

**Minutes of the 386th Meeting of Flitwick Town Council will be held on
Tuesday 16th January 2018 at the Rufus Centre**

Present: Cllr G Mackey (Chairman)
Cllrs J Blakeman I Blazeby M Bonner
P Feerick A Lutley M Platt
J Roberts M Sheehan P Thompson
M A Williams

Also present: CBCllrs C Gomm A Turner
PC5832 Dagley

In attendance: Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk

Apologies for absence: Cllrs K Badham J Dann V Owens
K Quantrill M Waites CBCllr F Chapman

No apologies Received: Cllr A Larkins

Open Forum There were no items.

Reports from Central Bedfordshire Members

1. CBCllr Turner thanked the Town Council for the added publicity given to Central Beds Council's (CBC) Budget and Local Plan consultations on the Facebook page. It was important to urge residents to give full responses and stated there was an added weight with the Town Council response. He added that the plan was essential because without it, it left matters open for developers, Government etc. There were changes to the original plan, which were gathered through feedback from earlier consultation, and these shaped the new plan.

2. The Chairman read out a written question from Cllr Badham who was unable to attend the meeting. Cllr Badham had realised that the first draft related to housing development was near a decision from an inspector and asked what the thought process was behind this since the reason and background information had not been released in advance. CBCllr Turner responded that he was at the meeting where this was discussed and everything had been fully disclosed and well covered. CBCllr Turner advised that there had been lengthy discussions and no subsequent papers.

(Cllr Bonner entered the meeting at this time.)

3. CBCllr Gomm advised that there was not a huge pressure on Flitwick for housing however there were adjoining proposals for Marston and Aspley Guise where future residents of these areas would use Flitwick Station for commuting. Members were advised to look at this part of the plan.

4. CBCllr Gomm informed Members that CBC had contracted an external consultant to look at the noise issues relating to the housing development behind the Rufus Centre. A report had been circulated for discussion at CBC's Community Services meeting on 8th January and pinpointed conclusions/steps forward which would hopefully contribute to a solution. The Chairman advised that he was meeting with the Town Clerk the following week to discuss the report.

5. The 40 mph speed limit signs had been installed at the Flitvale bends and the on-going issue with leftover work at the Badgers Close/Steppingley Road junction was due to be sorted by the end of January.

4513 To note any Declarations of Interest relating to items on the agenda

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4514 Town Mayor's Announcements

- (i) The Chairman wished all Members a Happy New Year and stated he had attended the following:-
Flitwick Christmas Lights Switch On
Sea Cadets Mess Dinner
- (ii) The Deputy Town Mayor had attended the Police Carol Service at Shefford.

4515 Town Clerk's Report

- (i) Members were informed that the Council had been sent Happy New Year wishes from the Mayor of Calvisson. The next community exchange visit was planned for a weekend in March.

The Chairman asked for Members' approval to move item 14 – To discuss resident and Members concern about Local Policing – for discussion at this point and this was agreed.

4516 To discuss resident and Members concern about local Policing

- (i) The Chairman advised that following presentation of Police statistics at Council meetings, Members had seen a considerable rise in burglaries, attempted burglaries and crime in Flitwick. Subsequently, a representative from Beds Police had been invited to attend the meeting so that Members could learn what action was being taken.
- (ii) PC Dagley stated that a lot of work was being undertaken to investigate the series of burglaries affecting Flitwick and other areas in Central Beds. Operation Maze was the initiative used for responses, which included marked and unmarked patrols throughout the night and darker times.
- (iii) PC Dagley's team responded to victims of burglary. The Police had a Gold, Silver and Bronze grading system to assess the victim's vulnerability.
- (iv) Repeat victims of theft from and/of motor vehicles were always visited and these individuals were given crime prevention advice. The Police had done a lot of this since the beginning of November.
- (v) The Police had an awareness of who they believed were responsible for the crimes and were treating it with seriousness. There had been a series of dwelling and commercial burglaries and theft from and of motors. An arrest had been made in Flitwick and the person responsible for recent thefts from motor vehicles was in prison.
- (vi) The Police were actively seeking the person responsible for a number of offences and lines of enquiry were being followed. 'Reasonable grounds' for the arrest of a third person was anticipated the following week.
- (vii) A dedicated Intelligence Analyst was working hard on all evidence provided from the public and some of this had been obtained through social media. In particular vehicles had been seen via pictures on Facebook and good

information was being received via Flitwick residents. A clear intelligence picture was being formed and the Police were targeting their patrols based on this. Flitwick was deemed a 'hot spot' and PC Dagley wanted to thank the public for presenting the Police with the information.

- (viii) Operation Beneke was carried out by PC Dagley's team and they had been based at Flitwick Leisure Centre car park the previous weekend to gather intelligence. Officers were out on foot and delivered information to home owners.
- (ix) The report showed comparative figures from 2016 and the present day. Domestic burglary had increased by 5, theft from motor vehicles had increased by 2 and other figures were shown which would be clear to Members once they read the report.
- (x) Cllr Bonner asked if the Police were aware of the drugs situation in Flitwick. PC Dagley advised that the Police were proactively targeting however there was an intelligence gap. The Police were actively looking at some individuals but he was limited as to what he could discuss about this. PC Dagley advised that residents could supply intelligence anonymously via Crimestoppers.
- (xi) Cllr Blazeby asked what the Council could do to support the Police with promotions. PC Dagley stated he could provide information on crime prevention and the Council could support the Police with developing intelligence. Cllr Blazeby mentioned that the Council could assist with promotions through the Flitwick Papers and the website to inform residents.
- (xii) The Chairman wished to pass on his thanks to the Police on the front line who had provided an exemplary service however he felt that the operational capacity was different. Cllr Roberts echoed the Chairman's views as he had received a superb service personally.
- (xiii) PC Dagley commented that where the Police had the resources, personnel did visit the victims of burglaries as this was a priority in their Control Strategy.
- (xiv) The Chairman stated that he felt the Officers who were responsible for the strategy should attend a meeting as part of the Community Safety Panel, in addition to the Police & Crime Commissioner, the MP and Chief Constable. He believed this meeting should be held to discuss how to combat crime and give residents an opportunity to attend and ask questions. PC Dagley advised he would attend this meeting.
- (xv) Members discussed the email alert schemes available, which were informative, and Cllr Blakeman was currently forwarding these on for the Council to publicise where appropriate. PC Dagley stated people could sign up to specific messages that are of relevance to them and the alerts were an important engagement tool.

It was **Resolved** to organise and hold a public meeting which focused on the crime in Flitwick and the surrounding towns/villages. Senior representatives from the Police, Police & Crime Commissioner, the MP and Chief Constable would be asked to attend.

(PC Dagley and Cllr Roberts left the meeting at this time.)

4517 To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 385th meeting of the Town Council held on 21st November 2017

- (i) It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 385th meeting of Flitwick Town Council held on 21st November 2017 having previously been circulated be taken as read, be signed and adopted as a true record.
- (ii) Cllr Sheehan asked how progress was tracked on questions/tasks that had been assigned for people to investigate/carry out through discussion at previous meetings. The Chairman mentioned that the Action Log would soon be utilised for this purpose from mid February.

4518 To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 39th meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 6th December 2017

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 39th meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 6th December 2017 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4519 To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 298th meeting of the Planning Committee held on 7th December 2017 (Chairman's Decisions circulated)

This meeting was cancelled due to a lack of quorum

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Chairman's Decisions from the Planning Committee from 7th December 2017 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4520 To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 30th meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held on 13th December 2017

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the 30th meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held on 13th December 2017 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4521 To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 77th meeting of the Business Services Committee held on 14th December 2017

- (i) It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the 77th meeting of the Business Services Committee held on 14th December 2017 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record with one amendment: add Cllr Sheehan to those present.
- (ii) The Chairman reinforced item 830 from the Minutes to state that Members did not have voting rights unless they were attending the meeting as official Subs, which was part of the Standing Orders.

4522 To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 31st meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held on 8th January 2018

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the 31st meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held on 8th January 2018 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record with one amendment: p. 6 Recommendation point 3 – "CBCllr Young to carry out his proposed investigation into the Planning process for the current development."

4523 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 299th meeting of the Planning Committee held on 11th January 2018**

- (i) Members read the Minutes as these had not been circulated prior to the meeting.
- (ii) Cllr Sheehan advised that he had asked for CBCllr Young's proposed investigation regarding the Planning process (as detailed above within Minute number 4522) and had asked for a letter to be sent to CBCllr Young with regards to this.
- (iii) It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the 299th meeting of the Planning Committee held on 11th January 2018 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record with the amendment of correcting spelling of 'feedback' (item 2409) and request for a letter to be sent to CBCllr Young regarding the Planning process investigation.

4524 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 78th meeting of the Business Services Committee held on 11th January 2018**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the 78th meeting of the Business Services Committee held on 11th January 2018 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4525 **To receive the Precept Report and set the Precept for 2018/19 presented by the Chairman of the Business Services Committee**

- (i) The Chairman presented the Precept Report for the ensuing year.

(Cllr Roberts entered the meeting at this time).

- (ii) Cllr Thompson asked why the paperwork had not been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman advised that he had wanted to present the report at the meeting before circulating it however Cllr Thompson stated he felt this was not correct.

It was **Resolved** that the Town Council Precept for 2017/18 be accepted in the sum of £779,592 which was an increase of 2% for the Band D figure.

4526 **To note the Central Beds Council budget consultation**

Members noted the CBC budget consultation as mentioned earlier. Members were in agreement that the graphic used in their publicity material about how the money was spend was something the Town Council could look to take on board in the future.

4527 **To nominate Subs for the Planning Committee**

Members were advised that there were still Sub vacancies to fill on the Planning Committee.

It was **Resolved** for Cllr Mackey to be a Sub on the Planning Committee.

4528 **To accept the amended Calendar of Meeting Dates for 2018**

- (i) Following Members' decision to have monthly Corporate Services meetings an amended calendar of meeting dates had been circulated. This accommodated the scheduled meetings moving towards the end of each month.
- (ii) Cllr Sheehan asked if Officers present could explain where the changes were since he had updated his diary with the previous dates. The Assistant Town Clerk stated that as well as the movement of Corporate Services meetings, the March Business Services meeting was on 8th (instead of 15th) and the Planning meeting in October (11th) was the only date where the meeting started at 7pm due to Business Services being on the same night.
- (iii) Members noted the amended calendar of meeting dates for 2018.

4529 **To receive reports from representatives on Outside Bodies**

There were no reports from representatives on Outside Bodies.

4530 **Questions**

- (i) Cllr Blazeby asked for an update on Councillor Tablets and the Chairman stated that this was pending an imminent installation process by members of the IT Panel and once this had been carried out, Members could start using the electronic devices.
- (ii) Cllr Feerick asked what would happen if Members did not want to use an electronic device and he was advised that these Members could collect their papers from the office.
- (iii) Cllr Blakeman stated that she was happy to receive electronic versions of the meeting agendas that she was not a part of and would be content to pick up paperwork for the Committees she was a part of from the office.
- (iv) Cllr Blazeby reminded the Chairman that it was decided at the last Corporate Services meeting to see which Members could attend the Cllr/Staff Workshop on 25th January at 7.15pm. The Chairman explained the purpose of the workshops and 6 Members present said they were available to attend.

Confidential Section

In accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960) the public and press to be excluded for items 20 and 21 in view of the confidential nature of the information to be discussed relating to financial and contractual negotiations and item 22.

4531 **S106 applications**

Members received an update on S106 applications.

4532 **To receive an oral report from the Chairman of the Personnel Panel**

Members received a report from the Chairman of the Personnel Panel.

It was **Resolved** for staff to take holiday from 24th December 2018 – 1st January 2019 inclusive and close the Town Council office and the Rufus Centre building during this time except for the annual New Years Eve booking.

7.

4533

Questions

Members asked questions under the Confidential Section.

Meeting closed at 9.12pm.

Signed
(Chairman)