

MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2013 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 W Smith, Cllr G Wilson, Cllr M North, Cllr B Briars, Cllr D Albone
Louise Wilcox – Deputy Town Clerk
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant
Mike Makin – Project Manager on behalf of Kings Reach Development Consortium
Members of the public - 2

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs T Woodward, R Skinner, B Rix, Mrs M Russell and S Watkins.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item - none
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – Cllr Mrs W Smith declared an interest in items 12a & 12c

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reminded Councillors that they need to let the office staff know if they are planning to attend the Staff Christmas Meal on 13 December.

The Mayor had represented Biggleswade at the following events:

- 13 October – Ampthill Town Council Civic Service
- 15 October – Biggleswade Sea Cadets Awards Presentation
- 17 October – St Andrews School Opening of new building
- 20 October – Pottton Town Council Civic Service

4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr D Albone asked that Town Council write to Biggleswade Town Football Club with best wishes for their match on 26 October with Canvey Island. Winning this match will see them going into the draw for the main FA cup.

5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items discussed during the public open session.

6. BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Members received Crime figures from Bedfordshire Police.

7. INVITED SPEAKERS

Mr Mike Makin - to inform members on the state and progress of the consortium at the Kings Reach development.

The Consortium is made up of Taylor Wimpey and Martin Grant Homes, on a 2/3 and 1/3 responsibility respectively. The approved master plan is for 2100 homes divided across four parcels. The consortium controls three of the parcels. Of these parcels, 2/3 are allocated to Taylor Wimpey and 1/3 to Martin Grant Homes. The parcels are then divided into blocks which are subject to reserved matters approval.

Reserved matter approval has currently been granted for approximately 800 dwellings.

Both developers have disposed of blocks, with Taylor Wimpey having disposed of 6 or 7 blocks to Taylor Wimpey North Thames. Martin Grant have recently disposed of 120 units to Persimmon Homes.

The rate of development is currently 200 per dwellings annum, which is anticipated to increase to 250 for the next year and then 300.

It was explained that the Eastern Relief Road is being delivered in stages, with the First phase complete, the second phase to be completed in 2014 and the final phase to be completed by April 2015.

There are currently 350 dwellings occupied.

MM offered to do a site visit for members to view the development.

The plans for the local centre were withdrawn and will be re-submitted with the Town Council expected to consider this at the 12 November meeting. There is now an element of office space, a Care Home, Flats and Houses, the offices will be on the west side of the square.

The Town Councils objections to the previous local centre application were discussed. Cllr B Briars said that Town Council objections to the planning application were related to parking and the position of the Care Home, and asked if these issues had been addressed.

MM replied that they were told that the objection was 'over development'. The applicant has applied CBC parking standards to the plans, which has increased in number slightly.

MM replied that John Matuszewski, Martin Grant Homes will explain when he attends the Council meeting on 12 November. The Care Home has been retained; some of the residential area on the ground floor has been changed to office space.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said regarding the issue of parking – this will be needed by Care Home visitors, people visiting the shops as well as parents bringing children to school. We need a lot of parking.

MM replied that this will all be explained at the next Council meeting.

Cllr B Briars asked about parking for staff of the Care Home.

MM replied that this will be a rear of the building.

MM said that are 350 occupations so far. The school will be opening in September 2015 along with the community centre. During 2014 work is expected to commence on laying out the public realm.

It is hope to build a temporary community facility for residents until the permanent building is constructed, with a planning application to be submitted within the next three months.

There was to be a Public House, but after discussions this has been moved next to the Hospital.

Cllr D Albone said that Town Council objected as this is too close to the hospital.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that it would also mean another exit onto Potton Road.

MM replied that the original relief road took a different route around the Hospital, it is thought that the traffic might be of interest to the Alzheimers patients.

MM said that there is now a bus service to Kings Reach. MM acknowledged that there are still broadband problems in the area and said that James Cushing at CBC has been having talks with BT. CBC have stated that the development should have connectivity.

Cllr D Albone said that there is a problem with the recent application for a reduction in affordable housing, Town Council has expressed concerns in the past.

MM replied that the original plans showed 28% affordable housing. Its standard procedure for the Council to engage consultants to undertake a viability assessment, and the figure has now been reduced to 10%. This application is part of re-adjusting the figure. It is the requirement of the Council to carry out another viability assessment with the next 2 years.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked when the next assessment is due.

MM replied with the next 12 months or so when they are hoping to be able to increase the quota of affordable housing.

8. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8 October 2013 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.
- b. Members received a Draft copy of the minutes of the Joint Management Committee meeting held on 16 October 2013.

9. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8 October 2013 - none

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a. **CB/13/03360/ADV & CB/13/03361/LB – 23-24 Market Square, Biggleswade**
Listed Building: Replacement of existing signage to exterior of building

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this application as this would be detrimental to the character of this listed building and is out of keeping within the Conservation area.

- b. **CB/13/03169/FULL – 23 and 25 Broad Mead, Biggleswade, SG18 8LF**
Conversion of one of the dwelling into two residential flats, two storey side extension and installation of a pitched roof at nos. 23 and 25

This application was considered by Town Council on 8 October 2013 when;

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **DEFER** any decision until **FURTHER CLARIFICATION** of this application is received. Clarification on the incorporation of Highways land on the planning application documents / plans.

CBC has now confirmed that the application does also include the extension of the existing dropped kerb, so as to allow an increase in off street parking provision at the rear of the property. The Highways Team have been consulted on the application who will be advising on the acceptability of this arrangement.

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

- c. **CB/13/03542/VOC – London Road Retail Park, London Road, Biggleswade**
Variation of Conditions 20 & 21 of Application no CB/13/00949/VOC dated 20/06/2013 to allow the sale of food in Unit G.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to this application, it wasn't in the original correspondence when there was an assurance that there would not be any food outlets on the development.

- d. **CB/13/03560/RM – Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**
Reserved Matters: Change to Approval CB/11/02327/RM dated 19/10/2011 relating to Blocks 25,26,29,34 and 36 of development South of Potton Road, Biggleswade – Replacement of 8 no affordable Flats (Plots 153-160) in Block 36 with 4 no Houses (Plots 153 – 156) resulting in a reduction in dwelling numbers from 103 dwellings to 99 dwellings.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT** to the reduction in affordable housing, which is desperately needed in Biggleswade.

Cllr Mrs W Smith abstained from this vote.

11. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 30 September 2013
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 30 September 2013

b. **Annual Audit**

- i. Members approved the Annual Return for 31 March 2013.
- ii. Members received and recorded the External Audit Report for the year to 31 March 2013 and agreed to the recommendations (a copy was attached to the agenda).

12. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Commemoration of the 1st World War**

Members were asked to consider holding a service in the Market Square on Sunday 17th August 2014; to include service an exhibition of memorabilia, band and a competition for the schools to take part in.

Cllr G Wilson, said that the Royal British Legion would like to stage a community event on the Market Square on 17 August 2014, to mark the centenary of the First World War. Cllr Wilson said if Town Council approves the event in principle, he would return in 3 months with more details which would include a service and a band.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council support in principle this event.

b. **Street naming and numbering – Land South of Potton Road (Areas 35 and 41)
Postal addresses for 66 dwellings**

CBC has received an application for postal addresses for the next phase of the ‘Kings Reach’ development and is requesting that Town Council chose 3 or 4 more street names.

The previous section of the development is using names of ‘Nobel Scientist from Cambridge’

The names previously used for this development are:

Darwin	Hawking	Rutherford	Whittle	Maunder
Walton	Cockcroft	Anderson	Turin	Born
Sanger	Pople	Babbage	Gilbert	Bohr
Appleton				

If Town Council decides to continue with this theme CBC has suggested some possible names;

Gurdon	Blackburn	Evans	Maskin	Brenner
Hunt	Greengard	Walker	Stone	Ramsey
Stone	Fowler	Cormack	Mitchell	White
Hewish	Porter	Arrow	Hodgkin	Wilkins

Or, Town Council could choose a different theme instead.

A location map was attached to the agenda.

Cllr G Wilson suggested that a road be named after Horace Gale, a well known local figure.

Members agreed that this may be best suited to a through road on the development, at a later stage.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **DEFER** choosing any further street names until further information is received regarding the development and request that CBC or the developers supply Town Council with a street plan of the different sites, to assist Members with street naming.

c. Proposal to expand St Andrews Church Lower School

Correspondence was received to inform Town Council that notice has been given in accordance with section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that the Governing Body of St Andrews Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School, Brunts Lane, Biggleswade intends to make a prescribed alteration to the school from 1 September 2015.

The proposal is to expand the St Andrews School from a 450 place lower school for pupils aged 4+ 9 to a 750 place lower school for pupils aged 4+ 9 through the creation of a new second campus on a new site within the housing development on land east of Biggleswade as identified in the master plan for the overall development and secured under Section 106 agreement. The second campus will provide an additional 2 forms of entry (300) places at the site in the new buildings.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council agree to this proposal.

d. Works at Stratton Way Cemetery

The contractors appointed to undertake the repair works to the boundary walls and outbuildings at Stratton Way Cemetery have whilst removing the damaged fascias and soffits found the roofing rafters and timbers to be badly decayed with woodworm. Consequently the roofing works cannot be completed as intended and the buildings are temporarily fenced off.

The only option for the works to continue as intended is for the roof to be stripped and new timbers and rafters be supplied and fitted, details of the additional cost of this work are attached.

As neither buildings are presently used and both buildings will incur future maintenance liabilities the contractor has supplied a cost for the removal of both buildings.

Members were asked to consider the attached quotations **a** and **b**

It was **RESOLVED** that quotation **A** is accepted for the demolition of the building and making good.

Cllr Mrs W Smith gave her apologies and left the Chamber at 8.40pm.

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. Thank you letter

Correspondence was received from Bedford College to thank Town Council for their £50 Sponsorship.

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

c. Work to Tree(s) – Land at Bensons Court, Chapel Fields, Biggleswade

CBC has notified Town Council of an application to carry out work to tree(s) at the above property which is within the Biggleswade Conservation Area.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

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

d. Outcomes from Biggleswade Pride in held on 20th March 2013

Attached to the agenda was a final report on one of the outcomes from the Biggleswade Pride in Day held on 20th March 2013.

The work on this was undertaken after reports were made to the Community Safety Tasking Group at CBC; the reports were around issues of drinking and anti social behaviour in the bus waiting area at Century House.

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

e. **Appeal decision – 111 The Rowlands, Biggleswade**

The following application was considered by Town Council on 26 March 2013;

CB/13/00594/FULL – 111 The Rowlands, Biggleswade

Erection of a timber built pigeon loft with tiled roof, sited on 3 course brickwork

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.

CBC refused this application on 8 May 2013

The applicant appealed to The Planning Inspectorate and planning permission has now been granted.

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

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

MOP 1 said that the river is full of weeds and something needs to be done, also part of the river bank has collapsed. A wire cage was placed around it but has now been removed, leaving the bank dangerous for walkers.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that there are plans for improvements, but if the area has deteriorated, then perhaps Town Council could write a letter to CBC.

Cllr I Bond said that the path has been discussed at Joint Committee meeting, it is going to be re-routed on the correct route, but still allowing fishermen.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that it should be in this financial year – before April 2014.

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.

There were no exempt items.

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.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.