

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2013 AT THE
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr I Bond, Cllr G Wilson, Cllr T Woodward, Cllr G Wilson, Cllr M North,
Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr D Albone, Cllr B Briars, Cllr B Rix, Cllr Mrs M Russell
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant
Iain Finnigan – CBC Senior Engineer Flood Risk Management
Members of the public - 3

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs W Smith and Cllr R Skinner

At this point Cllr Mrs Hazel Ramsay proposed that the order of the agenda be altered to allow Councillors and members of the public to ask the invited speaker questions after his overview of the local situation..

All Members agreed to this request.

2.1 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item - none
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – Cllr Mrs M Russell declared an interest in item 4 on Council agenda and item 6b on PLOS agenda.

2.2 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay said that Town Council had held a MacMillan Coffee morning on 24 September which raised £140. She thanked the Staff for their work.

Cllr Ramsay went on to say the planned Harvest Charity Dinner that was due to be held on 5 October, had been cancelled due to lack of local support.

4. INVITED SPEAKER

Mr Finnigan gave an introduction; Mr Finnigan explained that although he had no background in local authority he had for the last 25 years been Flood Risk Engineer for the Environment Agency.

Mr Finnigan informed members that it was mandatory for all lead Local Authorities under the 2010 Flood Management Act; to gauge risk of surface water flooding.

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items discussed during the public open session.

5. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that a map that had been supplied to Councillors previously, shows Biggleswade has a floodplain; there had been problems in Kingfisher Close which may be the result of a ditch not being cleared out.

IF replied that the Internal Drainage Board look after the drains and have their own maintenance programme. If there is a local concern, CBC can approach the land owner, and if necessary serve notice to maintain.

MR said that the river itself is so full of reeds almost blocking the river, making the level higher. There is a huge catchment area that runs into the Ivel. Where is it going to go? Its going to be worse North West of Biggleswade, not fluvial flood, could the watercourse be cleared out?

IF replied that he would be responsible for building up a database – asset register of key water courses; the first steps could be to look at areas we are unaware of; to look at potential areas of surface water risk.

EA & CBC are joining up with information, which should help towards any funding. EA study the River level as part of River Framework Directive. IDB are active in maintaining standards.

EA are under pressure to spend as best possible for the number of houses, making sure all interests are taken into account.

Cllr D Lawrence declared an interest as a member of the IDB; Cllr Lawrence said that there is a lot of maintenance needed in Biggleswade this year. There is at the moment a project that is running late, so maintenance is needed now.

IF replied that he would speak to the Planners regarding time limitations

Sustainable Drain Systems are needed. As of April 2014 all new applications, of larger developments, must have sustainable drainage and will be assessed before handing over to the Local Authority. Anglian Water is part of this process.

MR said EA map Blue areas show flooding, there are new balancing ponds on the new developments north east of Biggleswade.

IF said that local surface water is identified in the strategy plan. The EA has now produced a 2nd edition of their map; their report is based on this map which is a prediction of surface water. He is aware that there are grey areas.

MR asked that CBC keep in touch with Town Council regarding flooding. If people know they could be prepared, such as in Kingfisher Close. Flooding hasn't been as bad the last few years. It's important what EA and CBC do, we need to know what houses could be affected.

IF said he agreed with MR, EA are updating the maps 3 times a year. Government is in discussions with insurers re new policies extending flood insurance, funded by people that don't live near the river. He will let Council know, as he is interested to gain local knowledge.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay with regards to planning application after April 2014, is there a minimum number of houses?

IF replied DEFRA is starting reviews, over 10 houses at first. Legislation states 1 and over, but that would mean too many applications. It will apply to major applications at first, for the next 3 years, then move onto all other applications. The EA are overhauling the surface water assessment in 2015, so all will be on one plan.

Cllr B Briars was pleased that Biggleswade finally had the roundabout in Shortmead Street; Cllr Briars asked if the Town Council could chase up the TROs that Council had asked for. Cllr Ramsay confirmed that the TROs in question were on the agenda of the next BJC meeting.

6. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 September 2013 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence asked that on page 1 – item 2- declarations of interest – the word 'and' be added between Cllrs J, D Lawrence.

Subject to this amendment, the minutes were approved.

- b. Members **approved the recommendations** of the **Public Lands and Open Spaces** meeting held on 17 September 2013.

Items as listed on the **Public Lands and Open Spaces** agenda:

6) ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a) **Boundary Fence, 173 Mead End**

Correspondence was received from the resident of the above address, who moved into the property in July 2012. The property is adjacent to the public alleyway leading from Mead End to Kitelands recreation

ground, and a boundary fence separates the property from the alleyway. The previous owners explained that the fencing is the responsibility of Biggleswade Town Council and that BTC had recently measured up the fencing with a view to replacing it in the near future.

The title deeds clarified that the resident owns the boundary fence. During the course of enquiries with BTC (followed up by Cllr Steve Watkins, see Appendix 3) the resident was informed that due to likely wear and tear caused by the public BTC may be willing to contribute to the cost of the replacement fencing.

The resident has obtained 3 quotations for the work and is asking BTC to consider making a contribution to the cost of this replacement given the damage caused to the fence by pedestrians.

Copies of photographs supplied by the resident are on display in the Chamber for Members to view.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council do not contribute towards the cost of the replacement fence.

b) Request for Parking

Correspondence was received from a member of the Biggleswade Congregation of Jehovah's.

For the next 4 months they are rebuilding the Kingdom Hall in Shortmead Street and require somewhere to park the vehicles of construction personnel, from 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday.

They have also contacted the Cricket Club with same request.

Members discussed the very close proximity of the Dan Albone Car Park to the development site. Members outlined concerns with possible damage to the grass surfaces surrounding the cricket pitch. Members also suggested that car sharing could be considered to minimise disturbance.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Council do not accept this request and suggest that the Dan Albone car park be utilised.

c) Draft copy of Biggleswade Town Council Memorial Safety Policy

A copy of the draft Biggleswade Town Council Memorial Safety Policy was attached for Members consideration.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that this document be sent to the Diocese of St Albans for consultation and referred back to the next meeting of this committee for recommended adoption.

d) Biggleswade 64th Annual Sports Meeting – 12 July 2014

Town Council has received correspondence from Biggleswade Sports to advise that they plan to hold their 64th Annual Sports Meeting on Saturday 12 July 2014 commencing at 1.00pm, at Fairfield Sports Ground. They are requesting permission to use the Sports Ground as well as the Pavilion and Toilets.

7. MATTERS ARISING

a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 September 2013.

Item 12c – Walking and Cycling improvements – Cllr Mrs J Lawrence said that she, Cllr D Lawrence and Cllr M Jones had a meeting with the transport people. She said that Ivel Gardens would not be narrowed, the ramp will not be dug up nor will the ramp at Wharf Mews.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay read out an email from Adrian Clothier;

- Following an executive member meeting, it has been resolved to 'delete' the proposals for Ivel Gardens and Wharf Mews
- All other works planned for Shortmead St will continue as planned
- Ann Rowland (Sustainable Communities at CBC) has been tasked with investigating avenues of funding for the zebra crossing requested by CBC members and BTC
- Other walking/Cycling priorities should be relayed to in the first instance to the Town Clerk who would then forward them to Steve Lakin (steve.lakin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence had spoken with officers at CBC to mention the elderly people in Northgate Court who would also benefit from this zebra crossing.

Cllr B Briars asked if this included London Road zebra crossing.

The Town Clerk confirmed that it was included.

8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. CB/13/03037/FULL – Parkside Stratton Park, Dunton Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8QS

Single storey rear extension and single storey rear/side link 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/13/03116/FULL – 15 Market Square, Biggleswade, SG18 8AS

Installation of timber gate to the rear elevation.

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.

c. 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

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

d. CB/13/03253/ADV – 20 – 22 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL

Advertisement: 2 No. New 680mm High Internally illuminated fascia signs. 1 No. New 400mm High Internally illuminated projecting sign. 1No New illuminated ATM Collar. 1No New Marketing Unit.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council **OBJECT STRONGLY** to the internally illuminated signs and the illuminated ATM collar.

e. CB/13/03350/FULL – 23 Courtlands Drive, Biggleswade, SG18 8PG

Replacing an existing conservatory with masonry extension and pitch hipped roof. Replacing/extending existing garage.

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.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. BATPC Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 23 October 2013

Members were asked to nominate 3 delegates to attend the above meeting. **This is in addition to those Councillors who are already on the Committee.**

The meeting is to be held at Millbrook Village Hall. Refreshments will be available before the meeting, from 7pm: the meeting itself will start at 7.30pm.

It was **RESOLVED** that no delegates be nominated.

b. **CBC – Consultation on the Leisure Strategy: Chapters 1, 2 and 3**

Members will have already received the link to access this document and are now asked for comments.

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council make no comments.

c. **Consultation on Wixam Park Master Plan**

The above document is being published for comment starting **Friday 27 September 2013 for six weeks until Friday 8 November 2013.**

Details were attached to the agenda.

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

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Tree Works – Barnfield Close, Biggleswade**

CBC has received a request to carry out the following work to tree(s) at 10 Barn Field Close, Biggleswade, which is in a Conservation Area: Remove one Sycamore tree within the rear garden.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

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

b. **Appeal lodged – 5 Apollo Gardens, Biggleswade**

Correspondence has been received from CBC regarding planning application **CB/13/02223/FULL – Part conversion of garage to habitable accommodation (retrospective application)**. Town Council objected to this application on 22/01/13 and 23/07/2013, CBC refused on 28/08/13.

The applicant has now lodged an appeal with the Secretary of State against the Councils decision. This appeal will be determined on the basis of written representations.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

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

d. **Ivel Bridge retaining wall replacement works – Shortmead Street, Biggleswade**

AMEY has advised Town Council of urgent works that are required at the above location as the existing wall was undermined during the construction of the new flats and is leaning towards the new building.

Details were attached to the agenda.

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

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no items discussed during the public open session.

12. **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.

Item 13a - Contracts

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.