

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2015 AT  
THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD  
BIGGLESWADE**

**Present:**

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay (Chair)	Rob McGregor – Town Clerk	Members of the Public - 4
Cllr D Albone	Mike Thorn – Deputy Town Clerk	
Cllr P Biernis	Angela Thomas – Meeting Clerk	
Cllr I Bond		
Cllr B Briars		
Cllr M North		
Cllr Mrs M Russell		
Cllr Mr S Watkins		
Cllr G Wilson		
Cllr J Lawrence		
Cllr D Lawrence		

**1. APOLOGIES**

Cllr B Rix  
Cllr Mrs W Smith  
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 Mrs M Russell declared an interest in Items 10b and 10c, and Cllr P Biernis Item 10b.

**3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor attended three functions on behalf of Biggleswade Town Council in December 2014:

Bedford Borough Carol Service  
Biggleswade and District Choral Society - Concert  
Biggleswade Pensioners– Xmas Lunch at Stratton School

**4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

MoP 1: Minutes of previous Meetings “Matters Arising” – It would be better to detail what the item number is referring to.

The Council noted his comment. Cllr J Lawrence supplied the information requested

**5. INVITED SPEAKER**

There was no invited speaker.

**6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence asked if we had a Pay Policy Statement as it is stated in Localism Act 2011 that we should have a copy.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked the Town Clerk to investigate and obtain a copy. Cllr Mrs J Lawrence advised that Deb Broadbent-Clark would be the contact at CBC.

Cllr P Biernis asked if there was an update on the Parking Strategy from CBC, as it is very evident that the problems are getting worse.

Cllr Mrs M Russell stated that she had attended a Task Group a few weeks before Christmas together with Cllr M Jones, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay and Martin Thomas Chamber of Trade & Paul Mason. CBC wanted to focus on commuter parking and the Task Group looked at all the effected roads.

Paul Mason went off to look at the costings involved in implementing the measures discussed by the group.

In the meanwhile the Town Council Task Group met in January, too look at what the Town Council need to do. We have looked at various options that the Town Clerk is investigating to take back to Council.

Cllr B Briars: it has been suggested that some roads such as Hitchmead Road, Dells Lane etc. would be getting additional yellow double lines, have they been done yet?

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that we need to look back at the records and add them to the list.

## **7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 December 2014 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

Members approved the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 December 2014 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

## **8. MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 December 2014.  
Cllr B Briars requested that in future all minutes be copied double-sided.

Item 5: "Invited Speakers"

Cllr Mrs M Russell was very disappointed to see that no reference had been made to the content of the questions asked by the Council as the minutes did not reflect the issues that that were raised at the meeting.

Item 10e: "Biggleswade Street Drinkers"

Council supported the siting of a Pod to be placed on the land on the end of Fairfield. However, it is not clear in the minutes that this is a multi-agency project to deal with issues of the street drinkers in the Town Centre. The Pod will be manned by various agencies, the cost of siting the Pod will be met by the Police, the electricity costs will be met by the Town Council.

Item 11b: "Planning Application Outcomes"

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence stated she didn't suggest that we invite a CBC Planning representative to the meeting to explain the reasons for them giving the go ahead despite Council objections.

It should state - If you want CBC Councillor to call a planning application into Committee you only have to ask and we will do so, subject to it being for suitable on planning reasons.

## **9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- a. **CB/14/04778/FULL – 19 Beech Avenue**  
Erection of conservatory.

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/14/04130/FULL – The Old School, Church Street**  
Replacement of three existing buildings/units with three larger buildings/units.

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/14/04622/FULL – 1 Holme Court Avenue**

Two storey side extension, first floor front extension, first floor rear extension, alterations to fenestration and render of entire dwelling.

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/14/04907/FULL – 2 Wilsheres Road**

Erection of a 3 bedroom dwelling.

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.

**e. CB/14/04867/ADV – 11 High Street**

Advertisement: installation of 1 fascia sign internally illuminated, 1 projecting sign externally illuminated, ATM surround sign internally illuminated and name plate/car park signs.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to the installation of 1 projecting sign externally illuminated.

However, the Town Council **OBJECT** to the installation of 1 fascia sign internally illuminated and ATM surround sign internally illuminated, the signs contravene Town Policy on internally illuminated signs as the signs are within the Biggleswade conservation area.

**f. CB/14/04920/MW – Broom Quarry, Hill Lane, Old Warden**

Variation of condition 3 of planning CB/13/03402/MW

The Town Council were unclear with what the variation was trying to achieve, is the variation relating to timing or does the variation mean that reinstatement of the site will not now take place.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that Town Council place a holding **OBJECTION** until further clarification is received.

**g. CB/14/04920/MW – Broom Quarry, Hill Lane, Old Warden**

Variation of condition 27 of planning CB/13/03402/MW

*A copy of the conditions was displayed for members to view.*

The Town Council were unclear with what the variation was trying to achieve, is the variation relating to timing or does the variation mean that reinstatement of the site will not now take place.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that Town Council place a holding **OBJECTION** until further clarification is received.

**10. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**a. Allocations Local Plan – ‘Call for Sites’ and review of designations.**

Central Bedfordshire Council has written to inform that they are commencing work on its Allocation Local Plan. The Primary purpose of this plan is to help in the delivery of sufficient housing to meet the requirement of the emerging Development Strategy.

A copy of the letter was attached.

Cllr D Albone - it is difficult to see where future development might take place due to the constraints of the settlement boundary, there is no capacity left in Biggleswade and the infrastructure will not take further development.

Cllr Mrs M Russell – it would be useful if and when sites are put forward, that we met with CBC planners to discuss the criteria for proposed sites.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence – the plans show East Biggleswade and Potton Road, we have fought for years to suggest no more development off Potton Road. Baden Powell way is constantly referred to as a relief road, it is not a relief road it is actually a by-pass.

If we do not put sites forward they will be thrust upon us. More land has been released at the industrial park to expand.

Cllr Mrs M Russell – the letter is asking for further sites, we need to meet with CBC to look at sights as they are being decided, we need dialogue.

Cllr D Lawrence – the issue is the infrastructure, we need an infrastructure plan first and should insist on it.

Cllr B Briars – I am happy to second the proposal for dialogue at each stage of the process.

Cllr D Albone – any pressure to develop would be at the north, it would be nice to see Biggleswade Common recognised in some way, possibly as a scheduled monument.

Cllr Mrs M Russell – this is a two stage process, we need to meet with CBC over criteria and infrastructure, then further meetings to look at the identified sights. We should consult with CBC about the status of the Common as a scheduled monument.

Cllr I Bond - suggested that scheduled monument status needs to come through English Heritage.

Cllr D Albone – is it possible to use CBC categorisation to protect the common.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to CBC to ask for an initial meeting to discuss the criteria for sights to include the impact on infrastructure, to be followed up with further meetings with CBC when sights are put forward.

**b. River Ivel – Proposed Removal or Modification of Weirs and Embankments**

The Environment Agency are currently investigating options to dispose of structures which no longer serve their original purpose and if removed, or modified, could offer environmental benefits. The (attached document), outlines the reasoning behind and the details of the proposal to remove Lock Pens, Weirs and some flood embankments.

Members were asked for their views.

Cllr Mrs M Russell stated we were invited to attend the meeting where this item was a “by product” of attending the meeting.

It was disappointing to see that the Council had no formal consultation at any stage. Concerns were raised about the lock at Jordon Mill as this could have an effect downstream. If these items are removed from the River Ivel then this could cause flooding. Environment Agency only seem interested in the plants and animals in the river that have been identified by the EU as requiring these measures that will be funded by the EU. They do not appear to have any regard to the impact that these measure will have on the increased dangers of flooding not only at Jordan’s Mill but in the surrounding areas and we do need to push hard on this.

Therefore, the Council **RESOLVED** that a letter be sent to Ellis Selway (Technical Advisor Fisheries, Biodiversity and Geomorphology Team), stating that the Town Council wish to be a formal consultee at all stages and a copy is sent to the Internal Drainage Board.

**c. Local Finance Settlement**

A briefing to all member councils regarding the oral statement to the House of Commons in which the Local Government Minister Kris Hopkins announced the provisional local government finance settlement for 2015/16.

The relevant extract of his statement concerning parishes, which mentions referenda but not council tax support funding, is below:

Parishes are an important part of local government, delivering valuable and valued local services. However that is not a reason for them to impose inflation-busting increases on their taxpayers. The

average Band D council tax in England has been raised by 2% since 2011 to 2012 – the equivalent figure for the parish element is 14.7% over the same period.

That is why I would welcome views on whether the highest spending parishes should be subject to the same referendum principle as the rest of local government. There is also a question about whether town and parish councils whose failings have been highlighted in a Public Interest Report should be included.

There is still no clarification on what is meant by the highest spending parishes, although in previous discussions there has been reference to it being those parishes raising a higher precept than a small district council.

Members were asked for their views by 14<sup>th</sup> January at the latest.

Cllr Mrs M Russell – I am angered by the ministers views on this, the Council Tax Support Grant has not been passed on and I propose that the Town Council respond to this consultation. No Council Tax Support Grant and we are forced to pick up some of the issues that CBC can't do. They are talking about a referenda if we go over 2%. Alistair Burt is well aware of the points and he does not think it is right to cap.

Cllr B Briars – we are told the principle council are not going to pass on the grant, this is forcing Town and Parish Councils to increase their proportion of the precept.

Cllr M North - this has happened already and an increase has been made last year to cover the loss, we are now a self-supporting Parish and do not get anything from CBC.

Cllr Mrs Russell – the issue is that we do not want to face capping, they are already talking about trigger points 2% or £150 band D figure. The Governments thinking is flawed we are more and more having to think about part funding just to bring projects forward.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence – the Council Tax Support Grant is no longer ring fenced, Town Council were told that the money would only be for one year, if CBC put up the rates grants would be cut, we are proud there has been no increase as it affects every household in Central Bedfordshire.

Cllr Mrs M Russell - I do agree with Cllr M North that we are self-sufficient. However, capping will really affect us already at 2%. We are taking on more than we should and we constantly have to challenge CBC on part funding.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council respond to the consultation.

**d. Street Naming and Numbering – Parcels 38 & 39 Kings Reach**

A further application has been received from Taylor Wimpey regarding postal addresses for parcels 38 and 39 Kings Reach, Biggleswade.

According to the master plan provided by the Town Council the area is included in the musicians theme. The musicians names previously supplied have been exhausted and at least six further names are required to complete the scheme.

The names that have been used to date are listed as follows;

*Delius/Frankel/Parry/Smyth/Wiseman/Tavener/Britten/Elgar/Handel/Purcell/Sullivan/  
Finzi/Tallis/Davies/Ellicott and Tate.*

*Boyce, Holst & Byrd are not suitable due to the similarity of existing roads in  
Biggleswade - Bose, Holme and Byron; and*

*Double barrelled names i.e. Coleridge-Taylor, Vaughan-Williams are not considered  
suitable to adopt as road names.*

Members were asked to consider the request for six further names.

The Council questioned why double barrelled names were not suitable as they do exist already. Also, why are Boyce, Holst & Byrd not suitable due to the similarity of existing roads as the development is to the east and within a theme of names?

The Council **RESOLVED** the following names are put forward for consideration:

**e. River Ivel Problems**

The above matter went to council on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014 where it was resolved that a working party was to be formed with interested parties.

A meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 with IPA and various options were discussed, the IPA have put forward proposals for the Town Council to consider.

Proposals were attached.

Cllr M North – this is a proposal from the IPA to integrate fishing management on the River.

Cllr Mrs M Russell – this is the right way forward and we should go ahead and implement in June 2015.

Cllr P Biernis also stated that anglers have permits and are able to fish all over the country including the River Ivel and felt that the Town Council should charge for a permit.

Cllr D Albone – perhaps we should consider charges later say in 12 months' time.

Cllr B Briars – we should go ahead and review in 12 months' time.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the proposals put forward by the IPA and carry out a review in 12 months' time.

**f. Works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order: reduce crown on Lime tree by 30% in front garden to TPO MB/57/00003/G2  
Location: 8 Eagle Farm Road**

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 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

This item was noted.

**11. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

There were no items for information.

**12. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

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

MoP 1: In view of the comments regarding Item 10a –should Council not have used CBC categories to identify the common as important green open space.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay confirmed that the Council will be writing about the concerns.

**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 is discussed.

Agenda Item 14a (Incident Report CCTV – Restricted)

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.