

## FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the 46th Meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at the Rufus Centre**

Present: Cllr J Dann (Chairman) Cllr A Lutley Cllr M Williams Cllr M Bonner  
Cllr M Sheehan Cllr M Platt Cllr J Blakeman

In attendance: Acting Town Clerk Community Services Officer  
Amenities Assistant Grounds Team Supervisor

Mrs H (Flitwick Resident) Mrs N (Toddington Resident)

Eloise Markwick, (Conservation & Project Officer – Greensand  
Country Landscape Partnership)

Apologies for absence accepted: There were none

#### **Open Forum**

1. Mrs H and Mrs N introduced themselves as members of the Flitwick Community and both concerned parents of two young people. They had been advised by the local Police that a gang pyramid appeared to be forming in Flitwick that involved drug use, knife crime and antisocial behaviour and that they were aware of many joining, particularly teenage boys. They were told that “County Lines” activity could be developing with people coming into the area by train from Bedford, Luton and London and there was a real danger of turf wars breaking out.
2. Mrs H and Mrs N were concerned there was only one local Police Officer covering not only Flitwick but also the surrounding area and both felt this was insufficient and would be asking the Police & Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire for another Officer specifically for Flitwick. They both felt that there were insufficient activities for young people to do and that prevention work was absent. They were aware of numerous dispersal notices given out in the Millennium Park area but felt that moving these young people on, many of them vulnerable with complex educational and behavioural reasons for joining gangs, was not the only solution. They added that as well as the dispersals carried out by the Police, there should be more targeted support for them, which would ultimately benefit not only the young people themselves but the whole community of Flitwick.
3. The Chairman acknowledged their concerns and invited them both to stay for the Agenda Item concerning Community Safety when comments and questions from the Committee Members would be raised.
4. Eloise Markwick, Conservation & Project Officer of the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership (GCLP) gave a presentation. The GCLP were halfway through a Heritage Lottery funded project to promote, protect and enhance the heritage and habitats of the area surrounding the Greensand Ridge and were currently involved in collaboration with FTC to develop the Flit Valley Walk.
5. The GCLP were seeking permission from FTC to allow them to apply for a grant to hire a Landscape Heritage Specialist to undertake a “Condition Survey” of the heritage features at Flitwick Manor Park which had been identified as a “Priority Parkland”. The specialist would be contracted by the GCLP and fully funded by a £15,000 grant from Historic England with an aim to safeguard and improve the condition of heritage features at Manor Park and to provide management guidance to both FTC and Flitwick Manor Hotel. This would be discussed by Members under Item 6b), Play Areas/Open Spaces/Parks, General.

514 **To Note any Declarations of Interest relating to items on the agenda**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

515 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed back Cllr Blakeman after her sabbatical leave from the Council.

516 **To elect a Vice Chairman**

Three Members were proposed and seconded as Vice Chair. That being the case, a vote took place and it was **Recommended** to elect Cllr Sheehan as Vice Chairman of the Committee.

517 **Acting Town Clerk's Report**

- (i) The Acting Town Clerk received a request from Henry Harris Fun Fair to hire the Millennium Park from Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March to Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April. Henry Harris was aware that the Flitwick 10k Race would be held on the last Sunday but had assured staff that the Fair would have packed away before the start of the race and that their vehicles would not try to exit the park until the Race activities and road closure had finished.
- (ii) The Chairman asked if there had been any records of increased crime or anti-social behaviour whilst the Fun Fair was there and the Acting Town Clerk said there was no evidence of this.

It was **Recommended** that permission be given to Henry Harris Fun Fair to use the Millennium Park from the 31<sup>st</sup> March to the 14<sup>th</sup> April inclusive.

- (iii) The Acting Town Clerk said there was another item relating to the use of Millennium Park which could be discussed in the Confidential Section with Members' agreement and this was agreed.

518 The Chairman announced that Agenda Item 11b), Community Safety , General would be taken next to allow the Members to discuss the points raised by the visitors in the Open Forum.

519 **Community Safety**  
**b) General**

- (i) Cllr Williams asked the residents if they had any specifics to report regarding anti-social behaviour or drugs use. Mrs H said in the last 2 years she had seen a massive deterioration within Flitwick and, as a dog walker, during the summer she had witnessed cannabis smoking and other drug taking. She had also seen empty gas canisters and plastic bags used to hold drugs left lying on the ground.
- (ii) Cllr Blakeman asked the residents how involved the schools were in educating children on the dangers of joining gangs and drug taking. Mrs H said that schools were talking to under 12's but it was 14 to 16 year olds who were at most risk and believed a culture was developing within the school environment and social groups.
- (iii) Cllr Williams asked what the residents wanted the Town Council to do. Mrs N replied that there needed to be more preventative work and more youth provision. The Youth Club was only on one day a week. She felt it required targeted youth work/mentoring and on a peer level. The Acting Town Clerk

explained that FTC contracted 4YP which raised the question about funding for extra provision which could be discussed in the Confidential Section with agreement from Members and this was agreed.

- (iv) The Chairman said that he was due to meet the Police and Crime Commissioner the following week and said it would be discussed with her then.
- (v) The Chairman thanked the residents for coming. (Mrs H and Mrs N left the meeting at this time).

**a) To re-consider a Council funded speed camera/Speedwatch scheme for speeding drivers**

- (i) The Acting Town Clerk stated that the main issue in the past had been recruiting Speedwatch volunteers and asked the Members if it was appropriate to try again. Cllr Williams said it only took a half-day training and agreed to send information to staff regarding what was involved for volunteers. The Chairman felt it was worth trying again.

It was **Recommended** that it should be tried again to set up a Speedwatch Scheme, using social media, eg Facebook, to recruit volunteers.

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**Play Areas/Open Spaces/Parks**

**a) To consider upgrade works for play area at Millennium Park**

- (i) Cllr Sheehan asked if this item could be deferred as he was waiting for a third quote from a play equipment company and hoped to receive it within the next two weeks. He proposed there be an additional Community Services Meeting arranged to review the quotes. This was agreed by the Members with no objections and a date would be set for late February/early March.

**b) General**

- i) In response to the Open Forum presentation by Eloise Markwick, a discussion followed regarding the granting of permission to the GCLP to apply for a grant of £15,000 from Historic England for the hire of a Landscape Heritage Specialist to undertake a "Condition Survey" of Flitwick Manor Park. All Members agreed that permission be granted.

It was **Recommended** that permission be granted to the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership to apply for a grant from Historic England for the hire of a Landscape Heritage Specialist to undertake a "Condition Survey" of Flitwick Manor Park.

- (ii) The Grounds Team Supervisor asked for permission to use his personal drone to photograph aerial views of Manor Park. He felt it would be useful to promote the Park on social media to encourage more use of the Park and could be used on other areas of land owned by FTC when the need arose. The Members all agreed this was a good idea and gave their permission.
- (iii) Cllr Bonner said a resident had reported to him that someone had been fishing on the lake at Manor Park. The Grounds Team Supervisor said that fishing was not allowed on the lake but it was highly unlikely there would be any fish as the lake had dried up the previous summer. Cllr Bonner said it was in danger of silting up again and the Council may have to consider re-dredging again in the not too distant future. The Flit Valley Volunteers had helped in the past and could possibly be asked to help out again should the need arise.

- (iv) Members requested for a “No Fishing” sign to be displayed at the site.

521 **Highway Issues / infrastructures / Car Parking**

**a) To note the Minutes from Highways Meeting with CBC representatives**

- (i) Minutes from the Highways Meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December, having been previously circulated, were noted.
  - (ii) The Chairman had noticed the “No Left Turn” into Chapel Road from Windmill Road had not yet been rescinded by CBC Highways Department. Traffic Congestion along Windmill Road was not being helped by the convenience shop on the corner of this particular junction as it was now being used as a parcel pick-up/drop-off point. This would be brought up at the next Highways Meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> February.
- b) Update on funding opportunity from CBC Local Transport Plan**
- (i) The Acting Town Clerk said she had received several suggestions from residents from the public consultation outcome and they were all replied to but unfortunately some did not meet the criteria. After consulting with Cllrs Blazeby and Sheehan, who attended Highways meetings, two popular suggestions had been submitted: traffic calming measures for Temple Way between Wren Close and Manor Way and Manor Way itself. She expected to hear back from them in May when the outcome would be reported back to Members.
  - (ii) Cllr Williams commented that the speed sensor situated on Steppingley Rd, near the junction of Manor Way did not appear to be working. Cllr Sheehan said he would take the matter up at the next Highways Meeting in February.

522 **Grounds Services**

**a) Update from Grounds Team Supervisor including Wildlife Survey costs**

- (i) Five trees had been planted at The Rufus Centre, (2 weeping cherries and 3 ornamental pears).
- (ii) The cost for a replacement tree at Beaumont Park, which had already been agreed by the Chairman and the Town Mayor, was £210 plus VAT and this was deemed acceptable. This was not brought back to Committee due to the time restrictions for tree planting.
- (iii) The field behind the lake had now been cut and fencing prices for cattle had now been reviewed. The Grounds Team Supervisor had obtained two quotes for fencing: the first quote was £1533.50 plus VAT. This was only for the materials so machinery to install it would need to be hired and it was estimated it would take at least two Groundsmen 2 to 3 weeks to complete. The second quote was £6000 plus VAT. This would include full installation and the use of chestnut posts, favoured by Natural England, and came with the possibility of receiving some funding towards the fences.

It was **Recommended** that Option 2 be approached to carry out the work, subject to funding criteria being confirmed as it was better value for money.

- (iv) Part of the Manor Park Management Plan asked for an ecological survey be carried out in four year's time to monitor the wildlife in the Park. The Grounds Team felt it would be beneficial to carry out a survey now to enable them to make a comparison with the later one and find out how the ecology of the Park was

progressing. The survey would cost £660 plus VAT. All Members felt this was a good idea.

It was **Recommended** that a Wildlife Survey be carried out at the Manor Park by The Greensand Trust later in the year.

## 523 **Allotments**

### **a) Update on the re-marking of plots 39 – 59 at Station Road Allotment Site**

- (i) A site visit to this particular area had been made by the Grounds Team Supervisor, the ALC Chairman, the ALC representative for Station Road and the Amenities Assistant on the 29<sup>th</sup> January. The area was clearly in need of reshaping as spine paths had become unaligned and plot sizes had become shapeless and of varying sizes. The Grounds team Supervisor had used his drone to gain an aerial view.
- (ii) A to-scale plan had been produced. The Amenities Assistant had notified the plot holders and was in the process of inviting individuals who would be most affected by any changes to come into the office to discuss the proposed work. This was ongoing.

### **b) General**

- (i) There were no items

## 524 **Community and Events**

### **a) Event Report**

- (i) The Community Services Officer presented to the Members on the events that had taken place over the previous two months as per the report previously circulated. Regular events for older people continued to be well attended and the Christmas events had been successful once again being well supported by local businesses and residents.
- (ii) The organisation of Children's events for Half Term and summer were well underway.
- (iii) The planning of a wide variety of future events was also in hand and included several evening entertainment shows, a Car Boot Sale, the Annual Dog Show and the Carnival.

### **b) To discuss Community Planters proposal**

- (i) Working together, the Community Services Team and the Grounds Team suggested to Members that community planters be placed around Flitwick, primarily at the end of each road with residents taking care of their own planter's upkeep and planting. The Grounds Team would be able to construct the planters during the winter months at a cost of approximately £70 each. Local businesses could also sponsor a planter(s) with their logo on the planters' side to promote their businesses. The Members all approved of this idea and offered their encouragement. Cllr Bonner offered to approach Jewson to ask for a special price for the wood.

It was **Recommended** for staff to progress with the community planters proposal.

**c) To consider GDPR equipment**

- (i) The Community Services Team often organised outside events away from the offices and it was a requirement to keep a register of all those attending for names, emergency telephone numbers and medical records. This was currently kept as a typed list on paper that could easily be lost or misplaced. To comply with GDPR requirements, the Community Services Officer asked if it would be possible to purchase an iPad so that sensitive information could be password protected and easily portable. It could be synced with the Apple Mac in the office so that if lost or stolen, it could have its contents deleted remotely. After an extended discussion it was agreed to investigate all options, including a second-hand iPad and Cllr Sheehan advised on Mobile Device management software.

It was **Recommended** to investigate all options for a tablet device to comply with GDPR requirements and report costs back to a future Committee meeting for approval.

**d) General**

- (i) Cllr Bonner praised the Community Services Team for all their hard work and this was concurred by the other Members.

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**Questions**

- (i) The Community Services Officer said a Christmas Lights Working Group Meeting had been held and wondered what the Members thoughts were on where the Christmas Lights Switch-On Event could be situated this year. There followed a discussion on last year's event and how it could be improved. Cllr Sheehan said that as it needed to move out from Tesco Car Park, he and the group proposed it be set up in the car park of Flitwick Village Hall. The event would complement the Christmas Fair at The Village Hall, (organised by the Village Hall Management Committee), would give an opportunity for a Christmas tree to be erected and more lights to be installed, perhaps on the roof of the Village Hall and suggested that the extra cost could be shared with the Village Hall. If the event was to be held in this area for several years to come, it could be worth making an initial investment in lighting that would only need topping up on an occasional basis and for maintenance. The Acting Town Clerk reminded Members that the budget for 2019 had already been set.

**Confidential Section**

In accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act 1960), the public and press were to be excluded for Agenda Items 13 and 14 in view of the confidential nature of the information to be discussed relating to financial and contractual negotiation and questions.

519 cont'd

**Community Safety – General (item b)**

Members were advised regarding a quotation.

It was **Recommended** to clarify budgets and progress with the quotation if possible.  
Vote: 6 in favour, 1 abstention.

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**a) Events costings**

The Community Services Officer provided Members with a breakdown of income and expenditure for all current regular activities.

**b) Proposed events for 2019**

The Community Services Officer provided Members with a breakdown of predicted income and expenditure for proposed events in 2019.

The Chairman requested to extend the meeting by no more than 15 minutes to complete the business and this was agreed by all Members.

**c) Older people's Transport Scheme**

Members discussed the transportation needs of older people who attended Council activities, events and trips and the cost implications.

It was **Recommended** to continue using Flittabus as the Council's transport scheme.

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**To note Monthly Community Services Budget**

The Monthly Budget Review for December 2018 by the Senior Finance & HR Officer, having previously been circulated to Members, was noted.

The Meeting closed at 10.00pm

Signed.....  
Chairman

**Report on Community Safety**  
**CSC7 06.02.19 Agenda Item 11 (b)**

1. The Acting Town Clerk advised she had approached 4YP to see what their fee would be to extend their services to deliver Youth Club on an additional week night. The quote was £6863.52 per annum.

Most Members were in support of pursuing this idea. Members were reminded about the additional Earmarked Reserve that had been transferred to their Committee and it was agreed to investigate if there would be any funding left from this amount after the play area upgrade, (Millennium Park) and the defibrillator costs were taken, to fund this additional youth service through 4YP.

It was **Recommended** to clarify budgets and progress with the quotation. If possible an update on this would be available for the February Full Council.

**Report on Community and Events**  
**CSC8 06.02.19 Agenda Items 13 (a), (b) and (c)**

1. The Community Services Officer had previously circulated detailed average income and expenditure for the regular activities over the whole of 2018 which each showed approximate profits and losses for the year. It was agreed by all Members that there would be some activities that would result in an overall loss but these activities provided a valuable service to the community. Members were comfortable with this and it was agreed that it would be the larger events such as the Car Show that would bring result in a profit. It was suggested for the Community Services Officer to do income and expenditure costings for all events to be looked at alongside the presented figures for regular activities.
2. The Community Services Team proposed two events for 2019 with Members' agreement:

The first event proposed was an Open Air Cinema. This event would be part of the Summer Programme and could be held on the Rufus Centre Field. There had been discussions with a company who specialised in this and who would provide all the equipment, set up/pack down and run the films. The sound would come from speakers on the field, not headphones.

There could be two showings, a family film in the afternoon and a 15 rated one in the evening. The evening film would end around 10pm and the company would have de-rigged and left the field by 11pm which followed agreed procedures from CBC Environmental Teams and Town Council Resolutions.

People could be invited to bring their own picnics but there would also be a limited bar and a couple of caterers vans. Tickets would be £7.50. A one-off film licence would allow 249 tickets to be sold for each showing.

If it was approved, the residents in Froghall Rd would be notified and those households closest to the Rufus Centre Field would be offered free tickets.

Cllr Sheehan said that as much as he liked the idea of the event, without headphones for the evening showing, he felt it would cause major problems with neighbouring households because of the noise and for that reason, he objected to the event being held.



The Grounds Team Supervisor wondered if it was possible for the sound to come through the speakers in the cars. Cllr Blakeman proposed an investigation on this which was seconded by Cllr Platt. A vote took place and all agreed with one abstention.

The second event proposed was the Family Fun Day. This event would be low cost and subsidised by FTC. Three quotes had been received from companies supplying the amusement rides and bouncy castles. The Chairman proposed Members let the staff take judgement on choosing the supplier and this was agreed by all.

3. Older People's Transport Scheme

Link-A-Ride had contacted the Community Services Officer about providing transport for older people's activities and trips. Their vehicle was able to accommodate wheelchairs but was restricted to carrying a maximum of 12 passengers (or 5 if there were 2 wheelchair users). They offered a special rate of £45 per event.

Flittabus had been used for all regular activities and trips so far and although their vehicle was inaccessible to wheelchair users, it was capable of carrying 16 passengers.

Cllr Bonner proposed that Flittabus remained the preferred transport provider. and all agreed.

**Questions**  
**CSC9 06.02.19 Agenda Item 15**

1. The Community Services Officer said that on several occasions the Older People's Friday Lunch Club, which was normally held in the Dining Room, had to be moved to an alternative, smaller room in the Rufus Centre at relatively short notice due to the Lockyer Suite being booked for conferencing. The Lunch Club was always well attended and enjoyed by many older people and moving to a smaller room resulted in many of them being excluded. She asked if this situation could be reviewed and it was agreed that it would be taken to Full Council for a decision to be made.