

MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2016
AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD BIGGLESWADE

PRESENT:

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay (Chair)
Cllr I Bond
Cllr Mrs M Russell
Cllr M North
Cllr S Watkins
Cllr M Foster
Cllr D Albone (Vice Chair)
Cllr B Briars
Cllr F Foster
Cllr T Woodward joined the meeting at 7.05pm

Mr M Thorn – Biggleswade Deputy Town Clerk
Mrs J Durn – Meetings Clerk, Biggleswade Town Council

6 Members of Public
1 Member of Press from 7.20pm to 7.25pm

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr P Biernis, Cllr G Wilson, Cllr B Rix, Cllr D Strachan.

2. ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGIES

Cllr Ms R Kerfoot

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item: Cllr M North, Item 9a.

4. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

On Saturday 19 March the Mayor attended Biggleswade Cubs Gang Show
On Saturday 19 March the Deputy Mayor attended East Beds Concert Band Easter Concert at the Biggleswade Academy.

5. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no Members questions.

6. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask questions that are pertaining to matters listed on this agenda. Members of the public will be allowed one three-minute slot.

There were no questions from Members of the Public.

7. INVITED SPEAKER

Mr Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director responsible for Housing Services at Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) attended the meeting to answer questions relating to a proposed Gypsy and Traveller site in the Biggleswade South ward on Dunton Lane. Mr Keaveney provided the following outline for publication in the Minutes:

It was explained that CBC has recently submitted a planning application for 10 permanent pitches and 2 transit pitches. His role in promoting the site is separate from the process to assess and determine the Planning application. The assessment process will be robust. Consideration will be given to whether the location is suitable and sustainable. The Planning application will be determined by CBC Development Management Committee. He advised that he will not be involved in deciding whether the application is approved. His role is to deliver and manage the site.

Should the application be approved, works to construct the site are likely to commence in October 2016 and be completed in late 2017, with occupation of the site early in 2018. The proposed designs were presented and Members were advised that site will be constructed to a good standard. This will include a soil bund and fence to the perimeter of the site, which will be planted to screen the site. The screening will complement the existing trees that define the eastern boundary. Images were presented of the recently refurbished site at Slip End, which illustrates the standard and design that is envisaged for the new site at Biggleswade South.

Town Council were assured that the site will be well managed, on the basis that time taken to build good relationships, respect for the residents and dealing with problems at the first sign was the key to successful site management. Although it was acknowledged there are issues at the Potton site, it was stressed that it is not the CBC's intention to move any residents from the Potton site to the new site at Biggleswade South. In addition, in re-opening the Slip End site in January 2015, the focus had been on creating a new community, where residents had respect for CBC's investment that has created a high quality environment. For this reason, references and background checks had been undertaken to ensure that new residents were likely to make a positive contribution to creating a new community. The same approach is envisaged for the occupation of this new site, should Planning permission be granted.

Planned provision of high quality, well managed sites is the best way to ensure positive relationships and mutual respect between the settled community and the Gypsy and Traveller community. Members were advised that the CBC believed a planned and proactive approach to the provision of new pitches is the best way forward. A substantial number of pitches have been approved across Central Bedfordshire, generally as a result of expansion of existing sites and often following planning appeals to the Secretary of State. The Biggleswade South site had been chosen recognising there is a tension between an edge of settlement location, and the often expressed preference of the Gypsy and Traveller community and also the settled community, for there to be more separation between housing development and sites. For this reason, the proposed location is a compromise. The location is sustainable, enabling residents to access services and facilities in Biggleswade. Yet, the proposed site is not cheek by jowl with housing development occupied by the settled community.

8. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Following the addition of Cllr S Watkins on the attendance list, Members received and approved the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8th March 2016 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 meeting held on 15th March 2016 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade, as follows:

Heather Drive Play Area:

- It was **RESOLVED** to accept Quote A for £26,000.00.

Franklin Recreation Ground Swing Frame:

- It was **RESOLVED** to accept Quote A for £4,903.44

PLOS Walkabouts

The Deputy Town Clerk will circulate a list of suggested dates for 2016.

9. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8th March 2016.

There were no Matters Arising.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/00865/FULL - 10 Dells Lane, Biggleswade**

Part single part two storey extension to rear and two storey extension to the side.

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.

- b. **CB/16/00876/VOC – Land off Edworth Road, Langford**

Removal/ Variation of conditions on Planning Application Ref: CB/13/02288/FULL dated 18/12/13. Removal of condition No5: The improved access onto Edworth Road shall be reconstructed in accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan dated November 2013 for a distance of 15m measured from the carriageway edge of the highway boundary. These works shall be carried out within 6 months of the completion of the development. Vary the wording of condition No9 to read: The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Timetable for Landscaping Implementation received 28th October 2014 and approved 24th November 2014.

Vary the wording of condition No11 to read: The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Noise assessment received 28th October and approved 24th November 2014.

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

- c. **CB/15/04768/FULL – 67 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade**

Redevelopment of the site for 52 retirement apartments and houses for the elderly with associated communal facilities, parking and landscaping.

Amendments to this application have been received.

Revised plans A1-501 rev 04, A1-402 rev 03, A1-401 rev 06, A1-111 rev 10, A1-101 rex 08 and A1-001 rev 12.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Application. However, Town Council wish to raise concerns over parking provision.

- d. **CB/16/00229/FULL – 51 Boddington Gardens, Biggleswade (REVISED)**

Demolition of existing garage and the erection of 2 No. 1 bedroom bungalows.

In addition to the previous revisions dated 08.03.16, revised site layout plans 04a & 05a have been received on 15.03.16 which results in the relocation of both proposed units a further 1 metre back from the proposed access.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this Application on the grounds of over-development, access and impact on neighbours.

- e. **CB/16/00957/FULL – 9 Aston Croft, Biggleswade**

Single storey rear 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.

- f. **CB/16/00779/FULL – 136 Shortmead Street, Biggleswade**
Change of Use: Conversion of disused bakery to form additional living space for existing 1st & 2nd floor 3-bedroom flat.
- It was **RESOLVED** to raise concerns over lack of parking. Town Council request further information as to whether there is adequate parking provision at the rear of the property.
- g. **CB/16/00860/FULL – Land at Dunton Lane, Biggleswade**
New use of land as new traveller site incorporating 10 permanent pitches with studio buildings, 2 transit pitches with studio buildings, a site manager's office and sewage treatment plant.
- Following presentation by Tony Kearney Town Council **RESOLVED** to raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Application.
- h. **CB/16/01027/FULL – 35 – 39 The Baulk, Biggleswade**
Change of use from Doctors Surgery to 3 No. domestic dwellings.
- It was **RESOLVED** to raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Application.
- i. **CB/16/00611/FULL – 65 Laburnham Road, Biggleswade**
One dwelling with garage.
- It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Application **on condition that this is a 2-bedroom property**, and 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.
- j. **CB/15/04057/FULL – Cherry Trees, Kitelands Road, Biggleswade**
Change of use from residential institution (C2) to residential (C3) to create ten new flats.
- It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this Application.

11. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

Members received the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 29th February 2016.
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 29th February 2016.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council adopt the Accounts presented.

b. **Internal Audit Report 2015-16 (Interim Update)**

Members received the Internal Audit Report 2015-16 (Interim Update).

There are no issues arising from the Internal Audit Report and the Chairman asked that thanks be noted to all staff for their excellent work in achieving a high standard in all administrative areas.

12. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Local Authority Governor Vacancy at St Andrew's VC Lower School**

The Council have been contacted to request assistance in helping to recruit a new Local Authority (LA) Governor for St Andrew's VC Lower School Governing Body. There is currently a vacancy.

This information was **NOTED**. The Chairman asked that any councillors interested in this position should contact the School directly.

b. Central Bedfordshire Council – Local Plan & Call for Sites

Discussion took place on the site assessment criteria and submission form attached to the Agenda, and the implications on Biggleswade.

Cllr. Mrs M Russell spoke on this item, raising awareness of the implications on the future of Biggleswade. Concerns were raised, in particular over the increased threshold, which now has no upper limit on the number of homes. Members agreed that it is important for a Local Plan to be put in place as soon as possible.

c. Consultation on Central Bedfordshire Council's Environmental Framework

Central Bedfordshire Council is consulting on its Environmental Framework and have asked that Members view the consultation documentation on:

http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/environmental-framework_tcm3-12347.pdf

It was noted that consultation will run until the 19th April. It was agreed that Members will respond individually to the attached questionnaire.

d. Stratton Street Bridge – Updates

This weekend's work went well with repairs to the concrete being carried out and the entire centre span being lifted in too. This has mitigated some of the delay last weekend and we are planning to secure these slabs and install more this weekend. We are still due to be complete by the end of June subject to weather.

Next Update: 21st/22nd March

This information was **NOTED.**

13. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Planning application outcomes

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

Planning Application 16/00277/ADV London Road, A1 Retail Park Unit C1: BTC raised no objection to the first part of this application, however objection was raised to the second part (One additional sign located to the rear of the Unit facing the A1, halo-illuminated) on the grounds of the illumination facing the residential area, and the wrong information has been put forward. The Town Clerk will ensure that our objections are correctly recorded.

c. Former gasworks at St John's Street, Biggleswade – Work set to restart

Biggleswade Town Council have received notification from National Grid to inform us that the electrical cable, that stopped National Grid from completing their work in January, is scheduled to be disconnected by the local distribution network on Thursday 10th March.

Once the cable has been disconnected, the contractors expect to return to site on Monday 16 March. It is anticipated that the remainder of the work will take approximately three weeks to finish. National Grid will use monitoring equipment to make sure that any noise, dust, vibration or odour stays within reasonable working levels. Their traffic management plan will ensure that all deliveries to the site are made safely and efficiently.

This information was **NOTED.**

14. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask questions. Members of the public will be allowed one three-minute slot.

There were no questions from members of the public.

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 is discussed.

Exempt Items (15 a. Minutes).

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.