-18.2%

Robbery (Person) – 3 November at 5.15pm, victim was walking along Palace Street past a group of males when he was shoulder barged and searched by group. Personal property stolen. Enquiries ongoing.

12 November at 4.30am, victim driving off to work in Hitchin Street when his path was blocked and he was approached by 2 x males who demanded his vehicle. Victim managed to drive off. Enquiries ongoing.

Domestic Burglaries – 14 November, Back Street, house door left open for a few minutes whilst occupier popped upstairs during which time a bicycle was stolen from the hallway.

15 November, Cedar Avenue, premises entered during the early hours of the morning and various electrical personal items stolen.

16 November, Lindsell Crescent, known female entered premises and stole TV remote control. Charged and due to attend Court in December.

Vehicle Crime - These offences include 1 x Catalytic Convertor being stolen from a Mercedes Sprinter van in Langford Road between 27 – 29 October and diesel being siphoned from 4 x vehicles in Potton Road and from 1 vehicle in Langford Road between 15 – 16 November. Diesel was also siphoned from another vehicle in Eldon Way on 23 October.

Metal Thefts – Towards the end of November and throughout December a number of Operation Chinook (Metal/Catalytic Convertor theft) Action Days involving a number of partnership agencies will be out and about in Biggleswade and surrounding areas targeting those responsible for metal thefts.

Sergeant Kidd also informed Members about a Police Initiative taking place on 7 December 2012 between 2pm – 4pm, at ASDA car park. Members of Biggleswade Community Safety Group and Local Community Police Team will be in attendance to carry out “Operation – Your Numbers Up” (Vehicle number plate security) and recording details of Vulnerable Vehicles with valuables on display.

8. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received Minutes of the Council meeting held on 13 November 2012 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay requested that items 8d and 9a on page 5 be amended.

Cllr T Woodward requested that a sentence be added between items 16b and 16c.

- b. Members **approved the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes** meeting held on 13 November 2012 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Items as listed on the agenda:

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6a. Asset Management

Members received the following presentation on Asset management from Derek Kemp, DCK Beavers:

The full asset register requirement is much more comprehensive than the spreadsheet and extends beyond the spreadsheet.

DK has looked for software solutions – database program and has identified 2 options.

Pear Technology option which needed developing are now in partnership to sell, install and maintain.

DK has looked at another solution, not aimed at Councils, but this was vastly more expensive. Another program that RBS offer, doesn't offer much.

You can have as many items on the Asset Register as you wish. For instance, one for furniture, one for grounds equipment, land, etc. It could be linked to a map and photographs.

There is the availability to plan events – e.g. tests etc and event reminders as well as insurance policy details and auto back-up.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that 2 quotations (including RBS quotation) are obtained and taken to next full Council meeting for approval.

b. Publicity Budget

At a meeting of the Off Street Car Park Committee of 06 November 2012, Committee recommended to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that the Publicity budget 4032/106 is split and a budget heading be created in the Central Services Budget of 4032/901.

Members **AGREED** to this recommendation.

c. Budgets

Members considered budgets for 2013/2014.

First review of Budgets for 2013/2014 a final review will be carried out at Finance and General Purposes on 08 January 2013 to go forward to Council on 22 January 2013.

Papers were handed out on the night and a page by page review carried out.

There will be changes to Council tax collection and benefits claimants.

Capping on precept seems likely to be applied to precept per band D equivalent.

2% increase permitted, anything above that is not permitted.

Cllr D Lawrence requested that the 3rd line in item C be changed to read:

Papers were handed out on the night **for consideration.**

9. MATTERS ARISING

a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 13 November 2012.

Cllr B Briars asked what was happening with **item 9a** – trees in Market Square.

Cllr T Woodward replied that the application has been withdrawn.

Rob McGregor said that he'd had a meeting with CBC Tree Officer, he is not happy to do all the trees at once it would be better in the spring and to deal with the trees individually.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that she thought the idea was to cut back before the Christmas lights are on the trees.

Rob McGregor said that a compromise had been reached – not to remove trees but to remove the bike stands.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence said that the Leader of the Council now doesn't want the bike stands removed and has cancelled this order.

Cllr D Albone voiced concerns about damage to lights in the trees.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said she was also concerned about damage to the Christmas lights. Things take a long time to sort out, Town Council doesn't have a say. Things need to be done in the right order. This could be discussed at Joint Committee.

Cllr T Woodward said that the Market Square is still run by CBC and not Town Council.

Cllr B Briars said that CBC took over the Market Square after the refurbishment but Town Council manage the Market Square.

Cllr B Briars said that CBC keeps changing their mind. Town Council are dictated to.

Cllr D Albone asked if there had been any answer regarding – **Page 2 item 4** – Quality Status

Cllr T Woodward said that he needed to send out dates to arrange a meeting. The items are being addressed. Staff qualifications are under way.

Cllr D Albone said there needs to be a meeting to create an action plan.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the whole Quality Council Scheme is changing. The new scheme will be as tough.

Cllr T Woodward said that there is no urgency, but will get on to it.

Cllr S Watkins asked about **Page 3 item 6e** – Street Cleaning

Rob McGregor said that this is ongoing.

Cllr D Albone re – **Page 3 item 6e** – asked if a letter had been sent.

Rob McGregor said that a letter had been sent but no response has been received yet.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. CB/12/03471/FULL – 22 Spring Close, Biggleswade

Extensions and alterations to dwelling, Conversion of garage to games room, bay window to dwelling.

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/12/03532/ADV – 25 Kitelands Road, Biggleswade**
Advertisement: 1 externally illuminated Fascia sign, 1 internally illuminated Projecting sign and one non illuminated Projecting sign – retrospective

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to the externally illuminated Fascia sign, but **OBJECT** to the internally illuminated Projecting sign.

- c. **CB/12/03930/ADV – 11 Market Square, Biggleswade**
Advertisement: Replacement of existing signage with 1 fascia illuminated sign and 1 illuminated projecting sign to front and 1 fascia illuminated sign and 1 fascia sign to rear.

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

- d. **CB/12/04097/FULL – Edward Peake School, Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Installation of extract & ventilation system.

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

- e. **CB/12/04090/FULL – Ivel Valley School, The Baulk, Biggleswade**
Installation of extract & ventilation system

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

- f. **CB/12/04101/FULL – Lawnside School, Lawnside, Biggleswade**
Installation of extract & ventilation system

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

11. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

Members received adopted the following accounts:

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

Cllr Mrs M Russell asked for the Bank Reconciliation to be included in the paperwork.

12. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **PCSO funding**

Bedfordshire Police has contacted Town Council to raise the subject of funding the services of a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) for Biggleswade.

Bedfordshire Police are currently undergoing a restructuring process due to the financial restrictions placed upon the force. This is likely to result in the reduction of Police Community Support Officers across Bedfordshire by 40% from April 2013.

Cllr G Wilson said he is strongly opposed to Town Council funding a PCSO. In 2006 PCSO's were first on the scene when Town Council paid £12,000 for one year – and for what, we pay enough in taxes.

He said he was disappointed that Sergeant Kidd had been allowed to leave the meeting.

Whenever Town Council writes to Police Headquarters in Kempston, any reply is sent from Biggleswade.

Cllr D Albone said that the funding idea should not be dismissed but Town Council needs more information. There is not enough in the letter received by Council and proposed that a decision be deferred.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence agreed with Cllr D Albone, there is no indication of cost. The letter says 'Biggleswade/Shefford area'. If the police station is to close, part-time cover is ridiculous. More information is needed for Town Council to make a decision.

Cllr P Woodward agreed that the PSCO's are very useful outside Stratton School as the young will talk to them rather than the Police.

Cllr D Lawrence said it's about 2 things – Money and Management. Town Council support the Police doing a better job.

Cllr T Woodward said he had attended a meeting with Alistair Burt MP, Chairs of Councils and Town Clerks. Rural Councils are pleased with PSCO's. Some of them don't have a Police Station, a town like Biggleswade has always had a Police Station. Parish Councils are being asked to fund PSCO's. Beds Constabulary is facing £6 million cuts. They are testing the water to see if a Town like ours would fund a PSCO and agreed that Town Council needs more information on cost.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked if this was going to be a permanent situation or 2 or 3 years as there is no indication in the letter.

Cllr G Wilson said that the letter says it's a partnership, but Town Council are ignored. Why can't we have more 'Specials'?

Cllr D Albone said this must be affecting the whole area, it would be useful to find out what other Councils think.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council defers making a decision until more information is received.

b. Street Naming and Numbering – Former Fairholme, Fairfield Road, Biggleswade

CBC has received an application for Street naming at the above site for 19 new builds and has suggested possibly **Daisley Place/Mews/ Close/Mead** as requested by the family of local artist, the late Marji Daisley.

It was **RESOLVED** that the name **Vickers Close** be used.

c. Street Naming and Numbering – Blocks 31 & 32 Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade

CBC has received the above application for Street Naming for 39 new builds at the above location. The developers are happy for Town Council to decide upon street names, and suggest 3 names of scientists.

It was **RESOLVED** that the names **BOSE** and **HERSCHELL** be used. The 3rd name to be used was delegated for the Town Clerk to investigate and the name **SOMMERVILLE** was selected.

d. Request from Biggleswade & District Pensioners Association

Correspondence was received from the Editor of the Biggleswade & District Pensioners Association. They wish to start using a logo on their headings and have drawn up 3 possible ideas; all include a small picture of the Biggleswade Town Crest and are requesting permission from Town Council to this crest.

It was **RESOLVED** to write to the Pensioners Association to inform them that Town Council can neither object to nor endorse their proposal. Members agreed that the Town logo should be re-designed.

e. Request for fundraising on the Market Square, Biggleswade

Correspondence was received requesting permission to display a model Fun Fair made of K'Nex on the Market Square on Saturday 22 or Monday 24 December, in aid of Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital (Charity No 235825).

They have 4 collection buckets on 2 tables, in which people can donate if they wish.

It was **RESOLVED** that this request be granted.

f. **Planning application – CB/12/03604/VOC - Little Acre, Langford Road, Biggleswade**

Town Council raised a 'Holding Objection' when the above planning application went to Council on 23 October 2012.

The reply from CBC is attached to this agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application as long as the units are for family members only as originally agreed.

g. **Drove Road Cemetery Chapel**

Following a meeting with the approved contractor Bennie Historic, Levitt's and the Conservation Officer CBC, additional works to the cills of the windows to the chapel need to be carried out.

Please find below the revised costs for the work required to the cills as agreed on site with Robin Uff the conservation officer.

Costs revised

Replace 3 no cills to North Elevation £787.00

Replace 3 no cills to South Elevation £787.00

Replace cill in total to Main West Window of Storage Area £1,179.00

Replace 1 section of cill to Main West Window of Chapel approx. 700mm long. £285.00

Total = £3,038.00

Original costs

Omit repairs to North Cills £198.00

Omit repairs to South Cills £132.00

Omit Kneeler stone to East Elevation £316.00.

Total = £646.00

£3,038.00 – £646.00 = revised cost of £ 2392.00.

Members considered an additional cost of £2392.00 to the original agreed contract.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **AGREE** to this additional cost.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence abstained.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Street Naming and Numbering- Parcel 15 & 16, Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**

CBC has confirmed the postal addresses for 122 new builds at the above location.

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

b. **Street Naming and Numbering, Land to the rear of 161/163 Hitchin Street, Biggleswade**

CBC has confirmed the postal address of the dwelling being constructed at the above site as:

163A Hitchin Street, Biggleswade

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

c. **Street Naming and Numbering, Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**

CBC has confirmed postal addresses for 103 dwellings – Blocks 25,26,29,34,36, 87 dwellings – Blocks 27-30, and for 228 dwellings – Blocks 8-14.

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

d. Thank you letter received re: Work Experience placement

Correspondence was received thanking Town Council for hosting a work experience placement during the last academic year.

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

e. CB/TCA/12/00357 – Work to Trees – Market Square, Biggleswade

Correspondence was received from CBC advising that the above application has been cancelled and its status is now 'withdrawn'.

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

f. Members' Customer Service Bulletin – 15/10/2012 – 11/11/2012

A copy of the above Members' Customer Service Bulletin was received and is available to view in the Town Council office.

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

g. Planning application outcomes

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

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

14. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A member of the public spoke to the meeting about the PCSO funding – with 250 new properties in the town. It was proposed that the new Police Commissioner be invited to attend a Council meeting.

Cllr Mrs M Russell agreed with the proposal for a letter to be written to the new Police Commissioner.

A member of the public spoke in support of PCSO's in the town, stating that they do a good job, they attend Pub Watch meetings. They are very important to the town.

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.