

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2014 AT
THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present:

Cllr S Watkins – Chair

Cllr Mrs M Russell

Cllr M North

Cllr G Wilson

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence

Cllr D Lawrence

Cllr D Albone

Cllr P Biernis

Cllr B Briars

Cllr B Rix

Cllr H Ramsay – from 8pm

Mr R McGregor – Town Clerk

Mr M Thorn – Deputy Town Clerk

Mrs J Durn – Meeting Clerk

Members of the Public - 6

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr I Bond

Cllr Mrs W Smith

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

There were no announcements

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

MOP1: With reference to the Public Land & Open Spaces Minutes (PLOS). It is pleasing to note that the quotations for Franklins Recreation Ground have been presented in a way that is easy to read for the public. The Council was asked to confirm whether quotations will continue to be presented in this way. Cllr M North, Chair of PLOS, confirmed that this format will continue.

5. INVITED SPEAKERS

The meeting welcomed Mr Philip Clark and Ms Paula Cuthbertson, Project Managers, representing WSP. This company is working on an ongoing project with Network Rail covering proposed closures of level crossings. They are looking at the feasibility of closing crossings on the main line and the purpose of this presentation is to provide an update of where we stand at the moment.

A presentation followed covering the feasibility study of the Southern Section which includes the Biggleswade area. This study is the first part of a lengthy process. There is currently no funding for the infrastructure. This will not be requested until the all the findings are complete and have been passed to the Secretary of State.

In Summary WSP have:

Ascertained all crossings to be closed: Lindsels, Smarts, Primrose, Holme Green, Langford Road, East Road and Jiggs Lane.

Identified which crossings are generally used for leisure purposes - rights of way network.

Identified where essential access is required

Obtained and included CBC comments

Obtained and included English Heritage input and comments

There is now a period of 28 days for consultation and responses, following which all data will be analysed ready for a new round of consultation. The final design will be confirmed early in the New Year and a financial scheme can then be drawn up.

When the final scheme is ready for submission WSP will be happy to come back and update the council.

We are looking at timescale 2017-2020. This work will then dovetail nicely with the new signalling system in 2020.

Details can be found on www.Networkrail.uk/ecml

On behalf of the Council the Chair thanked Mr Clark and Ms Cuthbertson for their presentation. We will look forward to future updates.

6. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr P Biernis commented on the steam cleaning that was taking place in the market square during the evening, and asked if the area around the bus station could be included. The Town Clerk reported that the cleaning is undertaken by Central Bedfordshire Council subcontractors and he will ask them to ensure that this area is included.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 November 2014 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr B Briars asked that his name be removed from item 12a, Planning application outcomes, referring to the Furzenhall Barn application, as he did not raise this issue.

- b. For Members to **approve** the **recommendations of the Finance & General Purpose** committee meeting held on 18 November 2014 –

Cllr M North – Chair F&GP reported that item b, Financial Regulations, has been actioned and a working group has been set up.

- c. For Members to **approve** the **recommendations of the Public Lands and Open Spaces** committee held on 2 December 2014 –

PLOS Minutes:

Item 6a) Request to install a bench at Eagle Farm Road Recreation Ground

It was **RESOLVED** to accept this quotation. £150

Item 6b i) New safety surfaces to swings and hang glider at Franklin Recreation Ground

It was **RESOLVED** to accept quotation B £7,712.50.

Item 6b ii) New safety surfaces to swings, roundabouts, and Supa Nova installation at Kitelands Recreation Ground.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept quotation B £9,112.00

Item 6b iii) Installation of half MUGA to be placed at Kitelands Recreation Ground

It was noted that a second quotation has since been received for this work.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept quotation A £1,825.00

Item 6c i) Maintenance costs for Play Areas

It was **RECOMMENDED** that we proceed to obtain quotations

Item 6c ii) The removal of swings, slide and safety surfaces at Jubilee Recreation Ground

It was noted that a second quotation has since been received for this work.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept quotation A £2,820.00

Item 6d Play Area Site Visits

Cllr North reported that a site visit had taken place and was found to be very useful.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Deputy Town Clerk will arrange for the next site visit to take place on a Saturday morning in daylight.

Item 6e Adoption – Brunel Drive

Discussion has previously taken place regarding the contractor's obligations to provide a contribution and maintain this area to the proper standards. The Town Clerk will request an official ROSPA Report to verify that the area meets all requirements.

It was **RESOLVED** that on receipt of a ROSPA Report the Council will adopt this area.

Item 6f Allotment Security

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council will provide a combination lock which will be welded to the gate.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 November 2014

Item 10b, page 4

It was noted that the cycle track is now almost full constructed.

Cllr B Briars asked if there had been any reply from Central Bedfordshire Council from his previous concerns regarding flooding in the High Street.

The Town Clerk has been informed that if funds are available then this issue will be dealt with before the end of the financial year. However, if funds were insufficient then the work will be carried out in the Spring of 2015.

Cllr Briars asked if a member of the Central Bedfordshire Council Highways Department has been invited to a Biggleswade Town Council Meeting. Cllr Mrs J Lawrence suggested contacting Mr Richard Preston, Highways Development Team Manager.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Clerk contact Mr Preston, Highways Development Manager to invite either himself or the appropriate person to attend a meeting.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/14/04526/FULL – 2 Banks Road, Biggleswade**
Extension to dwelling (revised)

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

b. CB/14/04588/FULL – Roadside Farm, 122 Potton Road

Demolition of existing dwellings and outbuildings and erection of six dwellings and associated works.

It was noted that concerns were raised regarding the current 40 mile speed limit and that this enforcement should be reduced to 30.

It was **RESOLVED** that with the inclusion of the above comments, Town Council raise no objections to this application

Previously went to Council on 23/7/13 for the “Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and erection of 4 x 3 bedroom and 3 x 2 bedroom dwellings”, where more information was requested. It was granted on 20/12/13 by Central Bedfordshire Council.

c. CB/14/04428/RM – Land adjacent to Biggleswade Hospital, Potton Road, Biggleswade

Reserved Matters: Pursuant to CB/13/01812/OUT dated 30/09/2014 for public house, car parking, landscaping & new access to B1040 Potton Road. Matters include appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

The original application was discussed by Town Council on 24 September 2013 and 25 November 2014 when:

It was RESOLVED that Town Council OBJECT to this planning application. Members expressed concern at the close proximity of the proposed public house to the Biggleswade Hospital, with potential late night noise and disturbance. Members also raised concerns at the creation of the new access on to Potton Road.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this planning application for the same reasons as previously put forward.

10. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Work to a tree Protected by a Preservation Order: Remove one diseased Ash tree, remove one large Sycamore tree, Prune 1 Lime tree and Remove various self set Sycamore trees (Sycamore trees to remain have been marked) the trees are protected by Preservation Order Ref: MB/TPO/02/00006 and are listed as within Woodland W1.

Location: Shortmead House, Shortmead Lane, Biggleswade

CBC has received an application to carry out work to preserved tree(s) as the above property. If Members wish to comment on the application, please do so in writing within 21 days of the date of this letter quoting the above application number.

This item was noted.

b. Refurbishment of the Drum Clock, Pizza Express, High Street

Cllr M North has requested that Town Council obtain quotations for refurbishment of the Drum Clock attached to Pizza Express, High Street.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that quotations are obtained for the refurbishment of the clock

c. Proposed Touchan Crossing – London Road, Biggleswade

CBC has notified Town Council that they proposed to establish a signalised pedestrian and cycle crossing, including its associated zig-zag markings, in London Road. These works are intended to improve pedestrian and cycling facilities, particularly for those travelling to and from schools in the area.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the proposed crossing.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Clerk clarify the funding situation regarding the crossing as BTC has not agreed to provide funding. The Town Clerk will also request estimated date for completion of this work.

d. **Bedfordshire Police**

Sgt Gary Kidd, from the Biggleswade and Shefford Local Policing Team, gave an update on the issues that the police have been working on, and answered questions and concerns.

- Nuisance calls – particularly elderly people being targeted.
There is a publicity campaign underway. This is in the form of a Public Awareness campaign and is currently being distributed through the Press Office. Ringmaster is currently being updated and a new PCSO in place.
- Biggleswade Police Station is not closing. There is one person on the front desk Reception and unfortunately they did not have resource to cover her when she was ill.
- We have recognised response time from Kempston and now have 5 shifts, depending on resources. We now have officers based at Biggleswade, and we also have Specials back. The Specials are back from Ampthill which is now closing. They are currently making a case for more vehicles at Biggleswade.
- There are now 20 Specials in Biggleswade.

Parking: Still a big issue. However, complaints from public appear to have reduced lately. Following the last meeting the police conducted an exercise which produced the issuing of 10 tickets. These were not all commuters, there were several residents ticketed as well.

Dog Theft: This was investigated and found to be nowhere near the reported problems posted on network sites.

e. **Biggleswade Street Drinkers**

The Chairman summarised the request from Sgt Kidd to ask for agreement for the siting of a Pod to be placed on land on the edge of Fairfield.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept this proposal.

11. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Appeal decision re – 20 Spring Close, Biggleswade CB/14/01368/FULL**

The Planning Inspectorate has informed Town Council that the above appeal has been dismissed.

The application was considered by Town Council on 13 May 2014 when:

This application has been ‘called in’ by Cllr D Lawrence as per copy of Proforma to call-in planning application for determined by Development Management Committee, sent to CBC.

*It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this application as it is would have a detrimental effect on the neighbours, causing loss of light and privacy.*

This item was noted. Cllr Jane Lawrence asked that Council be aware that BTC influence is always taken fully into account.

b. **Planning application outcomes**

A report detailing the outcome of recent planning applications is attached to this agenda
Cllr Mrs M Russell commented on the disappointment regarding the decision on the Red Lion, which has been decided to go ahead despite Council objections.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence suggested that we invite a CBC Planning representative to the meeting to explain the reasons behind this decision.

12. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask questions.

MOP1: Holme Court Avenue road works are complete, however the speed humps are now ineffective.

MOP2: The road surface has now been raised making the speed humps ineffective.

MOP. In previous Minutes MOP were named, and then called MOP – which is it going to be.

MOP Re. Drinkers: I Think the POD will be in the wrong place.

Chair: Don't think it will need policing for long

Cllr Mrs M Russell: It is not in a children's area – we will try it and see how it goes.

MOP: People in the local area may not necessarily see it in a positive way

We are waiting to get agreement from the Council and then issue a press release.

Chair: Comments all appreciated.

13. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution was 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 Item (14a) Staff ,(14b) Lease, (14c) Lease, (15a) Staff

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.