

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BIGGLESWADE JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 APRIL 2016 – 10.00AM IN ROOM 13
AT CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
PRIORY HOUSE, MONKS WALK, CHICKSANDS, SHEFFORD SG175TQ

PRESENT:

Cllr M Jones	Deputy Leader CBC (Chair)
Cllr Mrs J Lawrence	Cllr CBC
Cllr D Lawrence	Cllr CBC
Mr P Fraser	CBC
Mr M Williams	CBC
Cllr Mrs M Russell	Cllr BTC
Cllr Mrs H Ramsay	Cllr BTC
Cllr B Briars	Cllr BTC
Cllr T Woodward	Cllr CBC
Mr M Thomas	Biggleswade Chamber of Trade
Mr R McGregor	Town Clerk, BTC
Mrs J Durn	Administrator, BTC

Also present:

Cllr I Bond	Substitute Member.
Cllr M Foster	Substitute Member.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies

2. MEMBERS INTERESTS

To receive from members any declarations and the nature in relation to:

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item: None received
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item: None received

3. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

To receive questions from members on items not already included on the agenda. Questions should relate to the terms of reference of the Joint Committee and be submitted at least two working days before the meeting.

There were no questions.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received and approved the minutes of the BJC held on 27 January 2016.

5. **MATTERS ARISING**

Matters arising from the minutes of the BJC held on 27 January 2016.

Page 3, item 8: Regarding signage in the town. BTC Councillors are concerned that signage is misleading and confusing. The “High Street Closed” sign is not followed by “Shops Open”, thus giving the impression to drivers that both the High Street and its’ shops are closed.

There are also concerns over further diversionary signs on the outskirts of town which are effectively re-routing people to Sandy as it gives the impression that Biggleswade is closed.

ACTION: The Chairman asked for a separate meeting to be held as soon as possible between CBC Traffic Management and BTC, to discuss an urgent review of signage.

6. **CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The Market Town bid was submitted. However, information regarding the outcome was only received yesterday, and unfortunately the timing did not allow for it to be brought to the agenda for discussion at this meeting.

ACTION: The Chairman will arrange a separate meeting to discuss this item

7. **STRATTON STREET BRIDGE UPDATE**

Mr M Williams gave an update:

Work is progressing well and although still weather dependent, is currently on schedule for completion in June. Updates will continue on a weekly basis.

Cllr Briars asked if it would be possible for a pedestrian access across the bridge. Mr Williams will look into this and report back.

Biggleswade Carnival organisers have been in touch with the Town Clerk. The bridgeworks will obviously cause a major obstruction to the Carnival route which historically takes place in June. It has therefore been suggested that the date for the Carnival be moved to July. Liaison has taken place between the Carnival Organisers and CBC.

Following this update Mr Williams left the meeting.

Item 10 was taken at this point

10. BIGGLESWADE ON STREET PARKING

Mr C Proto gave an update:

CBC are in the process of early discussions with BTC regarding car parking enforcement in Biggleswade. Meetings will be ongoing in order to discuss how to best utilise the space available.

Cllr Russell said that the Biggleswade Parking Strategy has provided valuable information on parking requirements, and includes the introduction of permits for both residents and workers in the town. Commuter parking continues to be a problem.

It was noted that the Birds Estate was not included for any action, but that it would continue to be monitored for the future.

ACTION: The Chairman asked Mr Proto to present a report at the next meeting

Following this update Mr Proto left the meeting.

The Agenda followed on with item 8

8. LAND EAST OF BIGGLESWADE PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

Mr P Fraser gave an update:

Following on from information given at our last meeting by Lisa White, CBC Regeneration Team, Mr Fraser reported that discussions have been taking place with Beds FA who have expressed an interest running the Biggleswade football sites, and providing a 3G pitch together with directional lighting focussed directly on the pitch in accordance with current guidelines. The pitch will be sited 150m from the nearest housing. There are still some issues such as transport and parking to be addressed, and it is understood that they will be discussing these with the Town Clerk.

Concerns were voiced regarding the length of the lease and its effect on the future maintenance and running of the football sites. Mr Fraser confirmed that it is intended to negotiate a 125 year lease to cover this. He will also broker a meeting between the Town Clerk and the appropriate person at Beds FA in order to discuss the remaining public open spaces.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence asked that the Minutes record her request that the issue of fencing to adequately separate the site from the nearby school also be addressed.

9. LAND EAST OF BIGGLESWADE COMMUNITY HALL

Mr Fraser informed Members that on the 5th April CBC had taken the decision to formally hand over the Community Hall to Biggleswade Town Council. It was agreed that this is a very welcome and valuable asset to the community.

Following a final survey for legal purposes, it is intended that the Community Hall will be handed over as soon as possible.

Item 10 was taken earlier

11. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Mr M Thomas asked that, given the delays on the bridgework and the effect this has had on trade in the town, would CBC give consideration to re-marketing Biggleswade.

Members asked if there was any news on the Transport Interchange. The Chairman has no further update at present, but will be placing this on the next Agenda.

Cllr Mrs M Russell asked if a more strategic look can be taken on plans for the town. BTC would like CBC to put on the table exactly what plans are in the pipeline for Biggleswade, and what will be the impact on the town. It was agreed that this would be progressed.

The Chairman will circulate dates for the following meeting

Dates now received:

Wednesday 20th July – 10.00am – Room PH14

Wednesday 26th October – 10.00am – Room PH15

Wednesday 25th January 2017 – 10.00am – Room PH15

Wednesday 26th April 2017 – 10.00am – Room PH15