

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT
THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr H Ramsay (Chair)
Cllr D Albone (Vice Chair)
Cllr F Foster
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr M Russell
Cllr T Woodward
Cllr I Bond
Cllr B Rix
Cllr B Briars
Cllr G Wilson
Cllr M North

Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Mike Thorn – Deputy Town Clerk
Michaela Beckwith – Minute Taker

Sian Farrier, Principal Planning Officer, CBC Local Planning Team – Invited Speaker

5 Members of Public

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr P Biernis, Cllr M Foster and Cllr R Kerfoot.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

- (a) There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item
(b) Non-pecuniary interests were declared by;
7b – Cllr T Woodward
9a – Cllr M North
11c – Cllr B Briars and Cllr T Woodward

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr H Ramsay attended the History Society Heritage Open Day on the 12th September.
Cllr H Ramsay attended the Ladies Circle 55th Anniversary Celebration on the 19th September
Cllr S Watkin and Cllr H Ramsay attended the Fire Engine Pull on the 20th September 2015.

4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

The following was asked:

Is there a maintenance programme in place for the footpath from Eagle Farm Road to Kings Reach?
Who is responsible for the footpath through the Spinney?

The Town Clerk will look into this.

5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no questions from the members of public.

6. INVITED SPEAKER

Sian Farrier, Principal Planning Officer, CBC Local Planning Team will give a short presentation on how to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

Sian Farrier explained that the Neighbourhood Plan can influence CBC decisions as it will carry the same weight as their own procedures and is more recognised than a Town Centre Masterplan. When planning

applications are decided upon, the Neighbourhood Plan will be looked at to make sure the application is in line with what the Town Council have requested in the Neighbourhood Plan. Thus, the Council can request how they would like buildings to look within the town.

She was asked if the Neighbourhood Plan could provide the right to compulsory purchase land involved in the Neighbourhood Plan. Sian Farrier said that she would find out.

Sian Farrier elaborated on what green space meant. It is almost as strong as green belt land but there are specific requirements. It wouldn't cover such areas like the Biggleswade Common as this is a large area and is already protected.

She explained that the independent examination would be performed by someone who has a background in planning and a professional qualification within the community.

CBC will help the Town Council in putting the Neighbourhood Plan together and help to ensure things are on track.

Sian Farrier explained that the other towns and parishes within Bedfordshire, who had begun to embark on the process to put together a Neighbourhood Plan, had not yet got to the referendum or adoption stages yet. However, there is a website which she will pass on to the Town Council which lists other towns and parishes which have passed these stages.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received and **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8th September 2015 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. Members received the Recommendations of the Public Lands and Open Spaces meeting held on 15th September 2015 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Proposed Public Arts Feature and Seating at Dan Albone Car Park

Members considered a request from Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity for the installation of a Public Arts Feature and Seating at Dan Albone Car Park.

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

b. 66th Biggleswade Sports Meeting – 9 July 2016

Town Council has received correspondence from Biggleswade Sports to advise that they plan to hold their 66th Annual Sports Meeting on Saturday 9 July 2016 commencing at 12.00, midday, at Fairfield Sports Ground. Biggleswade Cricket Club Secretary has agreed to the date. They are requesting permission to use the Sports Ground as well as the Pavilion and Toilets.

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

c. Biggleswade Splash Park Committee

Members considered the following two matters:

- 1) To use Franklin Recreation Ground as a site for a Splash Park
- 2) For the Town Council to adopt the Splash Park once built.

Cllrs were reminded that regarding item 2) a resolution to support a splash park in principle had already been made at a previous meeting

If the Splash Park was to be at Franklins, it could help to rejuvenate the town and attract people into town as well as bring more parking as there is land to the side of the proposed location. However, it was argued that Council do not know who owns the land for parking and if it is for sale. Also the survey of the land which has already been carried out should be looked at dubiously as it cannot be thorough as they have not taken samples of the soil, plus the area is a

floodplain so will bring silt into the area of the splash pan and the equipment in place that would be needed to operate the splash pan when flooding occurs. In addition to this, the previous paddling pool which was previously sited there attracted a lot of vandalism as it is on the edge of town out of the way. It was believed that the Splash Park should be up at the Kings Reach site as the Town Council will have the opportunity to adopt a large amount of land there. There was also concern over the complexity of the plans of the Splash Park. If plans were simplified it would cost less.

Overall it was voiced that more details and a business plan was needed in order to make a decision on both matters.

It was proposed that standing orders are suspended to allow the members of the Splash Park Committee, who attended as members of public, to talk to the Council, giving them more details. This proposal was seconded. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that standing orders would not be suspended to allow the committee members of the Splash Park to talk.

It was proposed that the recommendation is to be amended to read, It was recommended that Franklins Recreation Ground should be considered to be used for the Splash Park subject to a satisfactory survey outcome paid for by Town Council and appropriate parking plans are submitted by the Splash Park Committee. This proposal was seconded.

It was **RESOLVED** that Franklin Recreation Ground should be considered to be used for the Splash Park subject to a satisfactory survey outcome, paid for by the Town Council and appropriate parking plans are submitted by the Splash Park Committee.

It was proposed that this item is deferred until there is the opportunity for the Splash Park Committee to present a business plan.

It was **RESOLVED** that the item is deferred until the Splash Park Committee is able to attend a Council to present a business plan with further information.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8th September 2015 the following points were made:

It was asked if item 9f had been called in. To which the response was yes.

It was also highlighted that a member of the public who attended a previous meeting had emailed the Clerk his objections to item 9f but had received no reply. The Town Clerk said that he had received the email and forwarded it to the appropriate people at CBC.

9 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/15/03221/FULL – 77 Dells Lane, Biggleswade**

Loft conversion, including raising existing ridge.

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/15/02943/M2 – Former quarry plant site, Warren Villas Quarry, New Road, Sandy**

Change of use of land to an inert waste recycling centre by screening and crushing and construction of five associated 3.5 metre-high acoustic bunds plus retrospective change of use of land to a mix of fishing and nature conservation uses with associated engineering operations to create fishing swims.

Please note the above is situated on the southern end boundary of Biggleswade Common.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application.

c. **CB/15/03226/REG3 – Stratton Business Park, Pegasus Drive, Biggleswade**

Infrastructure works associated with expansion of Business Park, including service roads, surface water and foul water sewers.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECT** to this planning application on the grounds that full details of the overall plan of the site have not been received, the build could damage archaeological finds and it will impede access to the countryside for residents.

d. **CB/15/03025/FULL – 16 Brunswick Close, 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 principle dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

e. **CB/15/03038/FULL – 1 Bittern Drive, Biggleswade**

Side and rear ground floor extension.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application.

f. **CB/15/03258/VOC – Land South Potton Road, Biggleswade (Revised Plans)**

Variation of Condition 24 of planning permission **CB/13/03494/FULL** (51 dwellings, mixed use A1, A2, A3, B1 and B2, care home and community dwelling) revised layout to care home with revised plans.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application.

g. **CB/15/03321/FULL – 55 The Baulk, Biggleswade**

Demolition of existing dilapidated two storey timber storage building. Proposed replacement two storey oak framed garage with storage over.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application.

h. **CB/15/03334/FULL – 8 & 9 Railway View, Lawrence Road, Biggleswade**

Conversion of part commercial storage building and yard to 3 No residential flats with parking.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application.

i. **CB/15/03377/VOC – Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade**

Variation of Condition 20 of planning **CB/14/01181/VOC**: to allow up to 15% (77 sq m) of floor space within Unit K to be use for the sale of food and drink.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECT** to this planning application on the grounds of the application contradicts the planning conditions relating to the sale of food and drink on the premises and if granted it will create a future precedence for similar applications to be granted.

10. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

For members received and **ADOPTED** the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31st August 2015.
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31st August 2015.

11. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Bedfordshire Constabulary

Members to received Crime Figures from Bedfordshire Police.

Cllr G Wilson has had no response from Sgt Kidd although he is aware that his letters have been received. Therefore, he is to go back to Inspector Clarke.
He also said that he had not heard what is to happen to the Station at Biggleswade.

b. Neighbourhood Plan

Members considered producing a Neighbourhood Plan although when the Council agreed to arrange a speaker on this issue they agreed to not make a decision until they had had time to consider it. It was suggested that a speaker should be invited to a council meeting who can talk from experience on what happens after the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council should defer this item to the next Council meeting in order to give time to look at the websites mentioned by Sian Farrier as well as the PowerPoint slides from Sian Farrier's presentation.

c. Proposed Amalgamation of The Lawns Nursery School and Children's Centre with Biggleswade Academy Trust

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk is to write expressing Biggleswade Town Council's full support of the Proposed Amalgamation of The Lawns Nursery School and Children's Centre with Biggleswade Academy Trust

d. Works to trees within a Conservation Area: Prune 3 Arbutus (Strawberry Trees) to the side of the parking area and along the eastern boundary of the garden of 21 London Road Location: Land at 1 Barn Field Close, Biggleswade

Biggleswade Town Council had no comments on this item.

12. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Planning application outcomes

The report detailing the outcome of recent planning applications was noted.

b. Updates

1. London Road – Bridge Works

The Council were disappointed in the response received as the communication of the bridge works has been poor. CBC have known about the works for at least three years and only notified the Town Council nine months ago.

However, it was noted that CBC have been working with Network Rail in this time to try and reduce the impact. It's not just Biggleswade that will be effected it is the whole train line. Network Rail wanted seven million pounds in order to provide a time earlier than Easter to close the train line.

It was requested that an item is to be put on the next agenda to invite Cllr Spur and Cllr M Jones to provide evidence of what CBC have done to mitigate Network Rail.

It was asked how the bridge will be open between Christmas and Easter if a temporary bridge will not be in place.

Cllr T Woodward had received information from CBC that the bridge will be taken away and replaced in the two day closure over Christmas. There will then be intervals of work carried out over the four months to secure the bridge. Therefore, it will not be closed the whole time.

There was further discussion that CBC had not communicated this information to the Town Council as they were last told that getting the new bridge in place within the Christmas works time frame would not be possible.

2. Crown Inn
The update was noted.
3. Parking Consultation – No Update
4. Eastern Relief Road – Cllrs were informed that the developers had confirmed an opening date of October 2015

c. Christmas Fair

It was noted that the Biggleswade Christmas Fair and Light Switch On event will take place on Friday 20th November 2015.

13. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no questions from the members of public.

14. 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.

Agenda Item (15a) Minutes of meetings

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.