

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON  
TUESDAY 31 MARCH 2015 AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL,  
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE**

**Present:** Cllr Mrs H Ramsay (Chair), Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr G Wilson, Cllr T Woodward, Cllr P Biernis, Cllr D Albone, Cllr B Briars, Cllr M North, Cllr B Rix  
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk  
Mike Thorn – Deputy Town Clerk  
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant  
Members of the Public - 100

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence and Cllr S Watkins

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a)** Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – none declared
- (b)** Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – Cllr D Albone declared an interest as a resident of Drove Road, Cllrs B Rix and Mrs W Smith declared an interest as residents of Brunel Drive, Cllr M North declared an interest as a resident of Dells Lane, and Cllr T Woodward declared an interest as a resident of Mill Lane.

**3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

The Mayor announced that this public session will be combined with the public session as listed at item 5 on this agenda.

The Mayor then read out the following statement:

I am going to explain the reasons for calling this Extra Ordinary Council meeting.

As some of you well know we have been working with CBC and other parties over the last 5 years, looking at the parking situation in Biggleswade. Following our BTC/CBC Joint Committee meeting in January, we had expected that we would receive a proposal from CBC at the end of February 2015. However, when the papers arrived from CBC it was too late for the proposal to be included in the Agenda for 24 March and as CBC have asked the Council to consider the proposal before the 31 March, prior to its going forward for public consultation; a Town Council meeting has been called for this evening.

The purpose of this meeting is for your Town Councillors to consider the proposal from CBC and to send a formal reply to them. However, there will be an opportunity for you to ask questions during the public open session (item 5).

We have been told that there will be a public consultation held regarding these plans, as far as we know, no date has yet been set, but it will be publicised in advance.

Unfortunately, the representative from Amey who had agreed to attend this meeting, finds that he is no longer able to do so.

**4. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**a. Parking**

- i)** Members considered the works programme for Rose Lane resurfacing works.

It was **RESOLVED** that the scheduled works commences as planned.

As the disruption will affect shoppers at weekends, the Town Clerk will investigate alternative parking provision.

**Cllr B Briars proposed that Standing Orders be suspended, to give members of the public chance to speak before the Council discussed the proposal from CBC.**

**This was seconded by Cllr P Biernis.**

**A vote was taken and the proposal was defeated.**

- ii) Members considered proposals to tackle commuter parking. (a report and drawings outlining possible parking restriction options was attached to the agenda).

After discussion, and after minor amendments to the original proposal, Cllr Mrs M Russell proposed the following response to the CBC consultation document:

1. The Town Council is unhappy that the residents' parking areas are being brought forward without other necessary changes to help the viability of the town centre.
2. The Town Council is disappointed to see the proposal of residents' parking permits across all zones. Such permit systems have drawbacks and should be used in particular circumstances where there are residents who do not have off-street parking.
3. The Town Council is surprised that the alternative of am and pm restrictions is proposed at three hours. One hour is sufficient and gives much more flexibility for short and medium stay parking, as indicated by Parsons Brinckerhoff.
4. Empire Close and Mill Close should be added to either Zone C or Zone D.
5. The Town Council requests that Hitchin Street south of Teal Road is looked at again. What is proposed will not deal with the pinch point, particularly opposite South View, and any solution had to be as fair as possible to residents with no off-street parking.
6. Hitchin Street north of Teal Road should not be further restricted and the extra 15 spaces identified by Parsons Brinckerhoff should be brought into use.
7. Option 1 is to be preferred for London Road except that the south (or west) side should not be unrestricted but limited to 3 or 4 hours, with permits for residents without off-street parking.
8. The Town Council would prefer all zones to be implemented at the same time to avoid chaos of displacement.
9. After the Public Consultation, to bring any comments back to Town Council for discussion.

This was seconded by Cllr B Rix. The vote was unanimously in favour of the proposal. Therefore:

It was **RESOLVED** that Town Council write to CBC with the proposals above.

## **5. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

**The following comments and concerns were raised by members of the public:**

**As the Railway car park is so expensive, could Network Rail be asked to halve the price, even for a trial period, this would encourage commuters to park at the station**

**Dealt with Cllr McVicar years ago about Dells Lane, Tennyson Avenue area parking problems, he said CBC 'cannot afford policing'. It was passed onto Amey, who said that there is 'no congestion'**

**The public consultation must be given adequate notice and publicity. Could it be advertised in the Bulletin as this is delivered to every house.**

**Holme Crescent – the residents have been asking for signage for at least 12 months for residents parking, as commuters are taking up parking spaces.**

**Back Street – a resident has been asking CBC for the last 2 years for a disabled parking bay or parking permit for her disabled son. Despite support from Alistair Burt MP nothing has been done. However, 2 new disabled bays have just been painted in London Road, they remain unused.**

**A resident asked where the Public Consultation will take place. It was explained that this would probably take place in the BTC Council Chamber. He then said that he thought that there should be a meeting at the Weatherly Centre for CBC to hear people's comments, a meeting is preferable to an all day consultation.**

**With all the new houses under construction, there could possibly be 4,000 new cars. We need a new car park.**

**When CBC agreed the new development, did they think about parking?**

**London Road – cars park both sides of the road, making the road narrower. Are parking permits not favourable?**

**Hitchin Street – Zone C – no waiting on west side? Single yellow lines would be better**

**The newly painted disabled bays on London Road, were there originally for MBDC when their offices were there, they moved about 10 years ago, and the area is now residential.**

**The Dells off Dells Lane, commuters are parking on right hand side, restrictions are needed.**

**Windermere Drive – cars parking on the 2 bends, making the road dangerous.**

**Oak Crescent – no off street parking**

**Grasmere – could 'the dip' be changed into a car park.**

**Holme Court Avenue – people are parking on the speed humps.**

**Some residents are commuters, and need to leave their car at home, so need to be able to leave my car all day without being penalised.**

**Exeter Close – re time restrictions – most houses have more than one car. When we go to work, we need somewhere to leave our car.**

**Restrictions have got to be right for residents and would prefer 2 hours restriction.**

**Are parking permits a quick fund raising tax for CBC?**

**When planning permission is granted, there should be 2 parking spaces per house.**

**Kings Reach buses – need them to start earlier in the day. Preferably around 6am to link with the early trains.**

**The Baulk – has had parking problems for years, with the Doctors surgery and commuters. As soon as a resident goes out, they have lost their parking space.**

**Sun Street traffic lights not timed correctly for cyclists. Parking considerations should not be at the expense of walking and cycling. Biggleswade is not cycle friendly, but the Green Wheel is good.**

**London Road – people regard this road as long term parking. Residents have seen Fire Engines and Asda lorries struggling to get through. Some residents have seen vehicles parked in the same place for several days. Presumably while their owners are away on holiday.**

**Kings Reach – a lot of houses have a garage and parking space, but do not use their garage for their cars. Cllr Ramsay commented that you cannot legislate what people may or may not put in their garage.**

**Residents asked if BTC agreed that there should be a public meeting.**

**London Road – the cottages near the Red Lion – could we have permit parking?**

**Saffron Road – speeding traffic, people doing ‘u’ turns and then going the wrong way, commuters parking in the layby, we need restrictions.**

**Cllr Ramsay thanked the residents for attending the meeting and emphasised the importance of residents attending the consultation, as they as residents were more aware of the problems and potential difficulties in their immediate vicinity and would be better placed to inform CBC and suggest solutions.**

**The Council agreed to support the residents in requesting a public meeting with CBC officers and Councillors as well as the public consultation.**

## **6. 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 is discussed.

### **Agenda Item (7a) Parking**

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.