

MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2014 AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD BIGGLESWADE

Present: Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr M North, Cllr T Woodward, Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr D Albone, Cllr P Biernis, Cllr B Briars, Cllr B Rix
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Mike North – Deputy Town Clerk
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant
Members of the public - 8

1. APOLOGIES

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

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. COUNCILLORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Mrs M Russell made the following announcement:

I would like to thank everyone who helped make the Christmas Fair on Friday such a success.

- First, members of the Task Group who have been meeting since the beginning of September when it became obvious that the Town Council was going to have to arrange the lights switch on. From the outset, the Group changed the concept of the day.
- We co-opted Hayley Down, who had helped the Chamber of Trade last year. She has worked long and hard and her contacts have been invaluable. Not least, she got the Town Council onto Facebook – which she will now hand over to a member of our admin staff.
- Next, Town Council staff. The outdoor workforce put in a very long day, setting up from 8am and not finishing the clear up until 9.30pm.
- Thank you to fellow councillors who helped by litter picking – otherwise it would have been an even longer day for our workforce.
- Finally, a huge vote of thanks to our Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk, who interpreted the Task Group's vision and carried through a very successful day.

There have inevitably been learning points and the Task Group will meet again for a debrief.

This must not detract from an event which has been a huge feather in the Town Council's cap.

Thank you.

Cllr B Briars thanked Town Council, on behalf of the Twinning Association, for all their help and support over the last 12 months.

a. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor said that the Biggleswade Sea Cadet Corps Band walked away from the Tymba National Band Competition with no less than seven awards from the Championship Class.

The awards included Winners of the Championship class overall, Best Drum Major, Best Percussion, Best Drill, Best Musical Effect, Best Turned Out and winners of the league table throughout the year.

4. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr B Rix advised members that there is going to be a public meeting before Christmas with the residents of Kings Reach looking to resolve Broadband problems they are still experiencing. The question is, if any Cllrs wish to attend, to let him know.

Cllr Mrs Ramsay said that in the local paper it stated that the Broadband would be improving very soon.

BR replied that the improvement planned for 1 December is not going to be delivered. We need to put pressure on the authorities.

Cllr D Lawrence said that a communication box needs to go outside a resident's house and the resident has objected. The residents objections have to be heard which has caused the unforeseen delay.

HR asked when the meeting is due to be held.

BR replied in the next few days.

HR asked if the meeting could be delayed until after the resident's objections have been heard.

BR said 'no', residents would hold the meeting anyway.

HR said perhaps BR could ask DL, as a CBC Cllr to attend the meeting.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence said that there had been meetings with Alistair Burt, and the head of Communications. It's not a matter for the Town Council as the developer is now on board. It might not be a bad idea to postpone the proposed meeting.

5. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

MOP 1 re page 5 of minutes of 11 November – asked that the 1st paragraph be changed to read 'MOP 5 asked whether Town Council welcomes businesses like Weatherspoon's in the Town' and paragraph 3 be changed to read 'MOP 5 asked whether, if comments in the local press are to be believed, the Town Council is against Weatherspoon's'

6. **INVITED SPEAKER**

There was no invited speaker.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 November 2014 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr B Rix asked that on Page 5 – paragraph 7 – be amended to read 'BR said that all Cllrs want new businesses, but not on any terms, we need to respect the nature and history of the town, and maintain the public right of way from the Crown to Church Street as this is the only public right of way'

Subject to the requested amendments, the minutes were approved.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 November 2014

Cllr B Rix re: page 1 – item 8a – asked if a reply had been received from CBC and that this item be carried forward.

9. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- a. **CB/14/04288/FULL – 35 Stratton Way**
Ground floor extension to front

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/14/04191/FULL – The Acorn Centre, Chestnut Avenue, Biggleswade

The proposal is for a change of use from a class B1 business centre to a class D1 GP health centre. The proposal comprises of internal refurbishment and re-planning of the existing building. A small extension of approx. 55m² is proposed at the front of the building to provide a more appropriate entrance. It is also proposed to infill or replace a number of external windows and doors and building to rear for plant room and waste area.

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

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

Reserved Matters: Pursuant to CB/13/01812/OUT dated 30/9/14 for public house, car parking, landscaping and new access to B1040 Potton Road. Matters include appearance, landscaping and scale.

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.

Town Council objected to this application on the same grounds on 24 September 2013.

10. ACCOUNTS

a. Financial Administration

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

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

11. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Bedfordshire Constabulary

Members received Crime Figures from Bedfordshire Police.

HR said there was good news regarding Biggleswade station. The station now has Response (24 hour Policing) Officers based back in Biggleswade. They have been joined by a number of Special Constables who have been also been transferred back to Biggleswade Police Station.

It was also good to see the issue of Street Drinkers is being addressed by the Police and BTC and that they are involved in discussions with other agencies with the aim of finding a long term solution to the problem

Cllr P Biernis asked if Sgt Gary Kidd could be invited to attend a Council meeting.

HR said that the Town Clerk will email GK.

b. Proposal to introduce 40mph speed limit on Baden-Powell Way (Eastern Relief Road)

CBC has notified Town Council of the above proposal which is consider necessary for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs. This is a spine road, which will form part of the Biggleswade Eastern Relief Road and it is felt that a 40mph speed would be the appropriate limit for a through-route of this type.

The roads affected would be: Baden Powell Way, from its junction with Saxon Drive, Chambers Way and Sorrel to its roundabout junction with Potton Road.

Any comments should be sent to the Transportation Manager, Central Bedfordshire Highways, Woodlands Annexe, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41 7NU or email centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk by 9 December 2014. Any objections must state the grounds on which they are made.

Cllr Biernis expressed concerns regarding the cycle way being in place along the whole of this route.

The Council felt that the map supplied by CBC was not clear and appeared to have some anomalies.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to CBC to ask them to clarify the map that they supplied to Town Council and also that the Town Clerk invites the new CBC Highways officer responsible for Biggleswade, to attend a Council meeting.

HR confirmed that the Town Clerk would email GK

12. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Planning application outcomes**

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

Cllr B Briars re Furzenhall Road, Furzenhall Barn application. Town Council raised no objection on condition no development of the land, can we be sure of this.

The Town Clerk said that he will investigate.

13. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

MOP 2 – Said that the gullies in the pedestrian area of Hitchin Street, are broken. Who is responsible?

HR replied that CBC are responsible and that this has already been reported to them

MOP 2 asked what the cause was.

HR said that if she is correct, it is the heavy traffic. Some blocks have already been replaced.

DL said the sub-contractor of Amey has accepted liability, and this will be a major job and expensive to put right.

MOP 3 asked if the Police and Town Council are aware that it's not only the street drinkers in the town centre causing problems, there is also drug dealing going on.

HR asked if he had reported it to the police.

MOP 3 replied that no, he hadn't.

The Town Clerk said he will pass it onto the Police.

MOP 1 asked if Cllrs are aware that planning applications are available to view online.

HR replied that yes, they are aware, but Cllrs prefer to have the plans to view in the Chamber as well.