

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT  
THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD  
BIGGLESWADE**

**Present:** Cllr S Watkins (Vice Chairman), Cllr D Albone, Cllr I Bond, Cllr P Biernis, Cllr B Briars, Cllr M North,  
Cllr B Rix, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr G Wilson  
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk  
Mike Thorn – Deputy Town Clerk  
Angela Thomas – Administrator  
Members of the public -8

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from, Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay and Cllr T Woodward.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – None declared.

(b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – Cllr I Bond declared an interest in Item 10c, and Cllr D Albone declared an interest in Item 9d.

3. **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

All Councillors and members of staff have been invited to attend the World War I 1914 – 1918 Centenary Commemoration Service on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2014, and should meet at the Marquee by 10.45 am.

On Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014 The Town Council has organised a Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan, to be held in the Council Chambers commencing at 10.00 am. All Councillors and members of staff are invited to attend.

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Mr Frank Foster made reference to Page 6, Paragraph 5 of the Council Minutes dated 26<sup>th</sup> August 2014 that read virgin and footway, (to amend - verges and footway). Mr Foster asked what had the Town Council done to notify or contact members of the public and local organisations regarding the half on half off parking regulations.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said it could be seen to be our responsibility to notify the public, however it is not the Town Councils responsibility. It was recommended at the Town Council meeting 12<sup>th</sup> August 2014 that members look for priority sites and pass them to the Town Clerk.

Mr Paul Jenkins asked if there was any progress on the Christmas Lights Task Group and questioned if there was not a further member to the group than the minutes of the 26<sup>th</sup> August indicated.(to amend to add Cllr P Biernis).

Cllr Mrs M Russell confirmed they had met, and would be making contact with various organisations.

Mr Mark Foster asked about item 10b on the Council agenda, Christmas Lighting display. Mr Foster question whether the quotation should be to extend the lighting display towards the Bridge and not to the High Street.

Cllr Mrs M Russell agreed and would be raising that point when the item comes before the Council.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

There was no invited speaker.

## 6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr D Albone asked members if they were aware of any plans to extend the 30 mph speed limit along Potton Road, Cllr Albone felt that the road would benefit from an extension to the 30mph speed limit.

Cllr Mrs W Smith suggested Cllr Albone follow this up with an email to the Town Clerk.

Cllr B Rix raised his concerns about the queues of traffic approaching the A1 near Sainsbury's particularly on a Saturday and Sunday and mainly due to traffic trying to access the tidy tip. Can we ask CBC what can be done about this.

Cllr Mrs M Russell informed members that this had been raised some time ago, and that CBC were to re-organise how the tidy tip operates, we are pushing with CBC and we can raise the issue again at the next BJC.

Cllr B Rix said that it has become a health and safety issue and there is an urgent need for something to be done.

No further questions were raised.

## 7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. Members subject to the amendments **approved** the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

*To amend page 6 - paragraph 5 - virgin to verges. To amend page 2 - paragraph 8 - to add Cllr Biernis.*

## 8. MATTERS ARISING

From the minutes of the Town Council meeting 26<sup>th</sup> August 2014, Cllr Mrs W Smith said that we really do need to ensure that we get correct specifications out when we require play equipment. This has been going on for months and it's imperative that we put the correct specifications together.

Cllr B Rix do we have any further time scales for completion of the land east bypass.

Town Clerk – we have no further timescales.

Cllr B Rix asked if Council would press for a completion date.

- a (i) From the minutes of the Town Council meeting 12 August 2014, **approved** at the Town Council meeting **26<sup>th</sup> August 2014**; Dan Albone car park lease.

Following correspondence from the Town Clerk that Town Council will not renew the lease for Dan Albone car park; initial correspondence has been received to inform Council the agent will be taking instruction from their client.

Cllr S Watkins asked if there were any comments – none were received.

- a (ii) Sun Street – St Johns Street one way system, proposed introduction of an area wide HGV ban; following a recommendation from the TCM Committee 19<sup>th</sup> August 2014 and approved at Town Council meeting **26<sup>th</sup> August 2014**; It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council and ask why Town Council was not consulted; to ask which members requested the potential to introduce an area wide HGV ban; to request that the one way system and proposed HGV ban should not be considered together, and that no HGV ban should be considered until after the opening of the Eastern Relief Road.

Correspondence has been received from Nick Chapman of Central Bedfordshire Highways, (copy attached).

Cllr S Watkins asked Cllr Mrs. M Russell if she had any comments.

Cllr Mrs. M Russell was disappointed, this is not what was agreed at the Biggleswade Joint Committee, there was an indication that 106 monies might be made available to implement the scheme.

## 9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

### a. **CB/14/03269/FULL – 8 Ely Croft**

Proposed double story side/rear extension to replace existing 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/14/03329/FULL – 21 Lime Tree Walk, Biggleswade**

Erection of part single and part two storey rear extension and new front porch.

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.

### c. **CB/14/03239/FULL – 32 Clover Close**

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.

### d. **CB/14/03353/FULL – 25 Drove Road**

Erection of 2 semidetached 3 bedroom dwellings with integral garages, associated parking and access following demolition of existing bungalow.

*This planning application was considered on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014 where it was approved. Council are now asked to consider the above application which has minor external appearance amendments.*

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.

## 10. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

### a. **Work to a tree Protected by a Preservation Order: Fell two large Conifer trees (1&2 on applicants sketch plan) located within the rear garden to the rear right hand corner, and two Cotoneaster trees (3&4 on applicants sketch plan) located to the rear boundary of the rear garden. – Located 16 Barn Field Close, Biggleswade, SG18 8FN**

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

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

### b. **CHRISTMAS LIGHTING DISPLAY 2014 – 2015**

At a meeting of the Town Centre Management Committee 19 August 2014, Members asked if costs could be obtained to provide extra strings of Festoons along the High Street.

Costs have now been obtained and members are asked to consider these costs. (Copy attached).

Cllr Mrs M Russell informed members that the quote is not what was asked for and the Town Clerk has gone back to ask for a further quote.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer item 10b until the revised quotation has been obtained.

c. **Work to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order: Trim Oak Tree to give 2m clearance to no 5 Hazel Walk and trim oak tree to give 2m clearance to no 21 Hazel Walk. Location: Shortmead House, Shortmead Lane, Biggleswade**

CBC has notified Town Council that they have received an application to carry out work to preserved tree(s) at the above property, a copy of which is attached to this agenda.

Any comments need to be submitted in writing by 19 September 2014.

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

d. **Public Spaces Protection Orders**

From 20 October new legislation will come into force to regulate any activities in public spaces which a local authority believes have a 'detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality' – or is likely to do so.

Ministers insist so-called public spaces protection orders (PSPOs) are intended to clamp down on anti-social behaviour, such as spitting and aggressive begging.

Anyone flouting the order will be liable to an on-the-spot fine, normally between £70 and £100, from a police officer, PCSO, council worker or security guard employed by the town hall.

Members are asked to consider contacting CBC and the Police for more information and guidance on this new legislation.

Cllr G Wilson asked what will happen if offenders decline to give their name and addresses? He requested further information on this.

Cllr B Rix said that members of the public have brought this issue to his attention, but more so with the parking rather than with spitting and aggressive begging.

Cllr Mrs W Smith I am interested in the parking aspects, but there is no point in going forward unless the police are available to enforce.

Cllr P Biernis stated that nobody had been fined in the last twelve months in Central Bedfordshire for dog fouling or litter.

Cllr S Watkins asked Cllr B Rix what his understanding was on the new legislation.

Cllr B Rix replied it does not widely involve spitting and begging, but should involve other issues such as parking.

It was **RESOLVED** to contact CBC and the Police and obtain further guidance and details on the legislation.

e. **Pedestrian and Cyclist East-West access across North-South barriers in the town**

Cllr B Rix has raised concerns regarding pedestrian and cyclist access from the town to the countryside on west.

The new long-a-bout on the A1 is causing problems for pedestrians and cyclists as would the closure of pedestrian rail crossings.

Members are asked to consider contacting CBC to ask them to take the needs of pedestrians and cyclists into account for any future changes or developments.

Cllr B Rix raised his concerns about the new long-a-bout, and the problems encompassed for both

pedestrians and cyclists when accessing the countryside from the town. He is an avid walker and crossing the A1 has become extremely dangerous. No provision has been made for cyclists and pedestrians and there are concerns about the Health and Safety aspects of crossing, especially as there are threats about the closing of crossings along the rail network.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said that over the years we have had many meetings with BRCC who were aware there was going to be a problem, and this needs to be re-addressed, we need to ask BRCC if they have made any provision.

The Town Clerk confirmed he had spoken with BRCC two years ago and had advised them at that time to consider discussions with the relevant bodies around ways of introducing as part of the development access across the A1.

Cllr B Rix - someone has improved the path that runs from Mill Lane to Jordan's Mill across the field, but it stops 5 yards short of the cattle creep that takes you under the A1.

Cllr Mrs W Smith - the introduction of this path has been an idea for a long time, the river path was not safe at the time and it was agreed to approach the land owner for an additional path.

Cllr P Biernis felt that moving the path was better than nothing.

Cllr Mrs M Russell did not agree and felt that more and more of the Kingfisher Way was being taken away from the river.

Cllr D Albone felt there was a need for the cycleway and the path as the path in some places is nearly impassable.

Cllr S Watkins asked if there were any further comments.

It was **RESOLVED** that Central Bedfordshire Council are contacted to ask that they take the needs of pedestrians and cyclists into account for any future changes or developments; that BRCC are also contacted to provide an update on the progress of the cycleway.

**f. Request to install a bench on the banks of the River Ivel**

The following email was received:

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have not long ago finished the NCS course (National Citizens Service) and part of the course is going on to doing something for my local community as a team of 8.

As a team we have decided to raise money for Wills Fund. Will is one of our friends who has recently drowned in the river in Biggleswade and we would firstly like to raise awareness of the dangers of drowning in rivers, and secondly we would like to install a bench with a plaque remembering Will, in the area where he drowned. Around the bench we will also like to landscape the near ground planting flowers and making it look like a nice area for perhaps old aged people to sit at and enjoy the view.

Our course is government a funded scheme and we also have a graduation where we present our projects on a big screen to the mayor of Bedfordshire and 400 other people including many other teams who are also doing their social action and their parents. Every individual in each team will also receive a certificate signed by the prime minister.

Our graduation is on the 17th September and we will like to know as soon as possible if our plan can go ahead.

We plan to raise money for the bench by bag packing in Asda whilst at the same time raising awareness. With any money left over from the bench project we want to fund swimming lessons for people in the local community- any age and people who cannot already swim.

To summarise what we are asking, we would like permission to install a bench at 'The Wreck', the area at which Will drowned.

I look forward to your response.

Members are asked to consider this request.

Cllr S Watkins asked for any questions.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said this has had media attention and was a tragedy, if friends want to honour their friend and it fits with our rules and regulations I think this should go ahead.

Cllr B Briars agreed this was a good idea and it should be approved, I suggest they contact the Town Clerk to discuss the detail.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said she agreed, with exception of the planting, I would like to ensure that the Clerk and the staff are happy to take on any extra work.

Cllr Mrs W Smith highlighted how the work rate has increased, but I would not want to discourage them and would want the Town Council to act as the backstop and eventually take over.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to confirm the Town Council approval for the scheme and that a meeting is arranged with the Town Clerk to discuss the detail.

#### **11. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

There are no items for information.

#### **12. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

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

Mr Richard Mason raised the question, does the Town Council feel that the Bulletin is good value for money when Facebook is free.

Cllr S Watkins stated his thoughts on social media were close to Mr Masons, however when you consider the cost of the Bulletin per household, yes I do feel it is good value.

Cllr Mrs W Smith agreed with the Chairman that it was good value for money but the Town Council could find more to put in the Bulletin.

Mr Rob Green felt that the Bulletin should run alongside social media, however the Town Council could put more in the Bulletin that would engage with the public.

#### **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) Recommendation from the Personnel Committee; Questions from the ICO.

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.