



**MINUTES OF FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021  
AT 7:30PM VIA VIRTUAL ACCESS**

**Present**

Cllr J Dann (Chairman)  
Cllr A Snape  
Cllr M Williams  
Cllr A Lutley  
Cllr M Platt  
Cllr P Dodds  
Cllr G Mackey  
Cllr I Blazeby  
Cllr R Shaw  
Cllr P Earles  
Cllr C Thompson  
Cllr J Roberts  
Cllr D Toinko  
Cllr J Gleave

Cllrs G Mackey, C Gomm, N Bunyan – Central Beds Ward Members

**Also present:**

Rob McGregor – Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
Stephanie Stanley – Deputy Town Clerk  
Members of the public - 4

**5082. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted for Councillor Badham – unwell. Councillor Snape updated Members on Councillor Badham's recent admission to hospital and that he hoped to return to meetings in April. The Town Mayor sent the good wishes of the Council to Councillor Badham.

**5083. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a)** Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.
- (b)** Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.

**5084. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor thanked the Deputy Town Mayor for chairing the previous meeting whilst he had Covid-19. He advised that an effect of having the virus meant that there were some gaps in his memory from this time and he asked for the Council's understanding on this.

The Town Mayor had attended the Lord Lieutenant's online meeting for the commissioning of new Deputy Lord Lieutenants.

Members and staff were thanked for their input into the corporate strategy sessions. The next meeting was on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 9:30am.

Mr Chacko entered the meeting at this time.

The Town Mayor updated Members on the electoral position. The more recent vacancy would be filled by co-option as 10 signatures had not been received to call a by-election. As the Council still had to fill the earlier vacancy through a by-election and the two vacancies could lead to confusion regarding the dates for submitting and withdrawing nominations, it had been decided to await the result of the by-election, then fill the other vacancy by co-option at a later date. A candidate is entitled to stand for both by-election and co-option. If the co-option was undertaken first, and the successful candidate also won the by-election, it would void the election and the Council would incur further election costs.

#### **5085. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS**

Councillor Dixon at Central Beds Council (CBC) was due to give an update on sustainability on 18<sup>th</sup> March at the Corporate Resources Committee. He and a CBC Officer had offered the Town Council an opportunity to hear a presentation on this. The Chairman indicated that he thought this would be beneficial, and asked Members to let the Deputy Town Clerk know if they were interested.

The annual consultation for highways was out. Councillor Mackey had met with the new Director the previous week where he raised several issues including ongoing works to Greenfield Road and Pipet Close. Ward Councillors were disappointed at the extent of the program for Flitwick, but encouraged that the highways team were looking at these issues and they would continue to push for action.

Aldi supermarket had put forward a new plan which had just gone live – Ward Councillors encouraged the Council and residents to make comments on it.

Regarding the Additional Restrictions Grant, the initial response had been poor (300 applicants, 40 successful) and this increased slightly. CBC had re-thought their approach and increased the amounts given to businesses to £4,000. There was still some contention.

The CBC budget had been approved and residents would soon receive their bills.

The Ward Members had met with the CBC Officer in charge of the station interchange project. Comments previously raised by the Council were being listened to and a WhatsApp group would be set up to report noise/disruption concerns etc. Names and email addresses of responsible Officers would be known.

#### **5086. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no items.

#### **5087. INVITED SPEAKER**

The Chairman advised that 'Invited Speaker' would be a standing item for all agendas to allow for short notice speakers. It stopped the Council from being precluded from having a speaker if the agenda had already been published. Agendas would include the details of the speaker if known prior to the agenda being issued.

There was no invited speaker for this meeting.

**5088. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

There were no questions.

**5089. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. For Members to receive and adopt the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021**, this meeting was held via virtual access.

Members received and approved as a true record; the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 via virtual access.

- b. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Planning Committee Meeting, held on **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021**, this meeting was held via virtual access.

There were no resolutions or recommendations of the Planning Committee held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February.

- c. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Community Services Committee Meeting, held on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021**, this meeting was held via virtual access.

Members noted the **resolutions** of the Community Services Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 via virtual access.

- d. For Members to receive and consider resolutions and recommendations of the Personnel Committee Meeting, held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021, this meeting was held via virtual access (**Chairman will move this item to Exempt**).

Members noted the **resolutions** of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 via virtual access.

- e. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Planning Committee Meeting, held on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021**, this meeting was held via virtual access.

There were no resolutions or recommendations of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March.

- f. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Business Services Committee Meeting, held on **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021**, this meeting was held via virtual access.

Members noted the **resolutions** of the Business Services Committee Meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 via virtual access.

- g. Members are asked to note the Planning Committee decisions from 18<sup>th</sup> February and 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Members noted the Planning Decisions from 18<sup>th</sup> February and 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Councillor Dodds asked Members to note that the Speedwatch programme was being progressed.

**5090. MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

The Chairman noted that a member of the public present at the February meeting had been referred to as a former Councillor in the minutes. It was agreed that in future, former Councillors would not be referred to as such, but instead their title and surname would be minuted in the same way as other residents.

Councillor Mackey provided an update regarding the overnight works at Tesco. The Pollution Team had written to Tesco to remind them that works at night was only permitted in emergency situations and they were obliged to inform neighbouring residents.

The Chairman commented that at the recent Community Services Committee, it had been agreed to secure the land at Maulden Road. He mentioned that the minutes detail speaking to the Sewage Works but he had advised to speak with Anglian Water and CBC.

- b. Members to receive any updates from Officers – no updates.

## **5091. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **a. Joint Committee**

Members were asked to consider forming a Joint Committee for FTC and CBC Councillors to discuss matters relating to Flitwick. Three Councillors and Officers from both organisations would attend these meetings. The supporting papers circulated contained the Terms of Reference for Joint Committees.

The Ward Members and several FTC Councillors were in favour of the Joint Committee to improve relationships and interaction between the two authorities. The fact that CBC personnel were obliged to attend was also positive for these Members.

Some Councillors had reservations about forming a Joint Committee and Councillor Snape asked if the terms of reference could be customised. The Town Clerk advised that he had previously been involved in setting the terms of reference as previously, the towns involved had their own and this did not work. It was originally agreed for the terms to be used for one year and then reviewed and it was unknown if the review had occurred but there could be scope there.

The Chairman had concerns regarding the integrity of Committees structures and decisions, as the delegations of power had been allocated and he was unconvinced on the need or benefits for a Joint Committee.

Some Councillors did not think the Joint Committee should have a budget and the Town Clerk advised that they did not have a budget or decision making powers. The minutes would come back through the Committee Structure. Members were advised that the Joint Committee would allow Councillors to influence CBC on any matters relating to Flitwick. Some Members felt that this should be possible without a Joint Committee.

Councillor Snape was in favour of building a closer relationship between FTC and CBC and suggested a 'light' version of a Joint Committee and build on this as confidence grew.

Councillor Williams mentioned that the Council had a Joint Committee in the past to discuss the interchange but CBC had stopped inviting Town Council Members. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Council did have an informal version previously which worked well for a while but the Officers were not obliged to attend.

Some Councillors had concerns about the ability to spend Section 106 funds, the infrequency of meetings and potential political interests.

Some Councillors were in favour of the idea of a Joint Committee but thought the terms of reference needed work.

It was **resolved** to delay a decision on whether or not to form a Joint Committee and for the Council to have further discussions on the terms of reference.

**b. Electric Gates – Manor Park**

Members received a report from the Environmental Services Manager and considered the recommendations within the report.

Members were advised that UKPN had taken a long time to get back to Officers.

Councillor Dodds mentioned that the Council should not just decide on the solar power pack because it was cheaper and asked Members to consider the long-term effects of the decision. He advised that there were issues with batteries going down and that there were limited options with solar power, particularly if the Council wanted to install charging points for vehicles for example, in the future.

Councillor Toinko believed that the difference in cost was so high and advised that batteries had a predictable lifespan. He added that solar was resilient. Councillor Snape thought the premise of what Councillor Dodds was saying about thinking long-term was good but for this decision, he supported the solar power pack option as the Manor Park was unlikely to need electric.

It was **resolved** to install a solar power pack at a cost of £2,700+VAT to service the electronic gates at Manor Park (financed from the Rolling Capital Fund).

**5092. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**a. Councillor Surgeries/Public Enquiries Feedback**

Members were asked to note that there are no further updates since the previous Council meeting.

Members noted that the Surgery previously advertised for 9<sup>th</sup> March was cancelled and Surgeries would resume at the market from 12<sup>th</sup> April (on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month).

Councillor Mackey advised that he had hosted a Surgery with Councillor Thompson recently and found it very useful.

Councillor Toinko had previously agreed to host a Surgery on 30<sup>th</sup> March and Officers would check if this were still happening.

*Action: Deputy Town Clerk*

**5093 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no items.

**5094. 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.

13a) Asset Review Update – noted.

13b) Correspondence Received – noted and the Town Clerk given a decision to act upon.

The Deputy Town Clerk left the meeting at this time.

13c) Personnel Committee Recommendations & Resolutions – for consideration

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.