

FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the 408th Meeting of Flitwick Town Council held on 19th November 2019 at the Rufus Centre

Present: Cllr P Thompson (Chairman)
Cllrs K Badham I Blazeby R Coleman J Dann
M Halligan A Lutley G Mackey J Roberts
R Shaw D Toinko

Also present: CBCllr N Bunyan
CBCllr C Gomm
C Coverdale - Link-a-Ride
3 residents

In attendance: Assistant Town Clerk RFO & HR Officer

Apologies for absence received: Cllrs J Blakeman P Dodds P Earles
A Snape M A Williams

Open forum

1. Cheryl Coverdale from Link-a-Ride (LAR) advised the Town Council that four years ago Central Beds Council (CBC) had put their contract for community transport out to tender. She informed Members that LAR lost this contract to BRCC in April 2018, a charity that at this time had no buses, drivers or clients. LAR stepped in for 3 months in order to deliver the contract to make these vital journeys for vulnerable people in the community. Members were informed that BRCC went on to deliver less journeys at a cost to the tax payer. Members heard some statistics on the number of trips that LAR made in comparison to BRCC and Cheryl explained how LAR was vital in the community for tackling social isolation and loneliness. Members heard that CBC were being unsupportive and had taken away school runs. Cheryl told the Council that CBC had given notice for their use of their offices and emphasised the huge impact that removing this service would have on its users. Cheryl asked the Town Council if they would write a letter of support to Cllr James Jamieson of CBC and to also seek assistance with office space.

Cllr Shaw asked what proportion of the jobs BRCC had taken up. Cheryl advised that BRCC had not taken any jobs from LAR since receiving £90k per year since July 2018. No customers from LAR had moved over to BRCC.

Cllr Badham explained that he was puzzled to hear this information since CBC had been stating that BRCC had the capacity to take on work from LAR via communication platforms. Cheryl advised that BRCC did not have access to their customers. She added that some people in the community had applied for BRCC membership however they were required to complete forms and provide utility bills, which had led to people being refused membership.

The Chairman advised Cheryl that the Town Council had already sent Cllr Jamieson a letter of support for LAR dated 13th November 2019. Cllr Jamieson's letter of response would be circulated to all Members

Action: RFO

Cllr Blazeby asked whether LAR would 'disappear' come 1st January 2020. Cheryl explained that this could happen. The Chairman thanked Cheryl for attending the meeting and said the Town Council would discuss the information she had provided.

2. Two residents of Buttermere Close addressed the Town Council regarding a parking issue in their street. A van had been parked there for some time, which was not taxed, used or insured and it was causing an inconvenience. The resident showed Cllr Badham an image on her phone of where the vehicle was parked. The Chairman explained that CBC were the highways and parking authority and advised that the Ward Members present may be able to assist. CBCllr Gomm took the resident's contact information and agreed to look into this.

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Reports from Central Bedfordshire Members

1. CBC were seeking feedback from residents on polling districts and buildings that operate as polling stations. This consultation was due to end on 11th December 2019. Members discussed that the use of schools for polling stations was unsatisfactory. CBCllr Gomm advised that people could contact Brian Dunlevy on 0300 300 4049 to state their opinions and reasons on this. Cllr Thompson advised that Sacred Heart Church was due to be used instead of Flitwick Lower for the upcoming election. Members agreed to write to Brian Dunlevy from the Town Council to support the notion of not using schools for polling stations.

Action: Amenities Officer

2. CBCllr Mackey advised that he and other Ward Members had been supporting LAR, including setting up a meeting with CBC regarding a disputed payment. Ward Members were due to attend a meeting with Cllr Jamieson the following week on wider issues for LAR and to look at other potential funding sources. Alternative solutions presented by CBCllr Mackey included diversifying grants and a funding website. He added that the outcomes of a recent Task Group Meeting had been disappointing but there was wide support among Councillors to keep LAR going.
3. CBC were not any further forward for the Steppingley Crematorium to be an item on the Development Management Committee meeting agenda. CBCllr Mackey had been disappointed to see CBC Officers referring to the Crematorium within emails and stated that he and other Ward Members would continue to push this issue.
4. There had been over 100 challenges to the Local Plan to various items which were being reviewed. CBCllr Mackey had been advised that CBC Officer Jason Longhurst would be leaving the organisation.
5. CBCllr Mackey's motion presented to CBC regarding step free access at Flitwick Station had been defeated, which he believed was disappointing as CBC should be leading the fight for this.
6. Councillor Support Grants would be up to the value of £6k and Members would encourage residents and local organisations to apply. These grants would need to be match funded.
7. CBC had unanimously passed a motion to prevent live animals being given away on any land that it controls and he hoped the Town Council would also do this on their land. Officers advised that this was already being implemented.
8. CBCllr Bunyan explained that he was upset to hear that people had been unable to access the community transport via the new providers as detailed in the earlier presentation. Cheryl agreed to email CBCllr Bunyan with all the relevant information. CBCllr Gomm advised that Ampthill Town Council had taken the same stance as Flitwick Town Council on supporting LAR.

4895 To note any Declarations of Interest relating to items on the agenda

Cllr Mackey declared an interest for part of item 13 - Personnel Panel Report - he signed the Declaration of Interest Book and took no part in the discussion of this section of the item.

4896 Town Mayor's Announcements

- (i) The Town Mayor had attended the following:
 - Baycroft opening event

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- 20th Anniversary of the Rufus Centre celebration
- Remembrance Sunday
- Beds Girl Guiding Valuing Volunteers event

(ii) The Deputy Town Mayor had attended the following:

- Masquerade event at Ampthill
- Ampthill Civic Service
- Kempston Town Council's Indian Meal event
- Charity Quiz in Pulloxhill
- The High Sheriff's Annual Service for Justices
- Road Victims Trust Remembrance Service
- Respite at Home Volunteers AGM

4897 **To note the circulated Clerk's Report**

Members noted the report.

4898 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 406th meeting of Flitwick Town Council held on 15th October 2019**

(i) Cllr Badham referred to Minute Number 4863 - the resolution to amend Standing Order 23 - and commented that this had not been put on as an agenda item for the current meeting. The Assistant Town Clerk advised that the correct procedure for this had been explained at the 406th meeting in that three Members were required to write in to the Clerk. As far as Officers were aware, three Members had not written in and therefore the item had not been included on the agenda. Cllr Thompson stated that Members did not need to write in for this to happen and Cllr Mackey endorsed this.

It was proposed by Cllr Thompson and seconded by Cllr Mackey to **Resolve** that the amendment to Standing Order 23 be discussed at the January Town Council meeting in order to accommodate lettings at the Rufus Centre.

(ii) Cllr Badham referred to Minute Number 4877(ii) - Questions - and advised that Cllr Halligan had withdrawn his comment therefore this item should be removed from the Minutes and this was agreed.

(iii) It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 406th meeting of Flitwick Town Council held on 15th October 2019 having previously been circulated, be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record with the following amendment: remove item 4877.

4899 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 407th meeting of Flitwick Town Council held on 29th October 2019**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 407th meeting of Flitwick Town Council held on 29th October 2019 having previously been circulated, be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4900 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 330th meeting of the Planning Committee held on 31st October 2019**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 330th meeting of the Planning Committee held on 31st October 2019 having previously been circulated, be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

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4901 To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 53rd meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 5th November 2019

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 53rd meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 5th November 2019 having previously been circulated, be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

(Two residents left the meeting at this time.)

4902 To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 100th meeting of the Business Services Committee held on 14th November 2019

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 100th meeting of the Business Services Committee held on 14th November 2019 having previously been circulated, be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4903 To receive reports from representatives on Outside Bodies

- (i) Cllr Dann had attended the Youth Hub Forum the previous night. He had listened to the young people's priorities/concerns and would be drafting a report for Community Services.
- (ii) Cllr Shaw had attended the National Youth Agency Awards at the Rufus Centre. It was a celebration of what young people in the area had achieved. Cllr Shaw had also been co-opted onto the Beds Association of Town & Parish Councils and had attended his first meeting the previous week. There had been discussions about noise generated from Luton Airport and Members were advised that the Association stored data that could be useful for the Town Council.
- (iii) Cllr Roberts had attended the Patient Participation Panel (PPP) at Flitwick Surgery. He advised that the Practice had been working closely with surgeries in Marston and Ampthill. Flitwick Surgery were looking to appoint a Discharge Officer to work with Bedford Hospital and the Chairman asked if this would be extended to Luton & Dunstable. Cllr Roberts agreed to ask the PPP if the Discharge Officer would be working with Luton & Dunstable and Milton Keynes hospitals as well as Bedford. Cllr Roberts informed Members that the attendees at the PPP meeting had also been advised that patients who were unable to book an appointment at the surgery could ring 111 and be put through a triage process, which could result in getting an appointment. Members thought it would be appropriate for this to be publicised in the Flitwick Papers and the Communications & Marketing Officer would be asked to do so. Cllr Blazeby asked if the PPP had discussed the new appointments booking process. Cllr Roberts said the feedback had not been positive and Cllr Blazeby advised Members on what he knew to be happening first thing in the mornings at the Surgery. Cllr Roberts agreed to raise this at the next PPP meeting.
Action: Cllr Roberts / Communications & Marketing Officer
- (iv) Cllr Lutley advised that the Village Hall Management Committee was holding their Christmas Fair on 24th November. The Town Council had stalls and Santa's Grotto at the event.

4903 Questions

- (i) Cllr Badham advised Members of a person who was homeless and currently living in a tent in Flitwick Woods. He had spoken to Officers at CBC who were aware of the situation and he had been left feeling disappointed to learn that their advice was to ask the individual to phone CBC. Cllr Badham had told CBC that the homeless person may not have a mobile phone and CBC had advised that the person could walk to the Rufus Centre and use a phone there. Cllr Badham asked Members if they had any ideas on how to assist this person. CBCllr Mackey asked if there was a reference for this case and that he would pass

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it on to the Portfolio Holder in Social Care. After a brief discussion, CBCllr Bunyan agreed to visit the individual with Cllr Badham the following day to see if they could assist him. CBCllr Gomm expressed his disappointment that CBC had not shown more compassion.

- (ii) Cllr Badham referred back to the earlier discussion raised by CBCllr Mackey regarding the CBC motion to prevent live animals being given away on land it controls and stated that some residents on social media believed live animals (fish) were used at the Carnival. The Officers

believed that the fun fair co-ordinators did not use live animals at their stands at the Carnival however this would be investigated to make sure.

- (iii) Cllr Blazeby commented that two telephone boxes in Flitwick were on a list to be removed and asked for Members' views on objecting to this. CBCllr Mackey had been sent a brief showing how low the usage was and also vandalism statistics for the telephone boxes and for this reason, he believed they should be removed. CBCllr Gomm advised of the importance for the telecom providers to put signs up in pub windows to show that there were phones available for the public to use. Cllr Badham suggested putting a defibrillator in one of the phone boxes on the East Ward however CBCllr Mackey commented that there was already a defibrillator at Flitwick Club and other areas.

(CBCllr Bunyan, C Coverdale and a resident left the meeting at this time).

Confidential Section

In accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960) the public and press to be excluded for item 13 in view of the confidential nature of the information to be discussed relating to financial and contract negotiations and item 14.

4904 Personnel Panel Report

Members discussed the report.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve**
to progress with Option 2.
Vote: 8 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions.

4905 Questions

- (i) Members asked questions under the Confidential Section.
- (ii) Members discussed the presentation made by Cheryl Coverdale from Link-a-Ride.

It was **Resolved** to offer Link-a-Ride the opportunity to utilise space at The Hub as a temporary office environment. This would be done to work around the existing bookings. Vote: all in favour.

Meeting closed at 9.38pm.

Signed
Chairman