

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 14 JULY 2015 AT THE
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present:

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay (Chair)
Cllr D Albone (Vice Chair)
Cllr B Briars
Cllr P Biernis
Cllr M Foster
Cllr F Foster
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr G Wilson
Cllr Mrs M Russell
Cllr M North
Cllr I Bond
Cllr B Rix
Cllr Ms R Kerfoot

Mr R McGregor – Town Clerk
Mrs J Durn – Minute Taker

13 Members of Public (MOP)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr S Watkins and Cllr T Woodward.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item
Cllr B Briars expressed interest in item 10d (Canoes on the River Ivel)

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

We have achieved the first level of the Local Council Award Scheme.
During May the Mayor has represented Biggleswade Town Council at:
The Lord Lieutenant Service, with Cllr Mrs M Russell – 10th May
The District Scout Group AGM – 14th May
Buckingham Palace Garden Party
During June:
Joint Intelligence Training Group – 10th June
Baden Powell Way naming – 27th June
During July:
RBL VE VJ 70th Anniversary Ceremony - 5th July

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

MOP1 spoke in relation to Planning Application item 9(g) Land at Shuttleworth Court: In support of this application as it stands at the moment. It is hoped that the plans do not change and he will monitor progress on the Central Beds Website.

MOP2 spoke in relation to Planning Application item 9(e) 12 Kitelands Road: This is an unacceptable safety hazard. It has created a blind spot making it impossible to gain safe access to the road, as well as encroaching the footpath and blocking sight line. He has made objections to Central Beds and hopes that Biggleswade Town Council will endorse those objections.

MOP3 spoke in relation to Planning Application item 9(f) 20 Market Square: He has noticed that there are internal illuminated signs in the town and asked about the Council policy. Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the Council has always objected to internally illuminated signs on the grounds that Biggleswade is a Conservation area. Central Bedfordshire Council are at the moment taking action to have the current internal illuminations removed.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

There was no invited speaker

6. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr B Rix asked for an update on Hitchin Street and the parking issues in the Market Square: Cllr Mrs M Russell said that every opportunity is taken to remind Central Beds about these issues. With regard to parking, the Central Beds representative has said that they simply do not have the manpower to provide adequate cover. The Town Council are currently involved in talks with Central Beds to allow them to take control of the parking in the town by appointing a Parking Management Company. Cllr Mrs M Russell will keep us informed of progress.

Cllr B Briars said that the state of Hitchin Street is unacceptable. The Town Clerk said that the block paving is a design fault and Central Beds are aware of the problem.

Cllr B Briars asked about the provision of market stalls as he understood there were stalls available but there did not seem to be a visible uptake. The Town Clerk said that there were three new traders on the market this week. A meeting to discuss the Market is being arranged and he will keep us informed of progress. Cllr Mrs M Russell said that this was discussed in depth at the Town Centre Management Meeting and the Market Superintendent will attend the next TCM meeting in order to discuss it further.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received and **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 June 2015 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade,
- b. Members received and approved the **RECOMMENDATIONS of the Public Lands and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 16th June 2015** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade as follows:

Item 7 a Request for a Splash Park in Biggleswade

Council unanimously approved the Recommendation.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council offer support in principle to the request for a Splash Park in Biggleswade and help the Committee where possible, with at least one member of the Town Council to join the Splash Park Committee.

The Council Representative on the Splash Park committee would not be able to commit the Council to any undertaking, but would liaise with information and recommendations.

It was proposed by Cllr B Briars and seconded by Cllr Ms B Kerfoot that this would be an Agenda item at the next BTC meeting.

Item 7 b (i) Kitelands Recreation Ground: Installation of Play Equipment:

It was **RESOLVED** that Quote B £4,960.00 is accepted.

Item 7 b (ii) Lakes Recreation Ground: Removal of Toddler Swing Frame and Bases:

It was **RESOLVED** that Quote B £1,380.00 is accepted.

Item 7b (iii) Poppyfields Plan Area 2: Refurbishment of Play Area:

It was **RESOLVED** that Quote B £5,240.00 is accepted.

Item 7b (iv) Litter Bins

It was **RESOLVED** that Quote A £1,614.00 is accepted.

Item 7C (i) Improvements to Allotment Access Road

It was **RESOLVED** that Quote A £2,990.00 is accepted.

Item 7C (ii) Installation of Dip Tanks

It was **RESOLVED** that Quote B £974.22 is accepted.

Item 7d Vehicles:

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council proceed with the leases for the vehicles.

Item 7e Drove Road Cemetery:

Members considered a site meeting at Drove Road Cemetery to discuss future works, to include removing or repairing perimeter paths and re-pointing the cemetery wall and other maintenance work as required.

It was **RESOLVED** that any future works be discussed after a site visit.

Item 7f PLOS Walkabouts

These took place successfully on the 30th June and 7th July

Item 8 Items for Information:**Item 8a Kitelands MUGA:**

The installation of the MUGA at Kitelands Recreation Ground was delayed to allow for an application for a Certificate of Lawful Development. The Certificate has now been granted by Central Bedfordshire Council and works are expected to proceed in due course. A meeting has planned for the end of this week.

This item was **NOTED**

Item 8b Brunel Drive Play Area:

The Deputy Town Clerk has reached an agreement with the agents for the developers over the adoption of Brunel Drive, to include:

- Boundaries agreed, to exclude all banks.
- Removal of shrubs, bushes, chippings and horticultural membrane within the play area, make levels good with topsoil and lay turf.
- Replacement of swing apparatus to include new frame and swings and make good the safety surface.
- Replacement of wooden fence with metal bow top fence in green around perimeter of the play area.
- Adjust chain lengths on swinging plank to prevent trap hazard where plank fouls on the ground.
- A commuted sum of £26,000 payable to Biggleswade Town Council.

This item was **NOTED**

8. MATTERS ARISING**a. Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 June 2015.**

Item 4 Members Questions: Cllr P Biernis asked for an update to his query regarding CBC's provision of street cleaning when the regular cleaner is away on holiday. The Town Clerk said that he had not been made aware of any areas that were not cleaned. Cllr Biernis said that Rose Lane had not been cleaned and that bins were overflowing. The Town Clerk will write to CBC with these comments.

Page 2: Cllr Mrs M Russell asked that paragraph 18, the word "is" please be changed to "are".
Cllr Mrs M Russell also asked that the minutes be printed double-side to save on costs.

Item 11 a Page 7: Cllr G Wilson continues to pursue a meeting with the Police; this has proved difficult to arrange due to police restructuring. Cllr Mrs H Ramsay and Cllr G Wilson will liaise in order to write to the Chief Constable with a further request.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**a. CB/15/02164/FULL – 4 Eagle Farm Road, Biggleswade**

Single storey 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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

b. CB/15/02282/FULL – 11 Warren Close, Biggleswade

First floor side and 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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

CB/15/02229/FULL – 18 Drove Road, Biggleswade

Single storey rear/side 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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

d. CB/15/02278/FULL – Holmegate, Sheep Walk, Langford Road, Biggleswade

Ground floor side extension to an existing bungalow following the line of the existing roof pitch.

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

e. CB/15/02243/FULL – 12 Kitelands Road

Extension to garden fence and gates.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council strongly **OBJECT** to this application on the grounds that it blocks the sight line, encroaches the footpath and is an unacceptable safety hazard.

To ask CBC Ward Councillors to call the application in, if Officers are minded to approve.

f. CB/15/02287/ADV – 20 Market Square

Advertisement: installation of 1 No. internally illuminated fascia and 1 No. internally illuminated projecting sign.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council strongly **OBJECT** to this application as the lighting is inappropriate for the Biggleswade Conservation area.

g. CB/15/01970/FULL – Land at Shuttleworth Court

Construction of 7 two bed houses, 1 three bed house and 2 two bed elderly persons bungalows. Formation of access and associated parking modification of existing parking to provide additional spaces for existing Shuttleworth Court. External works comprising of landscaping to new area and modification to existing.

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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

However, the Members asked that CBC are made aware that our acceptance is for the plans as they currently stand, and the Council would need to be informed of any changes as this might affect the decision.

h. CB/15/02390/FULL – Stratton Business Park, Pegasus Drive, Biggleswade

Construction of new access road together with ancillary works

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

- i. **CB/15/02404/FULL – Land South of, Potton Road, Biggleswade**
New footpath to link temporary community centre car park (app ref: CB/14/00145/FULL) with new primary school for a maximum of 12 months until permanent school drop off facilities have been completed.

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

- j. **CB/15/02305/FULL – 1 Brunts Lane, Biggleswade**
First floor 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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

10. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. **Maunder Avenue footpath**

Cllr D Albone has requested an agenda item for Members to consider the lack of a footpath at Maunder Avenue.

Concerns have been raised that due to the lack of a footpath, Maunder Avenue has become hazardous for residents, wheelchairs, pushchairs and children en-route to school.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to Central Bedfordshire Council and request that a footpath be put in place.

- b. **Proposed Emergency Temporary Road Closure at Potton Road, Biggleswade**

Central Bedfordshire Council have requested a Proposed Emergency Temporary Road Closure at Potton Road to enable Gas connection works to be carried out safely.

Central Bedfordshire Council are looking for permission to be granted to use the road stated within the diversion map attached as a diversion route.

It was felt that this work should be delayed until the Eastern Relief Road has been completed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to Central Bedfordshire Council to put forward our views.

- c. **Community Engagement Day Biggleswade Evaluation 2015**

Please find documents attached.

This was **NOTED**

- d. **Canoes on the River Ivel**

For Members to consider an email request from the Secretary of the Ivel Protection Association regarding canoes being launched from Biggleswade Mill.

It was felt that the river is a shared asset and the Council have no concerns that it is not being managed appropriately by either anglers or canoeists.

It was however agreed that the river is not in a good condition and would benefit greatly from dredging.

- e. **River Safety at the weir by Biggleswade Mill**

Cllr B Briars has requested an agenda item for Members to consider river safety at the weir by Biggleswade Mill.

Cllr B Briars requested an additional lifebuoy to be placed on the river bank level with the end of the recreation ground. This was seconded by Cllr Bond. Cllr Briars also said that weeds have reduced the river to half of its width which has made it untidy, dangerous and a flood risk. Lack of dredging can also cause flooding. This is an additional reason for the request to Environment Agency to dredge the river and conduct an impact assessment.

Discussion also took place as to whether a half-ladder would be beneficial at that end of the river. However it was felt that might be more of an encouragement than a deterrent.

Cllr B Briars suggested that the Council connect with "Wills Fund" which is the charity set up following the drowning incident, as they could provide valuable input.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council install an additional lifebuoy.

It was **RESOLVED** that a strong letter be written to the Environment Agency with a request for dredging and an Impact Assessment on the proposed closures of all man-made structures (including weirs) on the River Ivel.

11. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Central Bedfordshire Council Footpath Orders – Footpaths 39 and 58**

Copies of the orders attached.

The Members would like clarification of the reasons for these orders. Cllr B Rix asked if it is possible to look at joining the footpath from point A to footpath 49.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to Central Bedfordshire Council with these comments

b. **East Coast Main Line level crossing closure feasibility study**

Please find attached an update from Network Rail, setting out the project status and revised approach to on the East Coast Main Line as of 22nd June 2015.

This was **NOTED**

c. **Re-modelling of the Household Waste Recycling Centres**

Information attached on the works being carried out at the Biggleswade Household Waste Recycling Centre and an invitation for representation from the Town Council to attend the reopening ceremony.

The information states that there will be alternative arrangements in place whilst this work is carried out. Cllr D Albone asked if we can obtain clarification of the alternative arrangements before the work is started. Cllr B Rix asked if the new facility would alleviate the problem of queuing from the A1, as this is something the Council are often unfairly blamed for.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to ask for this information.

d. **Biggleswade Joint Committee**

The Minutes attached are a draft copy for information.

Cllr Mrs M Russell referred to page 3, Stratton Street Bridge closure, and expressed concerns that the closure was reported as being from Christmas to April. Cllr Russell has been in contact with Mr Paul Mason at Central Bedfordshire Council to ask for details of his press release. However this is not yet ready for publication.

Councillors voiced concerns that Biggleswade will in fact suffer for at least three months and they found this timescale to be unacceptable. They asked what alternatives had been proposed, such as a bus service to another station, help for disabled passengers, and the installation of a bailey bridge as a temporary measure.

It was also suggested that our local MP, Alistair Burt, may be able to influence this project.

Cllr F Foster asked about the "pot of money" referred to in the Chairman's report and asked if some of this could be made available for the Market Square.

The Town Clerk is already following this up.

12. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

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

MOP1 asked for clarification as to why the police reports were not acceptable to the Council. Cllr G Wilson said that the reports of crime did not seem to be under the correct classification and were therefore not giving a true picture of crime in Biggleswade. This information could be misleading for the public, who may think we have more crime than we actually have.

MOP2 asked if we have dates for the closure of the Tidy Tip. We understand that this information will be notified in the press when the dates are available.

MOP3 thanked the Council for their support on the Splash Park.

13. 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.

Agenda Item (14a)

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