

**MINUTES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24 JUNE 2014 AT THE
OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD
BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr Mrs H Ramsay (Chair), Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr M North, Cllr G Wilson,
Cllr B Briars, Cllr D Albone, Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr T Woodward,
Cllr P Biernis
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Derek Kemp - DCK
Angela Thomas – Administrator
Members of public - 5

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs W Smith and Cllr B Rix.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

(b) Non-pecuniary Interests in any agenda item:

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence declared an interest in Item 10d
Cllr D Albone declared an interest in Item 10c
Cllr B Briars declared an interest in Item 10c
Cllr D Lawrence Item 16a.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that both she and Cllr Mrs M Russell attended the DISC presentation at Chicksands, and that the Deputy Mayor judged the Carnival Floats on 21st June.

The Mayor also stated that there is a Joint Committee being held on 25th June at Chicksands, commencing at 10.00am.

4. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr P Biernis asked if there was any progress on the parking strategy as some feedback was expected by the end of June 2014.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay informed members that the Parking Strategy was on the agenda for the Biggleswade Joint Committee for an update and the minutes of the meeting would come forward to Town Council.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence asked if there was any progress on the A boards; there is a large number of A boards and the last time I raised this we were promised that the policy would be implemented by the end of March.

Cllr Mrs M Russell informed members that the staff had done a lot of work on this and stated that all the A Boards had been listed and photographed (a total of 73). One further meeting has yet to take place before the policy can be implemented. Cllr Mrs M Russell stated the situation on the A Boards had been delayed due to the current staffing levels. Another meeting will be arranged.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence still felt that the situation should have been resolved by now.

Cllr D Albone raised concerns about the queue to the tidy tip at the weekends and asked what if anything can be done about this.

Cllr Mrs M Russell agreed there was a problem as she had noticed this, herself, a couple of weeks ago. There was a meeting recently with Paul Mason from CBC, and this issue was raised at the meeting. Paul Mason will take matter up with the Waste Management Team at CBC.

This issue could also be raised at the Joint Committee tomorrow (25th June).

5. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

MOP 1: the minutes for approval at this meeting mention various police related questions are they being progressed.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay informed members that a further letter had been written and we are still awaiting a response.

Cllr Mrs M Russell gave an update; explained that a meeting had been set up with head of parking enforcement at CBC and the Police were to carry out a site meeting and try and get some immediate action to deal with the issues.

Cllr Mrs. M Russell had spoken with Cllr M Jones who was going to pass the concerns to the Traffic Management Committee at CBC.

6. **BEDFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY**

Crime Figures

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked Cllr G Wilson to update where we are on this.

No Crime Figures were produced, however Cllr G Wilson confirmed he had been trying to contact Sergeant Gary Kidd, on several occasions, for update and hoped he would be attending the Council Meeting soon. Unfortunately, every time a meeting is due Sergeant Gary Kidd has not been available.

Cllr G Wilson, will keep trying to contact Sergeant Gary Kidd to get some response, and to confirm the Chief Inspectors attendance at the next Council Meeting.

7. **INVITED SPEAKERS**

There was no invited Speaker.

8. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. Members received the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 June 2014 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade

Changes were made to Item 10b "Street Naming and Numbering – Blocks 54 and 55, Land South of, Potton Road, Biggleswade"

Amend: "Davies (Peter Maxwell Davies)" to "Davies (Maxwell Davies)"

Add: "Cllr G Wilson asked if we could consider naming a street after Horace Gale for future road naming."

It was **RESOLVED** that subject to the amendments Town Council **approve** the minutes for 10th June 2014.

9. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 June 2014.

Cllr B Briars – as Cllr G Wilson has been unable to meet with Sergeant Kidd, can the Town Council now write and raise the issues discussed at last Town Council around South Walk.

Cllr B Briars thanked the Town Clerk for the response on the proposed works to the tree surround in the market square, however would it be possible to get a firm date when the works will progress.

Cllr B Briars asked if there was any update on the surveys taking place of the roads in Biggleswade as mentioned at the last Town Council meeting.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence – was unable to give an update the results have not come back to the Central Bedfordshire Councillors, the survey is a complete survey of all the roads and traffic flow in Biggleswade.

Cllr D Lawrence – the Police were invited to the Biggleswade Joint Committee tomorrow and agenda item; the police are unable to attend, however correspondence sent identifies that the standards committee for Beds and Herts police is situated at Biggleswade police station with no intentions for them to be moved, this is a good sign for the back office.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. **CB/14/02079/FULL – 154 London Road, Biggleswade** Conservatory to rear

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 conservatory to the principle dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents. Town Council ask that CBC monitor carefully the impact on the adjoining property.

b. **CB/14/02035/FULL – 10 Boddington Gardens, Biggleswade** Two storey side and 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. Town Council ask that CBC monitor carefully the impact on the adjoining property.

c. **CB/14/01761/FULL – 36 Drove Road, Biggleswade** Change of use and conversion/extension of doctors surgery (D1 Use Class) and dwelling house to 4 Flats (C3 Use Class)

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council ask that further information is given on this application prior to Town Council making a decision. This application does not cover the whole site and if the application were to proceed it may well land lock the remainder of the site.

d. **CB/14/02231/FULL – St Andrews Lower School, Brunt's Lane, Biggleswade** Single storey extension to provide new entrance lobby.

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

e. **CB/14/02253/FULL – 19 Ripon Court, Biggleswade, SG18 8JE** Single storey rear extension and addition of window to existing side elevation.

It was then **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. That the additional window is obscured glass.

f. **CB/14/02264/FULL – 40 Courtland's Drive, Biggleswade, SG18 8PQ** Demolition of existing garage & erection of 1.5 storey side & 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.

g. CB/14/02158/FULL – 85 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EE

Construction of front entrance 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.

h. CB/14/02162/ADV – 97 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0LA

Advert: 1 No. externally illuminated fascia sign and No. 1 externally illuminated projecting sign.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this planning application on condition that the signs are externally illuminated.

i. CB/14/02160/LB – 97 High Street, Biggleswade, SG18 0LA

Listed Building: Installation of new extraction/ventilation equipment, internal alterations & replacement shop front.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this planning application on the condition that the replacement shop front is in keeping with the remainder of the building.

11. ACCOUNTS

a (i) Financial Administration

Members received and adopted the following accounts:

- i. Detailed Balance Sheet to 30 April 2014
- ii. Summary of Income & Expenditure.
- iii. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 30 April 2014

a (ii) Members received and adopted the following accounts:

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

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked Derek Kemp to speak before we make a decision.

Derek stated he had looked at the April/May Financial Statements and found it difficult to understand where we were for the first few months. He stated that one of the problems noted was that a chunk of income and expenditure, such as insurance, had not been uniformed over the financial year.

He feels that an alternative method of reporting expenditure is required, and suggested we profile the accounts in a different way. Derek is happy to speak to the Chairpersons of the Finance and general Purposes Committee on this matter.

Cllr Mrs M Russell "Profiling Budgets.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence stated we have got legal fees amounting to £1,000 (8th April and 20th June) and that we are using quite a lot of money. Where are we going to find the costs for Legal Fees?

The Town Clerk stated the Finance Committee will have to look at this.

Cllr Mrs J Lawrence we have a Legal Fees budget, I note that we are only part way through the year and the budget is well used; where are we going to via the funds to top up this budget.

Cllr M North – budgets are set for the year, expenditure on the legal fees budget is due to exceptional circumstances, across the entire budget we may have a surplus on some and a deficit on others.

Cllr P Biernis required clarification on the Magistrates Court against Central Services budget.
Derek Kemp – a net cost of the Magistrates Court is charged as a service to Central services.

Cllr D Lawrence – Town Council currently have the same pattern of budgets each year, we could carry out a snapshot of previous years, and we do not wish to add overheads unnecessarily.

Derek Kemp – there is currently no profiling in the accounts.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt Detailed Balance Sheet to 30 April 2014. Summary of Income & Expenditure. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 30 April 2014. Detailed Balance Sheet to 31 May 2014. Summary of Income & Expenditure. Current Bank Account, receipts and payments to 31 May 2014

Proposed: Cllr M North **Seconded:** Cllr Mrs M Russell

b. **Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014 (attached)**

- i. For Members to approve and adopt the Accounts and Statement of Accounts contained in the Annual Return for 2013/2014.

It was stated the Financial Statement on Page 22 comparing costs to actual were as follows:

Budget 2013	Surplus £16,000
Actual Achieved	Surplus £10,500

Therefore, this suggests it is getting better as the years go on.

The Council has used same format for a number of years.

Cllr Mrs M Russell asked Derek to please confirm any issues.

Derek responded by saying it is pretty even keel, reserves have dropped slightly and there is no concern.

Cllr D Lawrence referred to Page 16.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Accounts and Statement of Accounts contained in the Annual Return for 2013/2014.

PROPOSED: Cllr M North **SECONDED:** Cllr M Russell

- ii. For Members to adopt and approve the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year 2013/2014.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt and approve the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year 2013/2014.

PROPOSED: Cllr M North **SECONDED:** Cllr M Russell

12. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Request from Cllr Peter Biernis re Committee paperwork supplied to Councillors – (deferred from 10 June Meeting)**

Cllr Peter Biernis is concerned about the amount of paper that is used in Committee documentation supplied to Councillors the amount of time taken for staff to collate the paperwork, and is proposing the following:

1. Councillors receive a hard copy of the minutes and agendas
2. Councillors receive an electronic copy of the previous minutes and agenda
3. Councillor receive an electronic copy of any attachments for them to review
4. Hard copy on display of the attachments at meetings for members to review plus a few copies for members of the public.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

Cllr P Biernis – paper use has impact on staff and environment; look at ways forward on how we can reduce amounts of paper and reduce our carbon footprint.

It was **RESOLVED** that a small Working Group of 3 – 5 councillors (to allow for any absences) be set up to consider and discuss Cllr P Biernis proposal.

Cllrs P Biernis, D Albone, B Briars, M North and T Woodward all agreed to be members of this Working Group, with the understanding they will report back to the Finance and General Purposes Committee then Town Council at a later date.

13. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Planning application outcomes

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

It was agreed by the Council that the last column should detail the actual decision made by CBC as the word “Decided” did not indicate the correct decision.

To be amended and taken back to Town Council meeting 8th July 2014.

14. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

MOP 2: have council seen the editorial on Councils speaking directly to the Press. What would be the attitude of Biggleswade Town Council?

Cllr Mrs M Russell - we as a Councillors need to be clear in our own mind what we talk about when we talk directly to the press.

Cllr D Albone – we should have a policy in place.

MOP 2: raised the question about what is happening to Rose Lane Car Park and Biggleswade Town Councils successful bid that was advertised in the Biggleswade Chronicle some time ago.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said this was a difficult one and she was not able to give a straight forward answer to the question because confidentiality was involved at this stage

MOP 2: I asked under an FOI some time ago how much has been paid to the Lord of the Manor over the years, for a car park which is not being maintained properly and I was told that at that time the information was commercially sensitive.

Cllr Mrs M Russell I am not able to give an answer now. Negotiations are still ongoing with the Lord of the Manor.

Cllr T Woodward stated that Council are pursuing Rose Lane as rigorously as they can and things are still commercially sensitive.

MOP 2: why has the Town Council web site still got pictures of Councillors missing, I would be happy to come round and take some snaps.

At this point Cllr Mrs H Ramsay closed the session as the 15 minutes was up.

15. 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 **(16a)**.

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.

At this point the Members of the Public left the room.