

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2012 AT  
THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD  
BIGGLESWADE**

**Present:** Cllr T Woodward (Chair), Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr G Wilson,  
Cllr P Woodward, Cllr S Watkins, Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay,  
Cllr D Albone, Cllr B Briars, Cllr Ms S Mulchrone  
Louise Wilcox – Deputy Town Clerk  
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant  
Members of the public - 6

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr R Skinner

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

**(a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests** – There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared.

**(a) Non-pecuniary interests** – There were no non-pecuniary interests declared.

**3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

A member of the public said that 'Christmas lights disposed of' is not mentioned in the minutes of 27 November meeting, and asked that it be added.

He said that in 2009 with Cllr Wendy Smith, the Chamber of Trade, and their fundraising committee, had raised money for the Christmas lights. He said that this committee has now re-formed and wanted to start fundraising, working in partnership with the Town Council. He said it would be easier to fund raise together and request permission to do so on behalf of Town Council.

Cllr T Woodward said 'no' to fundraising on behalf of Town Council and said that they would be better off talking to the Chamber of Trade as they have previous experience of this. Town Council can supply man power for helping out with the switching on of the lights.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the Christmas lights would be reviewed at the next OSCP meeting on 12 February 2013. She invited members of the public to attend the meeting. She said that there would not have been any lights if Town Council had not agreed to underwrite the cost of the lights.

MP1 said that in the past volunteers had worked to restore the previous lights and would be prepared to work with a contactor.

Cllr T Woodward said that working with a contractor would not be precluded. This year the timescale was short. The previous equipment was assessed and deemed unsafe.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said that the Chamber of Trade and their fundraising committee have had previous problems.

MP1 said that at a previous meeting of the Chamber of Trade, they agreed to hand over the responsibility of the Christmas to their fundraising committee then at the last minute the Chamber of Trade changed their mind. He said that the Christmas lights committee are not prepared to work with the Chamber of Trade again. He said that he wanted to start fundraising straight away while the Christmas lights are switched on.

Cllr B Briars said that he thought the Christmas tree in the Market Square looked better than it has for years.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the appearance of the Christmas tree is due to the efforts of the new contractors. They had 'reshaped' the branches to improve the shape and general appearance of the tree. The matter will be discussed at the February meeting. She added that the Chamber of Trade has already made a contribution to the lights this year and is raising further funding.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said that she did not think it was a good idea to delay fundraising until next year. If the Town Council were accepting donations now from the Weatherly Centre and the Chamber of Trade, it must be ok to accept donations from other volunteers.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the Weatherly Centre will be donating less money than previously so any money that this group does raise would be good.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said that there is a need to fund raise for this year and the future.

MP1 said that he couldn't speak on behalf of others but didn't think fund raising for this year would be successful. He said that he had set up a web site page and that of the people that had responded 97% of people don't like the new lights, 3% like them, and others had said that they would like to see more lights added.

Another member of the public (MP2) said that the Chamber of Trade should be invited to the OSCP meeting on 12 February 2013.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that the Chamber of Trade is already invited and that it's a public meeting that anyone can attend.

Cllr T Woodward said that he understood feelings about the lights. People don't appreciate the situation Town Council was in. We are willing to accept donations for the Christmas lights in the future.

MP2 said that he has looked at the figures for funding a PCSO and asked Town Council to think very carefully before reaching a decision. He suggested that the new Police Commissioner should be invited to a Council meeting to discuss the funding request.

#### 4. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

There were no members questions.

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

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 November 2012 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr D Albone requested the following amendments:

Item 12c to read – It was **RESOLVED** that the names **BOSE** and **HERSCHEL** be used. The 3<sup>rd</sup> name to be used was delegated for the Town Clerk to investigate and the name **SOMMERVILLE** was selected.

Item 12d to be added – Members agreed that the Town logo should be re-designed.

#### 6. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 November 2012.

Cllr D Albone asked if there had been any progress with the Quality Status meeting.

Cllr T Woodward said that the meeting had taken place the previous evening and he would be reporting back to Council at the next meeting in January 2013.

#### 7. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- a. **CB/12/04128/FULL – 2 Clover Close, Biggleswade**

Removal of conservatory & construction of new 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.

**b. CB/12/04145/FULL – Land at & to side of 5 Chapel Fields, Biggleswade**

Erection of detached Chalet Bungalow

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this planning application on the grounds of increased traffic in the area, as well as being part of the Safer Route to School and that the area would be overcrowded.

**c. CB/12/04150/FULL – 12 Fennel Drive, Biggleswade**

Erection of ground floor 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.

**d. CB/12/03070/FULL – Flats 2 to 48, Winston Crescent, Biggleswade.**

Proposed external wall insulation (EWI); new windows & doors, pitched slate covered roof (to replace existing flat roof), removal of existing balconies & replace with Juliette balconies. Improvements to ensure level access, weatherproof porch canopy at each main entrance, & general landscaping.

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

**e. CB/12/03471/FULL – 22 Spring Close Biggleswade**

Demolition of conservatory. Erection of two storey rear & single storey rear & side extensions. Conversion of garage to games room with pitched roof & external alterations. Front bay window.

*Amendments received to above application: Revised Proposal & Plan 12.52.01A. (Original & revised plan to be displayed)*

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

**f. CB/12/03996/FULL – Furzenhall Cottage, Furzenhall Road, Biggleswade**

Construction of new outbuilding consisting of garage, workshop and storage space.

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.

**8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**a. Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath no 55, Biggleswade – Proposed creation of Permissive Footpath link to highway pavement informal consultation**

CBC is consulting Town Council on the proposed diversion of Biggleswade footpath no 55 and the creation of a Permissive footpath extension to this diversion. This is a Council generated scheme to enhance the rights of way network in accordance with the Biggleswade Green Wheel parish initiative.

A copy of the proposed new route was attached to the agenda.

Members were asked to look at the plans and are invited to comment by **Friday 31 December 2012**.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council raise no objection to this proposed diversion.

**b. The Localism Act 2011**

The Localism Act 2011 repealed the general dispensation permitting any Councillor with an interest to take part in meetings relating to setting the precept. Many Councillors are likely to be council tax payers for their area and will therefore have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in setting a precept.

Members were asked to consider granting delegated authority to the Clerk, as the Proper Officer of the Council, to determine applications for dispensations.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council agreed to granting delegated authority to the Clerk and also to write to Alistair Burt MP to complain about this item.

**c. PCSO Funding**

This item deferred from Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2012 for further information. Further information has been received and was attached to the agenda.

Bedfordshire Police contacted Town Council to raise the subject of funding the services of a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) for Biggleswade.

Bedfordshire Police are currently undergoing a restructuring process due to the financial restrictions placed upon the force. This is likely to result in the reduction of Police Community Support Officers across Bedfordshire by 40% from April 2013.

Members considered contributing towards the funding of a PCSO.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council does not agree to funding a PCSO.

**9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**a. Thank you letter received**

The Branch Chairman of the Biggleswade Branch of the Royal British Legion has written to Town Council to say thank you for the excellent organisation of the Remembrance Sunday ceremony.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted

**10. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

A member of the public asked if item 11 could be discussed later to enable members of the public to remain in the Chamber for the PLOS meeting.

Cllr T Woodward said normally that would be possible but not on this occasion. Councillors who are not members of the PLOS committee would be leaving the Chamber and he needed ALL Councillors for the exempt item.

**11. 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.

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.