

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2015 AT THE  
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD  
BIGGLESWADE**

**Present:** Cllr H Ramsay (Mayor)  
Cllr D Albone (Deputy Mayor)  
Cllr B Rix  
Cllr B Briars  
Cllr B Kerfoot  
Cllr M Foster  
Cllr F Foster  
Cllr D Strachan  
Cllr T Woodward  
Cllr S Watkins  
Cllr G Wilson  
Cllr M North  
Cllr M Russell  
Cllr I Bond

Rob McGregor (Town Clerk)  
Michaela Beckwith (Minute Taker)

David Lamb, Invited Speaker (Planning Manager, CBC)

Members of Public (MOP) 5

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr P Biernis

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllr D Strachan declared a pecuniary interest in item 10a  
Cllr B Briars declared a non pecuniary interest in item 9d  
Cllr D Albone declared a non pecuniary interest in item 9d, 9g, 9e

**3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No Town Mayors Announcements

**4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

**5. INVITED SPEAKER**

Mr David Lamb, Planning Manager (East), Central Bedfordshire Council.

Planning is a plan led system. The first stage is the pre application stage. Central Government encourage Central Bedfordshire Council to actively engage in pre application advice. Many schemes are discussed, some of which never materialise. All the decisions are undertaken on a 'without prejudice basis'.

There is a standard planning application form and the initial assessment of the application is made against Central Bedfordshire Council's local validation checklist.

Once the application is valid, a consultation, site visit and preparation of recommendation happens.

Under section 38(6), if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning applications are determined by delegation, development management committee and the process for each application is determined by the Council's Constitution.

Conditions can be imposed on planning applications. A planning permission may be tied to a legal agreement or undertaking through section 106, as required by the council's planning obligations strategy. Advisory notes can be added.

The next stage is implementation. The section 106 agreements are monitored. Breaches of agreements are enforced through legal action, prosecution or injunction. Refusal of planning permission can be appealed.

Permitted development is development not requiring planning permission. It is governed by general permitted development order and includes school development, telecommunications and householder. This includes turning offices into living spaces. It also gives powers to statutory undertakers to carry out works without planning permission.

Cllr B Briars said that the calling in period is 21 days but by the time the applications reach council meetings the 21 days is often up. This means the council cannot call the application in.

David Lamb replied, ward councillors can call it in and then withdraw it if no objections are raised. The 21 days was seen as a good medium, not taking too long to process the application but long enough for feedback and the chance to call it in. Central Bedfordshire Council elected members would have to make the decision on whether the 21 day period was extended, but they do have the power to make this change. Planning applications should reach the Town Council within 7 days of Central Bedfordshire Council receiving it.

Cllr I Bond mentioned that regarding the Crown pub, there were amendments to the plans but the 21 days did not restart from when the amendments were received. Therefore, a plan could be submitted then amended and as long as it is within the 21 days will not be called in.

David Lamb explained that in this case the amendment was only minor.

Cllr D Strachan asked if the Town Council could call an application in or if Central Bedfordshire Council could only do this.

David Lamb said the Town Council cannot call in a planning application but if objections are made which cannot be overcome by the addition of a condition then the application will be taken to the committee if the application is considered major.

Cllr B Briars asked about a planning application which was objected to by Town Council but was still approved.

David Lamb explained the particular application was not considered a major application.

Cllr D Strachan said that it appears the Town Council have no power in regards decisions on planning applications.

David Lamb answered, on any application all comments are considered but it has to be considered against Central Bedfordshire's guidelines and the government's guidelines.

Cllr T Woodward informed everyone that he was Biggleswade's ward councillor for Central Bedfordshire Council and that he would be willing to take anything to Central Bedfordshire Council to call in.

Cllr M Russell referred to the ability to turn offices into flats without planning permission and Biggleswade's parking problems. She also queries who negotiates the 106 agreements.

David Lamb replied, parking and Highway safety can be considered within 65 days prior to approval. However, places like Biggleswade are viewed as being sustainable as there is much public transport available. Although it is considered it is often viewed as unreasonable for full parking to be made available.

With regards to the 106 agreements planning officers dealing with the application will negotiate the agreements. Central Bedfordshire Council can only seek contributions in line with the project. Central Bedfordshire Council have to show where and how contributions are being used. Only five contributions can be collected for a project which has to be major (10 houses or more for a development). Central Bedfordshire Council would be more than happy to hear the Town Council's ideas for projects linked to developments.

Cllr H Ramsay asked if the contributions for a particular area are collected will it be spent on what was intended.

David Lamb said if money is secured for a particular project then it will be spent on that.

Cllr D Albone enquired about the percentage of social housing which must be provided.

David Lamb explained that 35% of houses in development of 10 or more houses must be affordable housing. However, over the past few years affordable housing has been limited and the percentage of affordable housing has been under 35% in some cases. This is to enable development during the recession. If it is not viable for the developers to produce affordable housing then they are not required to.

Cllr D Strachan asked if Central Bedfordshire Council could discuss with the Town Council about possible projects.

David Lamb replied that the spending officers are the ones who implement the spending of the 106 monies but if comments are made on the planning application about potential projects which the Town Council would like to see on a development of ten or more houses.

Cllr M Russell asked for further details on school development being a permitted development. She also enquired about what was going to be built on the site at Bonds Lane as someone working on the site mentioned it was going to be houses, the Town Council have received no planning applications.

David Lamb said school development is not straight forward as there is a list of things which have to be followed. It also does not include temporary classrooms. With regards to the site at Palace Street, a wholly residential place would not be approved however, a mixed use building would be. However, no planning applications have yet been received.

Cllr D Albone asked what could be done about the lack of footpath along the school route on Maunder Avenue as it is a recipe for disaster with pushchairs and traffic like bin lorries.

David Lamb explained that this stretch of highway has been designed as a shared surface. Studies have shown it works well for both pedestrians and traffic. It is doubtful that this would be changed as it was approved to be in that format.

Cllr H Ramsay asked if the residents were to start a petition to have it changed, would it be considered.

David Lamb believed a petition would be looked at and considered by the committee.

Cllr G Wilson queried why so many roads in Biggleswade were unadopted.

David Lamb said the only people who can progress with an adoption of a road is the developer. This can be costly for the developer to do. There is no legislation requiring CBC to push the developer for adoption.

### **Standing orders were suspended allowing members of the public to ask questions.**

MOP 1 asked I cant believe that Biggleswade Town Council is the only Council who has to go through a second teir to get their voice heard on the calling in period.

David Lamb explained that there is no flexibility for the constitutions to be changed and that a comment must be made to Central Bedfordshire Council to change it.

## **6. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr D Albone asked when the new crossing in London Road will be operational.

Town Clerk replied that he believes it is waiting to be connected to a power supply.

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

- a. Members received and approved the Minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting held on 19 May 2015 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade, subject to the amendment of Cllr M Foster's name being added to the Personnel committee members on item 5a.

## 8. **MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr D Strachan asked, regarding item 13a, if Cllr G Wilson had any luck in trying to contact Sergeant Gary Kidd.

Cllr G Wilson replied that he has not had any luck in contacting Sergeant Kidd but he has left messages at the police station for him to call back. However, he may have no alternative but to make contact with Kempston Police Station.

## 9. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### a. **CB/15/01755/FULL – 174 DROVE ROAD, BIGGLESWADE**

Single storey side/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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

### b. **CB/15/01808/FULL – 23 NURSERY CLOSE, BIGGLESWADE**

First floor extension to rear and side.

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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

### c. **CB/15/01818/ADV – UNIT J, RETAIL PARK, LONDON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE**

Advertisement: 1 illuminated front fascia sign and 2 digitally printed vinyl logos applied to glass shop front (non illuminated). 4 digitally printed logos applied to totem.

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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

### d. **CB/15/01904/FULL – 24 DROVE ROAD, BIGGLESWADE**

Loft conversion with rear dormer and raising ground floor rear roof.

Cllr B Briars raised the point that a difference exists in the materials, the brick used in that property are not Arlesey whites they are Cambridge hand cut whites.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise **NO OBJECTION** to this application subject to a change in materials.

### e. **CB/15/01923/FULL – 16 DROVE ROAD, BIGGLESWADE**

Single storey rear extension (including demolition of existing single storey 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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

### f. **CB/15/01933/FULL – 33 NURSERY CLOSE, BIGGLESWADE**

Single storey side extensions.

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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and

privacy of adjacent residents.

**g. CB/15/01906/FULL – 7 DROVE ROAD, BIGGLESWADE**

Single storey rear & side 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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

**h. CB/15/01989/FULL – 7 FENNEL DRIVE, BIGGLESWADE**

First floor extension over 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 principal dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

**10. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**a. Dispensations**

Cllr H Ramsay proposed that all councillors have a dispensation on the matter of the parking strategy. Cllr B Rix seconded this proposal.

It was **RESOLVED** that all Biggleswade Town Councillors would have a dispensation on the matter of the parking strategy.

**b. Langford and Biggleswade Community Fund Group**

Cllr B Briars mentioned that he could not remember this issue coming before council in the past. He asked how were Central Bedfordshire Councillors Jane and David Lawrence were appointed.

Cllr M Russell replied that Central Bedfordshire Councillors Jane and David Lawrence were on the Wind Farm Committee so volunteered to be on the Langford and Biggleswade Community Fund Group as well. The Town Council have not received any reports back and would like to therefore ask those elected to ask what grants and for how much has already been given out.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr I Bond and Cllr M North are to be elected to sit on the Langford and Biggleswade Community Fund Group; the term of office will be 4 years or up to the next election.

**c. Street naming and numbering – Land at Potton Road, Biggleswade – 301 dwellings**

Cllr H Ramsay suggested that local children could be involved with the street naming in the future as it of too short notice currently.

Cllr M Russell liked the suggestion by Cllr M Foster to name the streets after Biggleswade's historical retailers.

She proposed that the list of street names put together by Cllr M Foster should be sent to Central Bedfordshire Council. Although, those who are still trading should not be included, nor shall the ones which are similar to current road names.

Cllr D Albone asked for Presland to be added to the list.

Cllr B Rix seconded Cllr M Russell's proposal.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following names are to be submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council as proposed street names for Land at Potton Road;

Brookbanks, Bryants, Carter, Chew, Collings, Denny, Dodimead, Fisher, Gale, Jemmett, Larkinson, Presland, Rouse, Soundy, Spong, Wakes and Whiteman.

Cllr H Ramsay asked if the council were in agreement that local schools should be contacted to help with generating future road names.

Council agreed that this should go ahead.

Cllr M Russell noted that the Central Bedfordshire Council guidelines on road names should also be sent to the schools.

## 11. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### a. **Proposed temporary road closure of London Road, Biggleswade.**

Council noted the proposed temporary road closure of London Road.

## 12. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

MOP 1 said that she was told her question regarding the safety of Harris' fair equipment was to be discussed at the Town Centre Management meeting, but it was not on the agenda. They asked if they could have a reply regarding the safety of the equipment.

Cllr H Ramsay replied that the Town Clerk would send a written response.

Cllr M Russell apologised that the issue was missed off of the Town Centre Management agenda.

## 13. **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.

Agenda Item (14a ) Minutes and recommendations of meetings.

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.