

## **Flitwick Town Council**

Minutes of the 387<sup>th</sup> meeting of Flitwick Town Council held on  
Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at the Rufus Centre

Present: Cllr G Mackey (Chairman)  
Cllrs K Badham I Blazeby M Bonner J Dann  
A Larkins A Lutley M Platt K Quantrill  
J Roberts M Sheehan P Thompson

Also present: CBCllrs C Gomm A Turner  
Simon Joynes – Central Bedfordshire Council

In attendance: Town Clerk Assistant Town Clerk

Apologies for Absence Accepted: Cllrs J Blakeman P Feerick M Waites  
M Williams CBCllr F Chapman

**Open Forum** There were no items.

### **Reports from Central Bedfordshire Members**

1. CBCllr Turner reminded Members that it was budget-setting time for Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) with the recommended final budget being discussed on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. £85m had been allocated for capital projects to drive efficiency and a saving of £13.8m had been attempted. Due to the cuts in Central Government funding, works such as pothole repairs, now took longer to be implemented but it was felt this was a reflection on modern life. The social care for vulnerable adults had been protected and this was a big cost therefore a 3% increase in Council Tax had been allocated for this purpose and a further 1.5% following on from areas identified as priorities within the budget consultation. The increase for an average Band D household was £1.22 per week (88p for adult social care), which was mandatory and essential.

2. The signpost at Fordfield Road would be reinstalled the following week.

(Cllr Bonner entered the meeting at this time).

3. CBCllr Gomm stated that there would be a consultation coming up on waste collection options. This looked at the possibility of garden waste collections being charged for and households would be soon receiving leaflets on this. CBC would be available to answer any questions from residents at Flitwick Library on 21<sup>st</sup> March.

4. CBCllr Gomm updated Members on the Flitwick Station Regeneration Scheme and advised that developers were being interviewed and negotiations were being held with retailers and businesses. Network Rail and Govia were involved and the Ward Members were being kept fully briefed on updates.

5. Cllr Dann questioned when the pothole at the Badgers Close/Steppingley Road junction would be sorted. CBCllr Turner echoed the Town Council's frustration with this since he had sent a series of memos to Highways, the Leader of the Council, the Director of Highways and the Portfolio Holder but the situation was not getting sorted, despite the pressure being applied. The work had been promised for several months and it was unacceptable. CBCllr Turner stated there was a group meeting before the next Council meeting so he would raise this again publicly.

6. The Chairman referred to the urgent need for step-free access at Flitwick Station. CBCllr Gomm commented that this was top of the list when meetings took place with Network Rail and Govia however there were limited funds throughout the country. Flitwick was on the list and CBCllrs were pressing for this and realised it was an embarrassment to not have step-free access. CBCllr Gomm noted that it is a very expensive scheme that would not be done in the immediate future.

7, Cllr Badham commented that Dunstable had been successful in their housing infrastructure grant application and advised that Flitwick's application could not have been approved. He asked if this would be an issue for the Station Re-development project as this funding was supposed to be assisting with the step-free access provision. CBCllr Gomm advised that as far as he was aware, the money for Flitwick had been ring-fenced. Cllr Badham asked if the CBCllrs could find out about this grant funding decision and this was agreed to.

8. Cllr Thompson advised he had concerns regarding the proposed plans for changing and moving the crossing adjacent to the Post Office in the High Street. The Chairman advised there was a separate agenda item for this later in the meeting.

9. Cllr Badham referred to trees being cut down in Flitwick Woods, as he understood it was a 'thinning out exercise' but over 300 trees had gone and the Council had been promised tree-planting plans for the future. CBCllr Turner advised he was aware of the situation but did not anticipate any planting happening soon. CBCllr Turner stated that the trees were removed because they were dangerous and in poor condition and the area needed to be made safe for local houses. CBCllr Turner mentioned that he thought the Friends of Flitwick Wood Group did a lot of the work at the site but the Ward Members would find out about tree planting at the site.

4534 **To note any Declarations of Interest relating to items on the agenda**  
There were no Declarations of Interest.

4535 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

- (i) The Chairman advised he had attended the Flitwick Civic Service – he gave his heart-felt thanks to everyone involved and commented it was a lovely event. He appreciated the effort put in and the service had been poignant. He congratulated Rev. Lucy Davis and asked for his thanks to be passed on to relevant individuals.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Mayor stated he had attended Bedford Borough Council's Holocaust Memorial Day and The Forum's Book Sale.
- (iii) The Chairman informed Members that former Councillor and Town Mayor David Thompson was very unwell and asked those round the table to keep him in their thoughts and prayers. David was loved by the community and had been Town Mayor a significant number of times. The Chairman addressed Cllr Thompson, David's son, and asked him to let the Council know if he needed anything.

4536 **Town Clerk's Report**  
There was no Town Clerk's Report.

4537 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 386<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Town Council held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

3.

- (i) Cllr Badham referred to the discussions on his question regarding the Local Plan - Reports from Central Bedfordshire Members – and advised that additional information regarding CBCllr Turner's explanation with regards CBC's duty to co-operate, that four memorandums of understanding now exist between CBC and neighbouring authorities needed to be included.
- (ii) It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 386<sup>th</sup> meeting of Flitwick Town Council held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018 having previously been circulated, be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record with the amendment to include mention of the memorandum of understanding from CBCllr Turner.

4538 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 40<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 40<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018 having previously been circulated, be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4539 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 300<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018**

- (i) Cllr Quantrill referred to item 2418 – Confidential Item – and questioned why this had been included in the public section of the Minutes. The Town Clerk advised that a statement was required in the public section of Minutes and that a relevant Confidential Report with more detail would be created.
- (ii) It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 300<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4540 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

- (i) The Chairman referred to item 375 – Open Public Meeting on Crime – and confirmed that the Annual Town Meeting would take place on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 in the Lecture Hall at Flitwick Library.
- (ii) It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the Minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

4541 **To confirm and adopt the Minutes of the 79<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Business Services Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

- (i) The Chairman referred to item 848 – Chairman's Announcements – regarding the Rufus Centre licence and advised Members that the licence for the building was under review following a report prepared by MAS regarding noise complaints from residents of the neighbouring development.
- (ii) A meeting had taken place with CBC representatives where noise attenuation measures had been discussed and Simon Joynes from CBC had attended the

Council meeting that evening to give background information to Members on the situation and provide an explanation of what CBC were paying for with remedial works.

- (iii) Mr Joynes presented some background information on the situation after FTC and CBC staff had received a series of quite ferocious complaints regarding noise from functions once the houses were occupied. Mr Joynes stated that there had not been anything proven to be a problem by CBC and that a mistake had been made at the Planning stage.
- (iv) A report had been produced by MAS, an independent consultant, regarding venue usage and it was expected that some of the events at the Rufus Centre would cause a problem. CBC had offered to look at a series of works and details on these were awaited, e.g. sound insulation at the rear of the building, to be able to hold events without causing nuisance. This was CBC's commitment at this stage.
- (v) Cllr Badham asked what the mistake was at the Planning stage and Mr Joynes advised that this related to the noise assessment and buffer zones, which was missed out from the process. The Town Council had raised this issue at the time and it was still missed and the reason for this was unknown and deemed as a mistake that had been acknowledged. Mr Joynes commented that CBC did not want business at The Rufus Centre to be impacted.
- (vi) The Chairman commented that the challenge of the licence seemed worrying but stated that it was unlikely for anything to come out of it at this stage because a Noise Management Plan was essential when licences were challenged.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to  
**Resolve** to accept CBC's offer to fund the  
remedial works.

Vote: all in favour.

- (vii) It was proposed, seconded and agreed to **Resolve** that the 79<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Business Services Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018 having previously been circulated be taken as read, signed and adopted as a true record.

(Simon Joynes left meeting at this time).

#### 4542 **Local Plan Response**

- (i) Cllr Badham stated that Flitwick was due to be affected by the Local Plan as a further 251 homes were due to be built.
- (ii) Cllr Quantrill advised that the Local Plan had been discussed at the Planning Committee and he had asked to see how the proposals would impact on the Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan. The Amenities Officer had sent the GI Plan to Cllr Quantrill but he had not had time to go through it yet but he felt now was the time to progress it. The Town Clerk asked if Cllr Quantrill would come into the office to go through the GI Plan with her and the Amenities Officer and he agreed. Cllr Sheehan requested for the GI Plan to be an agenda item for the Planning Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

- (iii) Cllr Badham questioned whether or not the Council were doing a concerted response to the Plan as the consultation period finished in two days time and the Chairman stated he had hoped Members would bring their thoughts that evening.
- (iv) Cllr Badham referred to the appraisal studies on each of the sites identified in the Plan and questioned why the studies were published the day after CBC Members voted on it. The timetable for builds, studies on evidence etc. was virtually a different Plan. CBCllr Turner advised that the vote on the night Cllr Badham was referring to was purely on putting the Plan out for consultation therefore the 'workings out' would not have affected the initial decision. Cllr Badham commented that other Councillors who had been present at the meeting had raised concerns similar to his own.
- (v) Members agreed to forward their responses to the Town Clerk as a matter of urgency.

4543 **Councillor Tablets Update**

- (i) Cllr Badham advised that Complete IT had started the transition to Office 365 that day and the remaining works would be carried out by 28<sup>th</sup> February. Cllr Badham stated that he was puzzled that the IT Technicians were talking about using secure data as he thought the Council would be using Share Point.
- (ii) Cllr Thompson questioned why devices needed to be on site. Cllr Sheehan advised that the current works were probably for staff at this stage and perhaps the process was phased.
- (iii) Cllr Roberts asked for a timeline for completion. Cllr Badham advised that the process had taken longer than previously thought but a date was not known. The Chairman requested that Complete IT be contacted for a completion date and Cllr Badham commented that a few questions needed to be answered first.

4544 **To nominate Members from Community Services Committee and Planning Committee to form a Task & Finish Group for S106 Applications**

- (i) Members from Community Services and Planning Committees were asked if they would be willing to join a Task & Finish Group for S106 applications.

It was **Resolved** for Cllrs Platt, Roberts and Sheehan to form the Task & Finish Group for S106 applications.

- (ii) Cllr Lutley commented that Members who had not been able to attend the meeting that evening may wish to join the Group and that three Members was perhaps not enough. The Chairman stated he would ask the Town Clerk to send a note round to the absent Members to see if they would be interested in joining it.

4545 **CBC Traffic Scheme Consultation**

- (i) Hand-outs on the Traffic Scheme Consultation were circulated to Members.

- (ii) Cllr Thompson asked CBCllrs where the ideas for this scheme had come from because the proposals were absurd, in particular for the crossing outside the Post Office where children and older people cross the road, especially in peak times. He added that the raised table outside Barclays had no resemblance to what had been discussed before with the Town Council. CBCllr Turner advised that this was just a consultation therefore Members' comments should be put into a response and these would be answered in the usual way. CBCllr Turner agreed to show Members an email to answer the safety concerns, which could be circulated by the Town Clerk.
- (iii) Cllr Badham advised that the promoted reason was to improve pedestrian access to schools.
- (iv) CBCllr Turner asked if this was the first time Members had seen the plans and the Town Clerk advised the plans went to Community Services and then Planning Committee but Cllr Thompson commented this was the first full Council meeting since the consultation opened.
- (v) A discussion took place regarding the scale of the drawings and the inadequate distance between the roundabout and the crossing in the High Street.
- (vi) Cllr Quantrill advised that the areas for resident parking outside properties were a sensible part of the proposals.
- (vii) Cllr Sheehan referred to the proposed raised table and commented that the plans instead showed pedestrianisation of the area. Cllr Dann stated that the benefit of a raised table there was negligible as there was not a speeding issue and the length of the raised table meant there was room for cars to speed. Cllr Thompson stated that the proposals had completely ignored the re-development plan for the section outside Barclays. He did not feel the proposals were sensible and that the scheme was looking at the area in isolation rather than in reference to the whole area and earlier discussions.
- (viii) The Chairman commented that he understood there was Government instruction a while ago to not use street furniture because of fuel and pollution in towns. Cllr Bonner endorsed this by stating that he had seen this on TV.
- (ix) Cllr Thompson spoke about power points for a market contained in the plans and questioned where this had come from. The Town Clerk advised that a separate letter to the team responsible for the Market Towns initiative was needed for this reason. She added that the Council were still awaiting a High Street De-cluttering Report and the plan for outside Barclays Bank which was disappointing. Clarification was required from CBC as this was not what the Council were told when entering into the Market Towns Scheme.

It was **Resolved** to:

1. Strongly object to the crossing proposal, both for moving it and changing the type of crossing as this was detrimental to road safety, children and elderly people crossing the road etc.

7.

2. Respond to the Traffic Scheme Consultation with concerns raised within the Planning Committee feedback and information gathered at Town Council that evening.

3. Write to the Market Town Regeneration Team regarding the proposals for outside Barclays Bank and the scheme in general being not in keeping with what was previously agreed.  
Vote: all in favour.

4546 **To receive reports from representatives on Outside Bodies**

- (i) Cllr Dann informed Members that there was a final attempt to re-establish the Timebank initiative and there was a new person in post at the CVS. Cllr Blazeby asked how the reboot was taking shape and Cllr Dann advised that it was in the form of a social event for members to encourage time swaps. There was also a new website as a resource.
- (ii) The Chairman asked Cllr Roberts if there had been a Patient Participation Panel meeting for Flitwick Surgery recently. Cllr Roberts advised there was not a meeting for a further 6 weeks as the meetings were only held quarterly.

4547 **Questions**

- (i) Cllr Sheehan thanked CBCllr Turner for his assistance with sorting the fly tipping issue at Primrose Close, which had been dealt with very quickly.
- (ii) Cllr Blazeby reminded the Chairman that Members needed to be informed about the next Councillor & Staff Workshop on 7<sup>th</sup> March at 7.15pm with the topic of communication. This would be open for anybody to attend and the Chairman asked if Members could attend this if they were available.
- (iii) Cllr Badham referred to the earlier point that the ATM would be taking place at Flitwick Library and asked how many people the Lecture Hall could seat. The Chairman advised that he believed the Hall could accommodate enough people for the ATM. Cllr Badham commented that extra residents may come as the Council were looking to discuss other subjects, e.g. crime, on the night.
- (iv) Cllr Badham mentioned that the Council were still awaiting statistics for the Doctors Surgery. Members had previously discussed consulting with the community on social media. Cllr Badham added that the Council were appearing to not be doing anything about the issues and asked Members for ideas on what the plan moving forward should be. Cllr Roberts commented that the Council were supposed to be writing formally to the Surgery and the Town Clerk advised that Cllr Roberts had been asked to raise the issue himself as the PPP representative one last time before a letter was sent.

It was **Resolved** for:

- 1. A letter to be sent to Flitwick Surgery to formally request the statistics.
- 2. Corporate Services Committee to look at the Council's response to the issues at Flitwick Surgery, e.g. survey formulation.

- (v) Cllr Badham commented that there was an online petition circulating for a crossing to be installed in Temple Way outside Flitwick Lower School, which was receiving more signatures daily. He added that there had previously been a meeting held with CBC Ward Members and the idea of a Lollipop Lady was mentioned, which he believed Cllr Williams was investigating. The strong feeling from the community through the petition signatures meant that in Cllr Badham's opinion, pressure needed to be applied to the relevant people/Officers to ensure action is taken. The Chairman endorsed this and commented that this issue was discussed at length at Community Services Committee.
- (vi) Cllr Roberts advised that the Police could provide speed guns for Temple Way and the Chairman stated that the Council had attempted to launch a Speed Watch Scheme previously but the response was almost non-existent. Members felt that with this may be different now as there was strong support for something to be done. Cllr Quantrill pointed out that 20mph speed signs were not mandatory and motorists could not be prosecuted for driving over 20mph.

### **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 16 in view of the confidential nature of the information to be discussed relating to financial and contractual negotiations and item 17.

- 4548 **To receive an oral report from the Chairman of the Personnel Panel**  
Members received an oral report from the Chairman of the Personnel Panel updating them on a number of matters and the report was accepted.
- 4549 **Questions**  
Members asked questions and raised comments under the Confidential Section.

The meeting closed at 9.14pm

Signed .....  
(Chairman)