

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 JULY 2014 AT THE
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr Mrs H Ramsay (Chair), Cllr I Bond, Cllr M North, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr G Wilson,
Cllr T Woodward, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr P Biernis, Cllr D Albone,
Cllr B Briars
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant
Chief Inspector Tania Coulson – Bedfordshire Police
Laura Hutchinson – Biggleswade Chronicle
Members of the public - 15

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs W Smith and Cllr B Rix

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – non declared
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – Cllr D Lawrence declared an interest in item 7b.

3. TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Town Mayors announcements.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that she would merge item 4 with item 5 (Invited Speaker) to allow Chief Inspector Coulson to answer questions from members of the public.

MOP 1 said that the Accounts received at the last Council meeting were very detailed, and asked why there weren't any with this agenda.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay replied that the Accounts are produced every month.

The Town Clerk confirmed that they are available for inspection at the Town Council office up to 11th July 2014, and can be viewed by appointment.

MOP 1 asked the Chief Inspector what is going to be done about the parking problems and dangerous parking in the Dells Lane/ Tennyson Avenue/ Chaucer Avenue area.

Chief Inspector Coulson replied that the Team based in Biggleswade are aware of the issues. Dangerous and obstructive parking are Police matters, anything else is dealt with by CBC and Highways, and she has asked Sgt Gary Kidd and team to focus on this area.

Sgt G Kidd and the Biggleswade Community Safety Group, carried out a survey on Dells Lane on 3 July 2014 from 7am to 1pm – 5 vehicles were found to be speeding, all prosecuted, 44mph the highest. There were no vehicles parking illegally that day.

PCSO's and members of the Biggleswade CSG were engaged outside Biggleswade train station advising commuters regarding illegal/inappropriate parking in the area surrounding the station, with 180 leaflets distributed.

PCSO's and Biggleswade CSG engaged with residents in Dells Lane. 35 addresses were visited and all residents were issued with Crime Prevention Advice Packs. A total of 14 residents were engaged with vast majority of those highlighting the problem with vehicles parked on the street, a couple of residents mentioned noise from the nearby pub.

Between 11.50am – 12.46pm PCSO's and Biggleswade CSG were engaged in Community Speed Watch in Holme Court Avenue. 59 cars were observed and none were speeding.

TC then read out a breakdown of reported injury related Road Traffic Collisions in Biggleswade between **01/06/2013 to 31/05/2014**. During this period there were **25** reported injury related RTC

A1 (North and South bound) = **8** London Road = 3 (2 of which occurred close the A1 roundabout)

Potton Road = **3** Dells Lane = 1 Other locations = **10**

There are 2 RTC injury incidents that fall within the area of concern (London Road, Dells Lane and Holme Court Avenue)

MOP 1 said that he appreciated the findings on that day but the statistics show that Tennyson Avenue often has vehicles parked on the left, blocking the view onto Dells Lane, cars park opposite and on the corner of Dells Lane. It's only a matter of time before there is an accident. The Police need to stop dangerous parking.

TC replied that she understood that this causes immense frustration, but if the area is not restricted, people will park there.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that Town Council has asked for a TRO for the area, but CBC are unwilling to implement until the Town has a Parking Strategy in place, which we are still waiting for CBC to complete.

Meanwhile the station car park remains 40% full, because many of the commuters think it's too expensive. She has seen for herself illegally parked cars on corners and opposite junction. Some cars had letters left on drivers' windows, but were not prosecuted, it's not enough. A few parking tickets would be good.

TC asked about the timescale for the Parking Strategy

MR replied that CBC had said the end of June, it is now 80% complete, so we hope it will be soon.

TC said that she will ask GK to co-ordinate looking at junctions.

HR said it would be good if the Police could be in Dells Lane when people are parking up in the morning, and asked TC to confirm that Specials have powers that the PCSO's do not. HR asked if the Chief Constable had considered authorising the PCSO's to deal with traffic infringements.

TC replied that the Police handed over enforcement to CBC and Highways, it sits with their Traffic Management Team. She confirmed that in Bedfordshire PCSO's role is that of a supportive role to the police officers engaged in Community engagement and did not include Traffic Management. She said that she would ask GK and his officers to try to monitor the area in the mornings.

MOP 2 said that he had been challenging the parking problems for 8 years. We now have long stay vehicles parking for 3 weeks, as well as Lorries going down the road. We are told it is down to cost, but why not put notices up?

TC said she will address these issues.

MOP 3 said that they cannot see to get out of their road.

Cllr P Biernis said that it is illegal to park within 10 metres of a junction, but this is happening every day in Dells Lane/Mead End, we need a decent parking strategy for the town.

TC replied that parking enforcement has moved to CBC but she will undertake to issue parking tickets where appropriate.

Cllr D Albone said that if PCSO's role is Community Engagement, do they have powers to ticket?

TC replied Specials - yes, PCSO's – no.

Cllr G Wilson said that before this was handed over to the Highways Agency, the Police must have liaised with CBC?

TC said that she could not comment as she had not been involved at that time and therefore didn't know the format of any discussions, but she thought there would have been some agreement.

GW asked if it is possible for the Police to write to CBC re the parking problems in Dells Lane.

TC replied that as CBC was also involved maybe the Town Council could do that.

MR asked if the Police could reinforce what Town Council is saying, and write to CBC about getting on with it.

TC said they have tried to work in partnership with CBC.

MOP 4 asked about Traffic Wardens and what they can do. People park in Station Road for as long as they like.

MR replied that CBC has limited enforcement. We already have TRO in Dells Lane, to limit parking to 1 hour on one side and 1 hour on the other side. There is already an application with CBC for a further TRO. Enforcement was divided, CBC deal with on street parking and Town Council deal with off street parking.

Clr Mrs J Lawrence said that instead of Parking Wardens, there is a van that goes round with a camera on top, to enforce yellow lines and 1 hour parking etc.

MOP 5 said that they don't do a very good job as he had not seen pictures being taken or any tickets on windscreens.

Clr T Woodward said that the parking is recorded on film and the tickets were issued through the post so there is no way of knowing if a ticket has been issued or not. The Parking Strategy is with CBC at the moment, once it has been put together, it will give an overview of all parking.

MOP 3 said the people are even driving from Saxon Gate to park near the Station.

Clr T Woodward said that is why Town Council is looking at the whole town, off street and on street.

MOP 1 said that he knows Town Council has limited resources, but could the CBC camera car come to Dells Lane?

HR replied that the van is only authorised to film in areas with parking restrictions. The Police are doing research, CBC and Town Council are working together on a Parking Strategy, there is nothing else for tonight.

MR said there will be a full public consultation. Lots of modelling is being done by CBC, once the Parking Strategy has been agreed by both Councils, there will be a public consultation.

HR said the Parking Strategy consultation would either be in the Town Council chamber to view or in the Library, or both.

MOP 6 asked what is the normal timeframe for implementation.

MR replied that she couldn't really say.

HR said that in view of the CBC originally wanting a strategy in place by 30 June and delay would be kept to a minimum.

HR said that the Police are doing their research, the CBC and Town Council are working together on a Parking Strategy, which was due to be completed soon. The Council was aware of the seriousness of the situation and were working hard on behalf of the residents to resolve these issues.

HR thanked Chief Inspector Coulson for attending the meeting.

9 Members of the Public left the meeting at 7.45pm

6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Clr P Biernis said that the Exempt Items list seems to have grown, the Local Government legislation states certain items only should be exempt.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that 3 items is not excessive, the Town Clerk draws up the Agenda, if Cllrs have any queries they need to take up the matter with the Town Clerk when the Agenda is issued, prior to the meeting.

PB started to list the exempt items on the Agenda. Cllr objected on a point of order. HR said that exempt items would not be discussed in full Council.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 June 2014 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Page 5 – paragraph 1 - Cllr D Lawrence asked that the first line be amended to read ‘Town Council currently have the same pattern of budgets each year’

Page 5 – Cllr D Albone said that he did not ‘propose’ to adopt the Accounts

Subject to the amendments – the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 June 2014 were adopted

- b. Members **approved the recommendation** of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 1 July 2014

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 - Statement of policy

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the draft policy produced at the meeting should be put before Biggleswade Town Council for adoption.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 June 2014

Page 1 - Cllr D Albone asked the traffic queues at the Tidy Tip were discussed at the Joint Committee meeting

Cllr Mrs M Russell replied that CBC Waste Management Team are looking at the layout of the tidy tip to see what improvements could be made.

Page 2 – Cllr B Briars asked if there was any update on the proposed work to the trees on the Market Square.

The Town Clerk said there is no update at the moment.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/14/02180/FULL – 47 Kitelands Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8NX**
Ground floor rear extension & ground/first floor extension to side.

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/14/02307/FULL - Holmegate, Sheep Walk, Langford Road, Biggleswade, SG18 9RB**
First floor extension & shiplap cladding to all external walls.

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.

c. CB/14/01868/FULL – 10 Lawrence Road, Biggleswade

Single and two storey side and rear extension – revised Plan 01 showing neighbouring property correctly situated.

The original plan was discussed by Town Council on 10 June 2014 when:

*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.*

This application was discussed again on 8 July 2014:

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.

d. CB/14/02181/FULL – Cherry Trees, Kitelands Road, Biggleswade

Construction of new vehicular access from the public highway and staff/visitor car park.

Cllr B Briars raised concerns regarding what the building is used for, also how much extra traffic would be using Kitelands Road and **proposed** that Town Council defer a decision until further information is received. There were also concerns that it was very close to an existing access road for Southlands School which was situated on the bend in Kitelands Road.

Cllr D Albone **seconded** this proposal. Therefore:

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **DEFER** a decision until more information is received regarding what the building is to be used for, any possible development on that site and how much extra traffic would be using Kitelands Road.

e. CB/14/01283/ADV – 8 High Street, Biggleswade

Advertisement: 3 New non illuminated signs.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council raise no objection to this application **PROVIDED** that the signs are **non illuminated** as stated on this planning application.

f. CB/14/02417/FULL – 2 Banks Road, Biggleswade

Two 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.

10. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy Publication Consultation and the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Submission to the Secretary of State

CBC are publishing the Development Strategy from **30 June 2014** for a period of eight weeks until **Tuesday 26 August** and are inviting Councils to express their views by taking part in the consultation.

More information about the document and the Publication stage is attached to this agenda.

The easiest way to have your say is online via: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/devstrat

You can also email your response form to LDF@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or by post to Freepost RSJS GBBZ SRZT, Development Strategy Consultation, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ

The documents are available to view on the Council Offices in Chicksands and Dunstable, the Customer Service Centres in Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard, and the main libraries across Central Bedfordshire.

On 23 June the **Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan**, supporting evidence and all comments received during the formal consultation stages were submitted to the Secretary of State, who will appoint an independent Planning Inspectorate to review all of the consultation feedback and determine whether the Plan is sound and legally compliant.

The Independent Planning Inspectorate will hold an Examination in Public in Autumn 2014. Individuals who made objections and sought changes to the document during the formal consultation and requested to attend the hearings, will be invited to attend the hearing sessions to present their argument to the Planning Inspector verbally. For those who do not wish to attend the hearing sessions, the Planning Inspector will still consider their written comments. All comments, whether made in writing or verbally at the hearings, will carry the same weight.

For more information about the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan or to view the Submission document please visit: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/gypsytraveller plan](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/gypsytravellerplan)

Alternatively, copies of the Submission documents can be viewed at the Council Offices in Chicksands and Dunstable.

If you have any queries about the Development Strategy or the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan please contact the LDF Team by phone on 0300 300 4353 or email LDF@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Cllr D Lawrence **proposed** that Town Council object to Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan (site 55), on density and size, the plan does not take account of existing surrounding sites.

This was **seconded** by Cllr Mrs J Lawrence

A vote was taken:

7 voted in favour

4 abstained

Therefore:

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to CBC with Town Councils objections.

b. Request from Cllr G Wilson

Members were asked to consider a proposal from Cllr George Wilson in relation to financial assistance from Town Council towards the First World War Commemorations taking place on Biggleswade Market Square on Sunday 21 September 2014.

Cllr D Albone **proposed** that Town Council support the idea in principle of Financial Assistance, with the details to be finalised. This was **seconded** by Cllr Mrs H Ramsay.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that Town Clerk would be happy to go through the costings with Cllr G Wilson before the next Council meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council support the idea in principle of Financial Assistance, with the details to be finalised.

11. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. RNLI collection

Correspondence was received from the RNLI thanking Town Council for granting permission for them to carry out their Charity Collection on the Market Square. They collected £301.29, which will go towards supporting the Volunteer Lifeboat crews to save lives at sea.

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

12. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

MOP 6 asked if Town Council could go into more details of exempt items, as guidelines say minute and press notified. He asked could he have a list of decisions.

After Cllr Mrs H Ramsay had discussed this with the Town Clerk, the Clerk said that it was a reasonable request.

MOP 6 said that items are only commercially sensitive until decided, for instance, the purchase of Rose Lane car park. He cannot recall any item saying 'was on pink'

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay replied that each item is looked at individually

MOP 6 said that Town Council is not notifying the press.

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 Items 14a & 14b – Staff

14c - Contracts

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolved** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.