

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22 APRIL 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 Mrs M Russell, Cllr M North, Cllr D Lawrence,  
Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr B Briars, Cllr P Biernis, Cllr D Albone, Cllr B Rix  
Louise Wilcox – Deputy Town Clerk  
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant  
Mary Davidson – MD Associates  
Nick Alford – LXB  
David Morton – Boots UK Limited  
Laura Hutchinson – Biggleswade Chronicle  
Members of the public - 4

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr T Woodward, Cllr S Watkins and Cllr G Wilson

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – none declared
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none declared

**3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that there is meeting on Friday 25 April between the Town Clerk, Jeanette Keyte (CBC), Cllr Mrs M Russell (Chair of TCM Committee) and the Police regarding the parking problems in Dells Lane, also to include a site visit.

**4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr D Albone asked if Town Council is aware of any plans to repair the track from Furzenhall Road to Furzenhall Farm.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that Town Council is not aware of any plans but the Town Clerk would investigate.

**5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no items discussed during the public open session.

**6. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY**

No Crime Figures were available but Cllr Mrs H Ramsay read out the following email from Inspector Vicki Evans, Bedfordshire Police:

‘Thank you for your letter regarding commuter parking issues in Biggleswade, and the request for Chief Inspector Coulson to attend a Town Council meeting. Chief Inspector Coulson would be delighted to attend. Her PA has been asked to look into which date is most suitable and will come back in due course.

In relation to the parking concerns you have raised, I completely understand that is causing great concerns. I believe Chief Inspector has discussed these matters during a meeting with Cllr G Wilson and advised on the Forces position. Chief Inspector Coulson will be happy to discuss with you further if the situation has changed since the last meeting.’

**7. INVITED SPEAKERS**

Mary Davidson – MD Associates and Nick Alford - LXB

MD gave a brief overview of timescales:

Phase 1: Construct acoustic barrier to northern boundary  
Construct new sub-station and decommission old

Build units D (Matalan),E,F,G1,G2 and H (TK Maxx). Leave Matalan & demolish unit 3. Retained structures subject to structural investigation.  
Construct plot S to house Halfords, Pets at Home, Bensons for Beds  
Demolition of unit 3 allows for delivery vehicles turning circle  
Construct new access off London Road  
Existing Homebase and Biggleswade Retail Park to continue trading

Phase 2: Build units A,B and C

Widening of Southern sector of London Road and formation of roundabouts  
Existing Homebase and Biggleswade Retail Park to continue trading with linkages to new retail areas.

Phase 3: Build units J,K,L,M and N

Extend existing Homebase to form unit P  
Final connection to new road network

Phase 4: Review of landscaping

Phase 5: Review of Highways

NA said that as units are let, there may be slight changes. The main contractor has been appointed and will start on Phase 1 in May and complete January 2015 Phase 1: Move Matalan, and building units D to H first. The sequencing of road works is approved with CBC, but would be delayed if other road closures are needed in the town, so there would be minimal disruption.

2015 -Phase 2: Units A, B and C to house Next. M&S and Boots

Phase 3 would include remodelling of the roundabout and merging car parks.

It is hoped to combine Phases 2 and 3, as CBC has stated that Phase 2 cannot be started unless able to move onto Phase 3 seamlessly.

Trees have had to be cut down before the nesting season, but will be replaced with semi-mature trees, creating an avenue of trees into Biggleswade. The irrigation system would also be in place.

MD said that the landscaping has been agreed with CBC Landscaping Officer.

NA presented a plan to Members showing planned accesses and dualling. Phase 3 will include widening existing roundabout tying into the dualling works.

MD advised that Plot S has now been divided into 3 units instead of 2, the floor space has not altered and are still above the minimum required. TK Maxx has asked for minor changes such as fire doors etc.

There have been small changes to the pumping station and irrigation.

NA said that as the scheme is let, there may be minor changes to doors, fire doors etc.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked about the Electricity supply.

MD replied that utilities should be supplied to individual units. Smaller electric boxes will be installed.

Cllr B Briars asked about where a shuttle bus would stop to take people to the Town Centre and where are the pedestrian crossings on the map.

NA replied that there were already crossing points on the map, at TK Maxx and further along. The shuttle bus would stop in front of units J & N. They will be paying CBC £200k to improve the bus service and will be paying money for Parking in the Town Centre at the same time.

MR said that the Parking Strategy is being developed. Town Council is working with CBC and Consultants and have paid for modelling to ensure viability. The issue will be discussed at Joint Committee meeting on Wednesday. CBC wants a transport interchange area, but there is no design at the moment.

NA said it would be useful for him to know the plans.

MR replied that the Parking Strategy is on Town Council website.

ClIr D Albone asked about noise from the irrigation pumping station affecting residents.

NA replied that they were holding a meeting with noise consultants, but the noise is no more than turning on a valve and just a hum from the pumping station.

ClIr H Ramsay asked if the walkways in car park would be raised as shown on the original plans.

NA replied that they are just looking into the actual design but that he would ensure that raised walkways were used as it would be safer.

ClIr D Lawrence asked if the Homebase site would be turned back into Industrial.

NA said that they are still waiting for Homebase to decide what they want. The CPO inquiry is putting pressure on them.

ClIr B Rix asked about signage as people come into the town and how would people know about the shuttle bus. At the moment the Biggleswade sign in the 3<sup>rd</sup> roundabout, it should be much sooner.

NA said that there will be information boards on the retail park to create linkage with the Town Centre.

ClIr D Albone asked if Boots are undertaking to maintain the town shop.

MD read out a letter from Boots UK Limited, part of which stated that 'in the event of Boots opening a new store on the A1 Shopping Park, the company would not look to close the town store in Biggleswade'

David Morton said that they would plan to keep both pharmacies to provide services. The Town Centre pharmacy is predominantly NHS from the Doctors surgeries, as they are close together. The new pharmacy would not take business away from the Town Centre. There are certain products that can't be sold without pharmacy status, such as Benylin or Calpol, and it is about being able to provide a service. People see Boots and expect to buy certain products.

ClIr Mrs J Lawrence said that Town Council was very specific that we didn't want food outlets or pharmacies, only M&S to sell food. All services are to remain in Town Centre. No supermarket would be on site so there is no competition with the Town Centre. We already have a pharmacy at Saxon Gate.

ClIr Mrs J Lawrence said she is against the Variation of Condition of the planning application.

NA said that LXB is keen for Boots to be at the retail park, 98% of their products can be sold under existing permission.

ClIr B Briars asked if Boots would plan to sell lunchtime foods etc.

DM replied they would sell sandwiches, salads, confectionery – no hot food.

ClIr B Briars said that people would have lunch there, and not go into the Town.

ClIr B Briars asked there were any Boots outlets without a pharmacy or food.

DM replied yes there are, but they are very few and far between, such as airports or train stations.

NA said that they are not trying to nibble away at the planning conditions.

ClIr Mrs J Lawrence said that it was actually specified in the conditions 'no pharmacy'. We do not want an out of town supermarket, from a commercial point of view, we need a fine balance.

ClIr B Rix said that he endorsed the comments from ClIrs Mrs J and D Lawrence and would very much like to see Boots, but we need to protect our Town Centre retailers.

ClIr Mrs H Ramsay asked DM is there a limit to the number of pharmacies in an area.

DM replied no, there is no limit. NHS England identifies the need in an area, we make an application, and they make a decision.

Cllr D Lawrence asked if this is endorsed by Alliance Boots.

DM replied yes, they are not trying to affect Town Centres. They have been significant changes over the last few years, with foodstores selling 60% of health and beauty products. Boots are passionate about Town Centres

## **8. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8 April 2014 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr Mrs M Russell pointed out an error on Page 5, on the first line, should read 'precedent' not 'president'

- b. Members received and approved the recommendations of the Public Lands and Open Spaces meeting held on 1 April 2014

**Items as listed on the PLOS agenda:**

### **6) ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **a. Heritage Open Day 2014**

Members are asked to consider opening Drove Road Cemetery Chapel for Heritage Open Day 2014.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council agree to the opening of Drove Road Cemetery Chapel for a Heritage Open day.

#### **b. Capital Works Programme**

For Members to consider the Capital Works Programme for 2014/2015 and to identify priorities. At the time of writing details of S106 funding held by CBC is awaited.

Members discussed various areas requiring attention.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Deputy Town Clerk produce a summary of priorities according to urgency and making reference to H&S requirements and other legislation.

#### **c. Drove Road Cemetery maintenance**

Members are asked to consider the deteriorating boundary walls, footpaths and roadways within Drove Road Cemetery and to discuss appropriate actions to remedy the various issues.

Cllr Mrs W Smith advised members of the various areas of concerns and outlined some initial costs and options for works that had been obtained. Cllr Mrs W Smith advised that the Deputy Town Clerk had been seeking guidance from the CBC Conservation Officer.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Deputy Town Clerk obtain guidance from the Conservation Officer and appropriate options be investigated and quotations obtained accordingly.

#### **d. Play Equipment updates**

Members were advised that recent works have been undertaken to remove the entrance gate at Stratton Way Recreation Ground, the log climber at The Lakes and also the Supernova (rotating item) at Kitelands Recreation ground.

Members should be aware that following the change of insurance providers taking place on 01/04/14 there will be a need for an independent annual inspection to be conducted and defects remedied within a 60 day timescale or items removed.

Information is currently being obtained on two play inspection software applications that enable the comprehensive capture of the condition of items and the details of all repair works carried out. Members are asked to consider the following quotations for replacing gates that have been removed from the play areas at Foxglove and Stratton Way play areas.

## Quote A

## Quote B (Note - Town Council supplying the gates)

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence proposed that **Quote A** be accepted this was seconded by Cllr S Watkins therefore:

It was **RECOMMENDED** that **Quote A** be accepted.

### e. **Dog Control Orders**

Members were asked to consider the implementation of Dog Control Orders in the play areas in Biggleswade.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council pursue the implementation of Dog Control Orders with a particular consideration for 'Dogs on Leads by Direction Order' and that the Deputy Town Clerk generates a list of sites and presents to Members at the next meeting.

### f. **Memorial Safety Policy software**

Members were asked to consider the attached quotation for Memorial Safety policy software.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council request a demonstration, at a full Council meeting, of this software before any decision is made.

### g. **Acorn Centre**

The Town Council vacated the premises at the Acorn Centre in February 2014. This has as expected caused some pressures on storage arrangements for the Town Councils plant and equipment. The Deputy Town Clerk will provide an update to members on a number of electrical matters that will need to be addressed at the Drove Road workshop as a result of the increased usage.

Louise Wilcox informed Members that the temporary storage container at Drove Road houses the mower, but the other equipment will not fit into it, and as there has been two break-ins, secure storage of equipment is an area of concern. A quotation for updating the wiring, installation of emergency lighting and storage containers had been obtained.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that further quotations be obtained.

## 9. **MATTERS ARISING**

### a. From the Council meeting held on 8 April 2014

Page 1 – on the bottom of the page – Cllr Mrs J Lawrence said that this sentence should read ' withdrawal of subsidy' not 'bedroom tax'

## 10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### a. **CB/14/01181/VOC- London Road Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade**

Variation of the Condition 21 of planning application No. CB/13/04399/VOC dated 20/3/14 to allow a pharmacy to operate from part of unit B.

Wording of the condition be amended to: "The development hereby approved for unit C as shown on plan no. 8695 P02 Revision M shall be used for A1 (retail) and up to a maximum of 975 sq m of A1 (food) but shall not be used as a post office, for the sale of tickets, as a travel agency, for hairdressing, for the direction of funerals, for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired, as an internet cafe where the primary purpose of the premises is to provide facilities for enabling members of the public to access the internet or as a pharmacy, except for unit B which can operate as a pharmacy".

Cllr B Rix proposed that Town Council object to this planning application. This was seconded by Cllr D Lawrence.

A vote was taken: **9 Voted in favour of this proposal**      **1 Voted against**      **therefore:**

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this planning application.

**b. CB/14/00879/FULL – 39 Osprey Road, Biggleswade**

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

**c. CB/14/01109/VOC – London Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade**

Variation of Condition Nos. 24 & 26 on planning application CB/13/04399/VOC dated 20/03/14:

Variation of condition 26 (approved plans) to make the following amendments:

- the elevations and layout of Plot S to create 3 units instead of 2 units;
- the elevations and floor plans of Unit H;
- new electrical substations at the entrance and end of the service road;
- a new area for refuse and compactors;
- electrical kiosks along the service road.

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

**d. CB/14/01170/FULL – The White Horse, High Street, Biggleswade**

Sub divide existing 1<sup>st</sup> floor flat to form 2 no. new flats.

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

**e. CB/14/01236/FULL – 99 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EE**

Single storey side and rear extension and first floor 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 principle dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

**f. CB/14/01322/FULL – 120 Mead End, Biggleswade**

Two storey side & rear extension and single storey front 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.

**g. CB/14/01381/VOC – Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, Saxon Drive, Biggleswade**

Variation of Conditions: under planning application CB/13/01149/REG.

Condition 2 – That a written scheme of Archaeological investigation be provided on implementation of the second phase of work instead of prior to commencement.

Condition 4 – Hard and soft landscaping to be approved within 3 months of commencement of development.

Condition 10 – Replace approved drawing GA 1201 (Ref E) with (Rev K), GA 1202 with (Rev C), GA 1300 (Rev C) with (Rev E) and SE 1400 (Rev B) with (Rev F).

Cllr D Albone proposed that Town Council **object to the variation of Condition 2** only. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs M Russell.

A vote was taken: **7 Voted in favour of the objection 2 Voted against 1 abstained**

**Therefore:**

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to the variation of **Condition 2** and raise **no objection to the variation of Conditions 4 & 10**

11. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31 March 2014
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31 March 2014

Cllr M North proposed that the Accounts are adopted, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs M Russell.

12. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Request from the Dan Albone Memorial Group**

At the Town Council meeting of the 12 February 2013 the Town Council **resolved** to support in principle the request to erect a memorial and placement of a tractor in Dan Albone Picnic area.

At the Town Council meeting held on 23 July 2013 the Town Council considered the Planning application for the same: the Town Council **resolved to object** to the installation of both these items raised **no objection** to the installation of **one item**, with no preference to which one.

Further correspondence has now been received from the Dan Albone Memorial Group requesting permission to erect the Memorial as well as Information Boards which will give information on the history of Dan Albone.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

Cllr B Rix proposed that Town Council agree to the installation of the Memorial and the Information Boards, this was seconded by Cllr M North.

A vote was taken: **9 voted in favour of the proposal**                      **1 abstained**

Therefore: It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council grant permission for the Memorial and the Information Boards to be erected.

b. **Guidance Note 2: Solar Farm Developments in Central Bedfordshire Consultation – Draft for Consultation**

A copy of the above Draft document was attached for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk invite the Environmental Policy Manager to address Members at a Council meeting and also that CBC are made aware that Figure 2 on page 10, does not agree with Figure 4 on page 15.

c. **Memorial bust of the late Peter Vickers**

An artist who is a member of the Conservative Club would like to commission a bust of the late Peter Vickers.

A request was received from the Conservative Club to ask if Town Council would consider the installation of this memorial, at no cost to the Council, within the Council Chamber as there is no suitable location available in the Conservative Club.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence proposed that Town Council grant permission for the bust to be installed in the Council Chamber, this was seconded by Cllr D Lawrence

A vote was taken: **3 voted in favour**      **6 against**      **1 abstained**      **Therefore:**

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council refuse permission for the bust of the late Peter Vickers to be installed in the Council Chamber as this would set a precedent for the future.

**d. Sustainable Communities Act to Town and Parish Councils**

A request was received from BATPC asking Biggleswade Town Council if they will support a proposal put forward under the Sustainable Communities Act by Sevenoaks Town Council that a percentage of the business rates be paid direct to parish and town councils, (a copy of the proposal was attached to the agenda).

Cllr Mrs M Russell proposed that Town Council support this proposal, this was seconded by Cllr P Biernis.

A vote was taken: **6 voted in favour**      **3 voted against**      **1 abstained**      **Therefore:**  
It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council support this proposal.

**e. Rural Match Funding**

At a Town Council meeting 11<sup>th</sup> March 2014, Town Council were asked to consider the location of a raised crossing in London Road.

It was **RESOLVED** option two as the location of the crossing and that the crossing is a flat crossing in order that the monies can be better spent on two flat crossings.

A meeting was held 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at the Town Council Offices, 4 Saffron Road; Present Cllr M North, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr T Brown, Ben King, Nick Chapman and Town Clerk to receive further information on this scheme.

Councillors present were informed that wherever engineeringly possible it is a policy of CBC to put in raised crossings. Raised crossings provide additional protection to people crossing the road and also have the effect of slowing traffic further down the road. Blue light services are always consulted on any schemes and very rarely if ever comment on them. CBC will only consider installation of a raised crossing in London Road.

Council have agreed to part fund £12,500 to the scheme and agreed the location, members were now asked to consider if they wish to continue with the only alternative put forward by CBC a raised crossing.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence proposed that Town Council still proceed with the request for a Flat Crossing, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs M Russell

A vote was taken:      **8 voted in favour**      **2 abstained**      therefore:

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council proceed with the request for a Flat Crossing.

**13. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**a. Planning application outcomes**

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

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

**b. Biggleswade & District Pensioners Association newsletter March/April 2014**

A copy of the above newsletter was attached to the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted and to asked the Association if the Newsletter could be sent to Town Council electronically.

**14. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

MOP 1 asked about the removal of the play equipment at Grasmere and the drainage problem in this area.



LW explained that the basin where the play equipment was situated is an attenuation area. Although Town Council cut the grass, most of the area is adopted by Central Beds. Town Council will not be replacing the play equipment as they do not own the land.

MOP 1 said that for some months the thoroughfare at the Crown Hotel has been blocked off, he thought it was a public right of way.

MR replied that this is agenda item for the Joint Committee Meeting taking place on 23 April. CBC will be generating a definite Rights of Way map. Town Council has already written to CBC about the Crown Hotel.

MN said that CBC has written to the developers.

**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(s) is discussed.

**Exempt Item 16a – Contracts**

**16b - Staff**

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.