



**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON 2<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY 2021  
AT 7:30 PM VIA VIRTUAL ACCESS**

**Present:**

Cllr Badham (Chair)  
Cllr Toinko  
Cllr Dann  
Cllr Earles  
Cllr Dodds  
Cllr Thompson  
Cllr Snape  
Cllr Platt

Rob McGregor – Town Clerk  
Stacie Lockey – Environmental Services Manager  
Susan Eldred – Community Services Manager

**791. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Lutley – Apologies accepted.

**792. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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 – None declared.

**793. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman commented following the Town Council Meeting, that he was pleased Ward Councillors were working to support local businesses in regard to CBC Grant applications.

**794. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Richard Luscombe attended the meeting to discuss a 'Community Gardens' initiative.

Richard Luscombe experienced some connection issues. The below statement prepared by Richard Luscombe would be shared with Members via email.

*"I'm Richard Luscombe. I have a particular interest in mental health in the community, through various volunteer roles. I would like to make some proposals on community gardening, partly with reference to the excellent plans for 'The Shed', but also to go beyond that.*

*From talking with Susan and Stacie, and with Councillor Mackey, it's clear that the Council recognises the therapeutic benefits of gardening as a communal activity. It can offer renewed purpose to people with mental health issues, disabilities, and loneliness, as well as a pathway for ex-offenders and an educational resource for young people. Some medical practices even recommend community gardening as a 'social prescription' and I believe it will play a significant role in a post-Covid society. And there are many examples, each one as individual as its community.*

*'The Shed' is a proposal to support men, who are a key area of concern for mental illness, and this has evolved out of a long-standing, cohesive, group. For that reason, I really wouldn't want to propose anything that encroaches on their territory. There are other local examples run for wellbeing, such as by Mind BLMK and Penrose Housing in Luton. On a broader scale, the Dunton Community Garden, an excellent example near Biggleswade, is for the whole community and also sells produce, and a similar project in Gloucestershire featured on the latest BBC Countryfile. Then there's the Silsoe Horticultural Centre, operated by Central Beds for adults with special educational needs. It has greenhouses, runs a tea-room in normal times and helps with other projects, such as the gardens at Wrest Park. Or, instead of a single location, kerbside planters can be spread around a community, such as at Marston Moretaine. In this instance, the Parish Council paid for the planters, which were adopted by volunteers, businesses and schools. So, there are many variations. Community gardening doesn't necessarily have to be in one garden. As long as plants grow and people grow, it will achieve its aim.*

*I do realise this is a long-term proposal. It needs land, money and a business plan. It would need a number of local partners as well as yourselves, such as Flitwick Gardener's Association, and, for instance, Mind BLMK or Grand Union Housing. I would be happy to discuss it further with any of you."*

#### **795. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr Dann suggested collating the minute files for all meetings on SharePoint. At present the files were not stored in a particular order. Cllr Dann suggested archiving old files and renaming files with the year, month and date of when the meeting took place. This would make files easier to find and would be saved in order.

*Action: Deputy Town Clerk*

#### **796. MINUTES**

- a. For Members to receive and adopt the minutes of the Community Services meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Cllr Toinko suggested adding, under minute number 788 c, that the Town Council had also consulted with the Luton Council of Mosques.

All Members agreed the minutes were a true recording of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (Vote - All in favour)

#### **797. MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

None.

#### **798. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**a. Carnival**

Cllr Toinko felt that the Carnival should be cancelled due to the ongoing COVID restrictions and queried what CBC classed as a large event.

Cllr Dodds commented that large events were difficult to police.

Cllr Badham suggested provisionally looking at a date later in the year to hold the event.

Cllr Snape felt that large events would not be viable for the foreseeable future however smaller events similar to those held last year would still be able to support the community.

It was **RESOLVED** to regrettably cancel the 2021 carnival and look to hold smaller events as COVID restrictions ease. (Vote – all in favour)

**b. Christmas Lights**

Cllr Dodds commented on the state of repair of the old Christmas Lights, and asked if the lights were in working order. The Community Services Manager informed Members that some of the lights had been in use for a number of years and, although the lights had been maintained, over the years the national health and safety standards for columns had changed and she was not able to guarantee they were in line with current standards.

Cllr Badham suggested the lights are checked by a company to ensure they are safe to be donated to a charitable organisation.

It was **RESOLVED** to recycle the Christmas Lights currently stored in the container at The Rufus Centre, once a safety check had been completed. (Vote – All in favour)

*Action: CSM*

**c. Dog Show**

Cllr Toinko suggested holding a Dog Show later in the year, if possible. The Dog Show was a key event for a local organisation to find potential new homes for rescue dogs and to raise funds. Cllr Toinko felt it would be a shame for the charity to miss an important opportunity like this.

Cllr Thompson suggested using social media to promote the charity and the dogs that need rehoming.

It was **RESOLVED** to cancel Dog Show on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021. (Vote – All in Favour)

**d. The Shed**

Cllr Badham informed Members that he had spoken with Cllr Lutley earlier in the day and Cllr Lutley had requested Cllr Badham share her views.

Cllr Lutley was in support of 'The Shed' but did not feel the project should be given priority on the waiting list. 'The Shed' would be added to the waiting list and dealt with in the same way as all other allotment requests.

The Environmental Services Manager informed Members there are currently eight people on the waiting list. If Members had agreed to place 'The Shed' on the waiting list when first requested, 'The Shed' would currently be number three on the waiting list.

The Community Services Manager informed Members the Community Services Team would contact all Men's Club members to gain feedback on 'The Shed'. The feedback would be reported at the next Community Services meeting.

Cllr Toinko commented the Scouts had an allotment plot. Depending on the feedback from Men's Club, the option of sharing the plot would be explored, in liaison with the Scouts.

Cllr Badham suggested the Wildflower Working Group also explore the possibility of a Community Garden project in conjunction with Richard Luscombe. The Wildflower Working Group would meet and report back to the next Community Services Meeting.

An allotment space had been identified for use for either 'The Shed' or Community Gardens. This was an old Ground's Team plot at the lower end of Steppingley Road allotments.

It was **RESOLVED** for the identified plot on Steppingley Road allotments to be utilised by either 'The Shed' or Community Gardens project.

**e. Community Awards**

Cllr Thompson asked that if the decision was made not to hold a 2021 Community Awards event, would people that, for example, had gone above and beyond during Covid, be eligible for an award in 2022 if nominated. The Community Services Manager informed Members anyone would be eligible for an award as long as they fit into the category criteria.

It was **RESOLVED** to invite all 2020 nominees to the Rendezvous Café at a set time and date. Awards would be presented by the Town Mayor with a socially distance photo in the car park (Subject to Covid restrictions and CBC guidance on the confirmed date). (Vote – All in favour)

**f. 4YP**

The Environmental Services Manager informed Members that the proposed cost of commissioning the youth service within Flitwick from 4YP had not increased from the previous year. Members were informed that CBC had agreed in principle to part fund the service by way of a £15,000 grant.

Cllr Snape commented that Flitwick Town Council were one of the few councils that commission their own Youth provision. Cllr Snape informed Members he had previously met with Wendy Millgate, Cllr Snape commented on the great working relationship Wendy had built with the young people of Flitwick. Members were informed that at present Flitwick Town Council only spend 4.1% of the precept on the Youth provision within Flitwick.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept a proposal from 4YP for the delivery of Youth Services within Flitwick for 2021/22 on behalf of the Town Council. (Vote – 7 in favour, 1 abstain)

**g. Section 106 Working Group Report**

Members noted the report from the 106 Working Group.

Members were in support of the Village Hall Section 106 funds application.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the 106 Working Group report and support the Village Hall application. (Vote – All in favour)

**h. Outdoor Gym Equipment**

The Environmental Services Manager informed Members that two locations had been identified as suitable for outdoor gym equipment, subject to funding.

The Environmental Services Manager had identified Millennium Park and Hinksley Road Park as a suitable space for four pieces of equipment on each site. Members were informed each site would have three pieces of equipment for cardiovascular training and one piece for strength training. The Environmental Services Manager informed Members that the four pieces of equipment come as a 'bundle' and extra equipment could be added to the 'bundle' at a later date.

Cllr Toinko commented that he felt the equipment would be a great addition to both areas, with the equipment being good value and a good source of exercise.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept Millennium Park and Hinksley Road Park as suitable areas for outdoor gym equipment, subject to funding.

**i. Steppingley Road Access – CBC Care Village Development**

Members were informed that the Town Clerk and The Environmental Services Manager had met with CBC regarding the old leisure centre site development. CBC planned to start the development in October 2021. CBC would agree to allow access to the allotments and Seed Box via a temporary access road from the new leisure centre. Unfortunately, the access road would not be suitable for access to the Tractor Store.

The Tractor Store would be relocated for a minimum of two years. The Town Clerk suggested the most suitable place would be on The Rufus Centre field. CBC would fund all works for the relocation, including the cost of containers, fencing and a hardstanding area.

Members would be in favour with continuing the Tractor Store relocation to The Rufus Centre field.

**j. Event Booking Protocol – Millennium Park Hire Working Group**

Cllr Dodds noted the Event Booking Protocol included The Rufus Centre field. Cllr Dodds commented that there had been some noise complaints from the houses backing onto The Rufus Centre field in the past and was concerned the clear down time stated on the document was too late. The Community Services Manager informed Members that The Rufus Centre field has its own policy in regards to timings and noise.

Members requested The Rufus Centre field policy be an appendix on the Event Booking Protocol document.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Event Booking Protocol with the additional appendix of The Rufus Centre field policy. (Vote – All in favour)

**799. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**a. Budget**

Members noted the budget.

**b. Ground's Team Report**

Members noted the report.

Cllr Dodds commented on the state of the small path leading from Coniston Road to the play area at Millennium Park. Cllr Dodds suggested the path should be paved or resurfaced.

*Action :ESM*

Cllr Badham asked if the new parking signs at The Hub had improved the parking issues seen previously. The Environmental Services Manager reported that had been no issues since the signs had been installed.

Cllr Dodds asked if it was known who was responsible for cutting which side of the hedge on Steppingley Road. The Environmental Services Manager informed Members that Ward Cllr Neil Bunyan was raising with matter with CBC.

Cllr Snape raised a concern regarding the hedge line on Dunstable Road, along Millennium Park. The hedge is very overgrown and is coming over the path. The Environmental Services Manager informed Members the hedge is owned by CBC.

**c. Community Services Manager Report**

Members noted the Community Services Manager's report.

The Community Services Manager informed Members that the business category winner of the Flitwick Festive Fun competition would like to donate the £100 prize money to The Need Project.

Members were invited to a meeting with Safer Central to meet the nominated 'one point of contact' for Flitwick. Cllrs Dodds, Earles, Thompson and Toinko would like to attend. The Community Services Manager would arrange a meeting.

*Action: CSM*

**800. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, in respect of any other business of the Town Council.

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed **(one) three-minute slot**.

No questions or comments

**801. 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.

Members noted 4YP Report.

Cllr Snape asked the Environmental Services Manager if there had been any progress on the lighting of the Skate Park and Basketball Court. The Environmental Services Manager informed Members that there had been no further developments at this time due to other projects taking priority.

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.

Meeting closed at 21.00