



**DRAFT MINUTES OF FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 28TH JUNE 2021
AT 7:30PM AT THE RUFUS CENTRE & VIA VIRTUAL ACCESS**

Present

Cllr A Snape
Cllr J Dann
Cllr A Lutley
Cllr K Badham
Cllr R Shaw
Cllr D Toinko
Cllr P Dodds
Cllr J Roberts
Cllr C Thompson
Cllr J Gleave
Cllr M Platt
Cllr H Hodges
Cllr A Chacko
Cllr P Earles

Cllr I Blazeby (via virtual access)

Cllrs N Bunyan, C Gomm – Central Beds Ward Members

Also present:

Rob McGregor – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Stephanie Stanley – Corporate Services Manager
Susan Eldred – Community Services Manager
Members of the public - 3

5114. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Mackey who had family commitments.

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Williams.

5115. 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.

5116. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor thanked Members for agreeing to change the date for the meeting. This had been done to sign off the accounts by the deadline which had been delayed due to resourcing problems at the external accountancy provider.

Councillors held a minute silence to pay their respects to former Town Mayor and Councillor, Phillip Thompson who had sadly passed away. Phillip Thompson had served the community well over a number of years.

5117. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS

Central Beds Council (CBC) had been receiving complaints regarding grass cutting, which had suffered due to the pattern of weather recently. Extra staff had been employed and CBC were trying to catch up. A schedule for rural roads was being drawn up alongside the National Policy to leave wildflowers wherever possible.

Councillors Snape and Gleave had contacted Ward Members regarding the surveying work being undertaken in the field opposite the former Leisure Centre site. It was reported that CBC did not own the land but this site had been within the Local Plan since 2017. CBC were trying to establish who the owners were. Councillor Lutley believed the Duke of Bedford was the owner and Councillor Bunyan had heard of another family. The Chairman advised that some residents had written to Town Councillors to voice their concerns.

Councillor Gomm entered the meeting at this time.

Regarding the station interchange project, staff were likely to be on site at the end of August. The project had been out to tender and these applications were being evaluated. A new Project Manager, Nick Shaw, had been appointed and he estimated completion within quarter 1 of 2022. The step free access scheme was being worked on by Network Rail (NWR) under discussion with CBC but this would not coincide with the station interchange project. There were no details from Thameslink as to when the exit/entrances from the bridge would be re-opened if at all. The Project Manager was aware of the shortcomings and was pushing for progress. Councillors were advised that there would be temporary traffic lights within the town centre area from now until completion and the Project Manager would keep FTC updated. Councillor Dodds had been invited to attend discussions with the Project Manager.

5118. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Jim Snook had attended regarding the agenda item relating to the lockdown car show. He advised that if anyone had any questions or queries, he was here to answer them. He hoped to help the Council to understand what was happening. The Chairman advised that there would be a discussion on this at the relevant time on agenda and that he would invite Mr Snook to speak if there were questions.

5119. INVITED SPEAKER

There was no invited speaker.

5120. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Councillor Shaw asked the Ward Members if the step free access scheme would definitely not be incorporated into the station interchange project as this is what had been intended. Members were advised that the step free access scheme was not anything to do with CBC other than for information. The scheme was being drawn up by Network Rail (NWR) and was paid for by the Department for Transport. CBC's input was to oversee and co-ordinate with the interchange project. Councillor Shaw advised that a representative from CBC had stated that the projects would run parallel however CBC Ward Members stated this was only ever an aspiration but it was not possible. The CBC Ward Members commented that it would make sense however it was impossible to change NWR's mind. Members were advised that the installation of lifts should not cause too much disruption other than when the crane was in situ.

Councillor Badham asked for an update on the Police investigation into the graffiti vandalism at the skatepark. The Community Services Manager (CSM) advised that statements had been given from her and 4YP and the issue was being processed by the Investigation Team and the Hate Crime Unit. She anticipated action would be taken shortly.

Councillor Badham advised that the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) had replied to FTC via a thread on Facebook and asked if the Ward Members present had any update on the conversations that had been held. Councillor Bunyan advised that the PCC had informed him that he would be following it up. The Chairman mentioned that this incident had taken place nearly a month ago and there was photo evidence and names/addresses of the people involved therefore he was disappointed no action had been taken yet.

Councillor Badham advised that part of the graffiti included a swastika on a traffic island near to the War Memorial. He had reported it via Fix My Street on 8th June however did not receive a response until 21st June which stated it had been allocated to a team. Councillor Badham cleaned the graffiti off himself 6 days after. He asked if the Ward Members present agreed it was an inadequate response given the nature of the graffiti. The Ward Members commented that it was appalling and they both would have assisted Councillor Badham if they had been contacted by him. Councillor Bunyan advised that Fix My Street was an app and that CBC serviced a large area wider than just Flitwick, therefore responses took time.

Councillor Badham referred to the fact that he was an ally for the LGBT community and referred to the homophobic comments that had been deleted from the FTC and Focus on Flitwick (FoF) Facebook pages. These were deleted by the removal of the thread and he was disappointed that the supportive messages were not left visible. He advised it was important for the LGBT community to see the support. He asked if there could be a review of what was deleted from the FTC Facebook page.

Action: Comms & Marketing Manager

Councillor Badham had received many thank you messages on Facebook but advised that the Police response had been a disgrace. He said the response communicates to the community that the Police did not care. Councillor Badham advised that his post had received over 3000 engagements showing the sense of feeling.

Councillor Dodds advised that the junction at Harlington on the A5120 needed mowing and CBC Ward Members agreed to have a look the following day and take it up with the CBC Portfolio Holder.

The Chairman advised that he had hoped Councillor Mackey would be in attendance because he wanted to raise some concerns regarding social media. He advised on what the FTC social media policy aimed to do including the awareness of risks associated with engaging with the public as a Councillor. He had concerns about Focus on Flitwick (FoF) which Councillor Mackey had set up for his work as a Ward Councillor. Moderators regularly stated that FTC/CBC politics would be discussed. He mentioned the responsibility Councillors had and advised that sometimes opinions were presented as fact.

As an example, the Chairman mentioned when Councillor Mackey shared the FTC post regarding the mowing schedule, residents understandably mixed up with the CBC delays. This brought FTC into disrepute and the Public Realm Team were labelled as lazy. There were also comments about FTC 'sacking' a member of staff who looked after the burial ground which was untrue. The graffiti issue at the skatepark had prompted an unacceptable conversation leading to the page having comments that promoted homophobia and transphobia, with one member of the group arguing that it was

unacceptable for a Council to be advertising homosexuality. He explained that Section 28 was repealed in 2003, that this was a rainbow painted 'be kind' and that these comments were not acceptable in 2021.

A moderator of the page stated that FTC should invest more on youth services because not much was done in this area but that was untrue.

The Chairman planned to write to Councillor Mackey regarding all of the issues raised about FoF and would ask under which persona he was posting on the page because it was unclear to residents. He wanted to know if FTC content was being posted on there, how the page moderators would ensure a balanced debate and that inaccurate information was not passed off as fact. Four FTC Councillors were regularly defending the Council on the page. The Chairman added that he had met with a resident this week who thought posting on FoF meant she was reporting issues to the Council.

Some Members were not pleased that a few posts relating to FTC news went on FoF Facebook prior to the Council's official page. Councillor Dann believed this to be ungentlemanly. Councillor Dodds advised that it was more than just Councillor Mackey who did this and he asked for this to be addressed as a global rather than personal issue. Councillor Dodds referred to the fact that another Councillor publicised about the proposed development at Church Road showing that the issue was wider than just as being presented. Councillor Toinko advised that he had done that in response to the FoF post which had been posted by Councillor Mackey before the briefing had finished.

Councillor Badham commented that the moderators of FoF did not understand their responsibility and he was particularly annoyed by the lies about staff. He added that it was personal and worrying, referring back to a previous post that named a staff member and it took three days before moderators removed the comment. He thought the site had turned into a hive of hateful comments, inaccuracies and constant repetition on the cost of the Barclays frontage project. Councillor Badham advised that Councillor Bunyan handled himself with dignity but he was not seeing that from others.

Councillor Blazeby advised that the social media policy was clear and Councillors needed to ensure that at the end of their posts, there was a line stating that it was your view and not that of FTC. He asked what powers the Council had around addressing the issue with those who did not follow the policy. The Town Clerk advised that it was difficult to answer and that he would give it some thought. Members had been sent reminders regarding the use of disclaimers and most used them. The Town Clerk mentioned that the issue being discussed was common at other Councils too.

Councillor Bunyan mentioned that he thought FTC needed to make more use of their own page as FoF had taken over as the voice of Flitwick with a following of 7000 people.

Councillor Hodges asked if the Chairman would share the response he received after he raised it formally with Councillor Mackey and he advised that he would.

5121. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a.** For Members to receive and adopt the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 18th May 2021**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

Members received and approved as a true record; the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 18th May 2021 via virtual access with the following amendments: correct spelling of recommendations on page 7, Councillor Thompson, and Paul Cranmer's names, and remove track change on page 5.

- b. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Extraordinary Community Services Committee Meeting, held on **Monday 24th May**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

Members noted the resolutions of the Extraordinary Community Services Committee Meeting held on Monday 24th May at the Rufus Centre and via virtual access. Councillor Thompson advised there would be an update regarding the Family Fun Day at the meeting the following week.

- c. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Community Services Committee Meeting, held on **Tuesday 1st June 2021**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

Members noted the resolutions of the Community Services Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 1st June 2021 at the Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

- d. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Planning Services Committee Meeting, held on **Tuesday 3rd June 2021**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

Members noted the resolutions of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd June 2021 at the Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

- e. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Business Services Committee Meeting, held on **Thursday 10th June 2021**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

Members discussed the recommendation of opening a Public Sector Deposit Fund with CCLA. Councillor Dodds asked why there was not any supporting papers for this item and the Chairman explained the recommendation sheet had been circulated. Members were advised that a vote was required that evening regarding the recommendation.

It was **resolved** to:

1. To open a Public Sector Deposit Fund with CCLA.
2. To adopt the proposed Treasury Management Policy.
3. To delegate the Authority for the Town Clerk and Corporate Services Manager after consultation with Derek Kemp, make such investments and withdrawals as required in terms of the Treasury Management policy.

Vote: 13 in favour, 1 against & 1 abstention

- f. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Corporate Services Committee Meeting, held on **Tuesday 22nd June 2021**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

There were no recommendations or resolutions for this meeting.

- g. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Planning Services Committee Meeting, held on **Wednesday 23rd June 2021**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

Members noted the resolutions of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at the Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

- h. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Personnel Committee Meeting, held on **Thursday 24th June 2021**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

This item was discussed under Exempt. Members noted and made one amendment to the resolutions of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on Thursday 24th June 2021 at the Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

5122. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18th May 2021 –

Councillor Toinko asked for an update regarding item 5108 – the street food licence for the Kebab van in Station Road. As Councillor Mackey was not in attendance, Councillor Badham read an email aloud to update Members. The business had appropriate licencing and an assessment of suitability following residents' complaints about the position of the van and waste arrangements would be undertaken.

Councillor Dann referred to the minutes where it was mentioned that the current Curate may take on the role of the Flitwick Combined Charities Trustee vacancy however her contract was coming to an end. Councillor Lutley confirmed that the constitution mentioned the Trustees needed to have 4 volunteers and the vicar therefore Members believed the position could remain open until a new vicar was in post.

- b. Members to receive any updates from Officers – none.

5123. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Joint Committee**

After a discussion at the Chairman's Group, it was agreed that this item was to be re-considered by the Council and the Town Clerk gave some background information on how Joint Committees worked. The terms shared in the supporting papers were supposed to be a trial for 12 months however it was assumed they had not been reviewed. A Joint Committee would be in line with the strategy set in terms of influencing CBC to ensure partnership working, making joint decisions, influencing the vitality of the town, discussion on key issues for the town and a medium to discuss significant projects. Key Officers from CBC would attend the meetings and a dedicated CBC Officer managed these Committees. All decisions would go through the usual Committee structure of both Councils.

Members asked several questions as there was a feeling of uncertainty and Councillors were unsure how it was different to when Ward Councillors attended Council meetings. Members were advised that the key aspect was that CBC Officers attended the Joint Committee meetings and that key issues relating to the town would be discussed there first. The Town Clerk used the example of the station project and how that would have been discussed at the Joint Committee from the outset and FTC could have influenced the plan.

The meetings would be held quarterly but extraordinary meetings could be called in between. CBC were not minded to alter the terms of reference.

Members asked about the fact that Planning issues would not be discussed and they were informed that this was because Town Councils were already consultees for the CBC process.

The Town Clerk gave examples of how the Joint Committee had worked well at Biggleswade, including the step free access and the decluttering of the town centre.

Councillor Toinko raised a range of questions including his confusion about the step free access at Biggleswade as he believed this was a Department of Transport Scheme and that the MP had been the main driver. He also mentioned how Town Councils were filling the service gaps, such as the provision of holiday meals for children that FTC facilitated. He was concerned about the lack of focus on the environment in the terms of reference and the mention of private clubs.

Some Members were not keen on only 3 Councillors being in attendance.

Some Members agreed that it was better to work together and that the partnership working between FTC/CBC was not effective at the moment so it was proposed to have a temporary trial.

It was **resolved** to trial the Joint Committee with the commitment of reviewing how it worked at the January 2022 Council meeting.

b. Finance

The Chairman explained that the Council meeting had been delayed to facilitate the sign off of the previous year's accounts and that it was a statutory requirement to do this prior to the end of June. He voiced his displeasure and requested for this to be communicated to the accountant. It was explained that the accounts also needed to be independently audited and for Members to see the draft accounts with two weeks' notice prior to approval. He added that Business Services Committee should have been able to scrutinise the figures as part of our checks and balances.

a) To receive and agree the Governance Statement 2020/21

It was **resolved** to agree the Governance Statement for 2020/21.

b) To receive and agree the Financial Statements for 2020/21

Members discussed the statement and asked for some amendments to the assets page:

- Remove burial ground under construction
- Insert the Dance Studio, Station Road land, Country Park and Hetley House.
- Amend the list of Councillors

The Chairman explained that most Earmarked Reserves were set to 0 as the funds had been moved to the Rolling Capital Fund in accordance with the changes mid-year to our capital management programme.

Councillor Dodds advised that the separation of the business side and social responsibility had not been reflected in the accounts. The Chairman explained that there was no requirement to split these as they were a legal document and from a business perspective, it was best practice not to declare income from the business due to commercial sensitivity.

The Chairman had checked the figures and he was comfortable with them. Councillors asked questions about approving the accounts apart from making amendments to the sections raised above otherwise the Council could receive a qualification from the external auditor if this was not done at the meeting.

It was **resolved** to agree the financial statements 2020/21 under the proviso that the amendments discussed at the meeting were actioned and the revised document was circulated to Councillors the following day.

Vote: 12 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions.

c) To receive and agree the Annual Return 2020/21

It was **resolved** to agree the Annual Return for 2020/21.

Councillor Hodges left the meeting at this time.

b. Town Mayor Allowance

Members were asked to consider donating the remaining funds from 2020-21 budget for the Town Mayor's Allowance £2,000 to the charities and to note that donations received for the same period were £609.92.

The Chairman advised that the previous Town Mayor's preference was to pay the remaining funds from the 2020-21 Town Mayor's Allowance budget but this needed to be approved by Council. The other option was to pay the previous Town Mayor the funds but this would be taxable. Councillor Dann advised that the spend should have been approved within the same financial year however he had not been made aware of this. The charities were the Need Project and the Domestic Violence service within the charity Victim Support.

It was **resolved** to donate the remaining funds from the Town Mayor's Allowance budget (£2,000) from 2020-21 to the Need project and the Domestic Violence service within the victim support charity.

d. Flitwick Town Council Strategy

Members were asked to note the resident feedback on the FTC Strategy and adopt a final version.

Members noted the good level of response from the consultation on the strategy. The feedback had been discussed in detail at Corporate Services. The main messages were that the public did not understand the different roles of FTC and CBC therefore it was agreed to make more effort to clarify this. The Comms & Marketing plan looked to address this issue which would hopefully counteract the negative misconceptions on social media. It was agreed for each Committee to reflect on the responses relevant to their own remits.

Councillor Hodges re-entered the meeting at this time.

It was **resolved** to accept the strategy document circulated.

e. Lockdown Car Show

The Chairman read out the resolution from the previous meeting where this item had been discussed. Councillor Dodds had written to the Town Clerk to ask for this matter to be re-considered however he wished to remove himself from this if the event had not been granted SAG approval.

Mr Snook (resident) was invited to speak and advised that he had submitted all necessary documentation to CBC and updated areas of his plan that needed work. He was waiting to hear from CBC regarding any further changes.

Mr Snook advised that the previous request had not been explained properly and that the 'walkabout' feel was always going to be there. He wanted to link two areas with a walkway across Millennium Park from Flitwick Lower School to the Village Hall car park.

The Community Services Manager advised that any event without SAG approval should not go ahead. If an accident were to happen the organiser would be liable for large fines and could be treated as a criminal offence. Members were not keen to approve the event without SAG approval.

Members asked about the area of the Park that Mr Snook wanted to use as the plan showed vehicles on a similar area to the newly planted wildflowers. Mr Snook advised it would not be on the wildflower area and that there would only be 10-20 vehicles.

An extended discussion took place regarding the event.

It was **resolved** to accept the Lockdown Car Show event and allow access to the Millennium Park providing a valid SAG approval was in place.

Vote: 10 in favour, 3 against, 2 abstentions.

10f Health Services

The Chairman commented on the recurring theme within the public's complaints regarding the inadequate health services. He had met with the Town Mayor of Ampthill, Cllr Smith, who was also a Ward Councillor and they had discussed holding a public forum similar to what the Council facilitated in 2018. He, Councillor Roberts and Councillor Smith would be meeting representatives from the Beds Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) for a private meeting to discuss healthcare provision for Flitwick, Ampthill and Steppingley. The Chairman said the idea was to collate issues raised by all FTC Councillors and lobby CBC to hold an event later in the year.

Councillor Badham advised that the previous public meeting of this kind had been held at the Rufus Centre and representatives from the local Surgery and Healthwatch were in attendance. He advised no Ward Councillors came which had been disappointing because many residents' questions were for them to answer. He asked for CBC Ward Councillors and Officers to be invited from the outset.

Councillor Chacko provided some interesting figures which needed to be discussed. The number of registered patients with Flitwick Surgery had a ratio of 2,700 people per 1 GP, which was much higher than the National average of 2,000. Within the local vicinity, there were only 3 surgeries, which was overwhelming. The Chairman suggested for Councillor Chacko to attend the private meeting.

It was agreed that the Davis Suite was not a large enough room and for Officers to look at using the Lockyer Suite. The Chairman thought the meeting would have been held online but that an in-person meeting could be possible.

It was **resolved** for Councillors Snape, Chacko and Roberts to meet with representatives from the BCCG at a private meeting with some Members of Ampthill Town Council and Steppingley Town Council to discuss healthcare provision for the area. Views from other FTC Councillors would be gathered to be presented at the meeting. Officers would engage with relevant healthcare providers for a public meeting to be held in the Autumn (date to be arranged).

5124. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- a. Members noted the Planning Committee decisions from 3rd June and 23 June 2021.

5125. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

The Community Services Manager and Ward Councillors left the meeting at this time.

5126. 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) Minutes and Recommendations of Meetings

Members noted and made one amendment to the resolutions of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on Thursday 24th June 2021 at the Rufus Centre and via virtual access.

13b) Councillor/Staff Team Build BBQ- for consideration

It was **resolved** to hold a Councillor/Staff Team Build BBQ on the basis that Councillors paid for their food and drinks. Staff would be allocated a voucher for a limited number of drinks, after which they would pay for their own. A date would be agreed once Lockdown rules were lifted.

13c) Building Opportunity – for consideration

It was **resolved** to task the Town Clerk to investigate the building opportunity and come back to the next Council meeting with a recommendation.

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.

Recommendations and resolutions of the Community Services Committee 6th July 2021

The Town Council are asked to consider and **approve** the **Resolutions** of the Community Services Committee

868a. Forest School - Manor Park Request

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the hire request for Manor Park for use of a Forest School. (Vote – all in favour)

868b. Street Lighting (overspend)

It was **RECOMMENDED** to agree an overspend of £873.32 for 4097/306 Street Lighting to repair a broken streetlight within the Ridgeway. (Vote – all in favour)

868c. Manor Park Heritage Projects

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the design drawings for the ornamental bridge and the main gates. (Vote – all in favour)

868d. Event Booking Protocol

It was **RESOLVED** to refer the event booking protocol back to the working group for reviewing. (Vote- all in favour)

868e. The Queens Green Canopy

It was **RESOLVED** to take part in the Queens Green Canopy and refer this to the Environmental Services Team with an update to be given at the next meeting. (Vote – all in favour)

868f. Section 106 Working Group

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations within the report. (Vote- all in favour)

868g. Flitwick Family Fun Day – Welcome Back Fund

It was **RESOLVED** to move the event to 25th September 2021 with additional information and options presented to the July Town Council meeting. (Vote- all in favour)

868h. Airmen Memorial

It was **RESOLVED** to contact Cllr Mackey with additional questions and add it to the next Community Services Meeting. (Vote – all in favour)

868i. Green Space Consultation

It was **RESOLVED** to set up a working group for the Green Space Consultation. (Vote – all in favour)

871. EXEMPT ITEMS

Skate Park Graffiti

It was **RESOLVED** to invite the PCC to attend the next Community Services Meeting. (Vote- all in favour)

**Recommendations and resolutions of the Business Services Committee
8 July 2021**

The Town Council are asked to consider and **approve** the **Recommendations** of the Business Services Committee

1295 It was **resolved** to progress with Friday Nights @ Rendezvous on the final Friday of the month (Option 3) for the next two months (July and August) and review the July event, along with costings, at the next meeting.

1298d It was **resolved** for the Town Clerk to purchase the furniture but to seek to reduce the cost further if possible. Procurement rules would be followed for the refurbishment of the rooms.

Recommendations and resolutions of the Planning Committee 15th July 2021

The Town Council are asked to consider and **approve** the **Recommendations** and **Resolutions** of the Planning Committee

2857. Street Naming Request

Members discussed options for street names and suggestions the following to put forward:

1. Fox Glove Grove/Court
2. Skylark Way
3. Red Kite Road

Vote: all in favour

2859. Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman advised that the idea of a working group would be to investigate the feasibility of creating a Neighbourhood Plan for Flitwick.

It was **RESOLVED** to set up a working group to investigate the option of creating a Neighbourhood Plan for Flitwick. Vote: all in favour.



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

Report to Town Council 20th July 2021: Flitwick Family Fun Day

Implications of recommendations

Corporate Strategy: In accordance with aim to develop the Council's potential.

Finance: Welcome Back Fund (CBC)

Equality: Increases inclusivity.

Environment: Takes forward policy objectives directly.

Background

Central Bedfordshire Council offered all Parish/Town Councils the opportunity to apply for a grant titled 'The Welcome Back Fund'.

The Welcome Back Fund is to be used to encourage people back to the High Street, enhancing business to local shops and the economy, bringing the community together and celebrating the lift on Government restrictions.

Community Services had previously agreed at an Extra-Ordinary meeting held on Monday 24th May to have a Family Fun Day on Saturday 14th August at various locations around the centre of Flitwick.

It was resolved at the Community Services Meeting on Tuesday 6th July to postpone the Family Fun Day until Saturday 25th September, as recommended by the Community Services Manager.

Introduction

The Community Services Manager had informed the Community Services Committee of logistical issues around event locations and costs which had originally be proposed at the Extra-Ordinary meeting on Monday 24th May.

Members requested for the Community Services Manager to re-evaluate the event priorities, look to reduce the costs in line with the funding received by CBC, and maximise local available space for businesses and community inclusion.

The Community Services Chairman, Community Services Manager and the Town Clerk met on Friday 9th July to discuss options. It was suggested for local business stalls to be set up outside shop premises, acting as a small 'popup' market. Local businesses who do not have premises within Flitwick could have a stall within Millennium park or any other secured location. This would reduce the cost of the market, due to traffic management not being needed.

There were also discussions around reducing the fun fair package, making small changes, such as having an inflatable helter skelter instead of a traditional style one, to reduce the cost.

See Appendix 001 – Vintage Fun Fair packages.

Reducing the vintage fun fair package to option 2 and relocating the market to stalls within Millennium Park, The Swan car park (if permission can be gained) and small pop-up areas around town could reduce the cost of the event up to the value of approx. £3,700.

Additional Matters

The Village Hall is not available on Saturday 25th September, which had originally been as a soft play zone for toddlers as part of the event.

The Community Services Manager has been in conversations with the management company in regard to gaining permission to use the frontage of Barclays Bank for a community market. Unfortunately, at this time, permission has not been confirmed.

When holding an event for more than 1000 people, FTC are required to take out additional public liability event insurance.

An application for Police Cadet and Army Cadet support has been submitted. These applications are not able to be confirmed as a booking at this time.

Options:

1. To hold a Family Fun Day on Saturday 25th September, with original vintage fun fair package (£12k), outdoor cinema, food court and local business stalls within Millennium Park.
2. To hold a Family Fun Day on Saturday 25th September, with original vintage fun fair package (£12k), outdoor cinema, food court and local business stalls on Millennium Park, The Swan car park (dependant on permission).
3. To hold a Family Fun Day on Saturday 25th September, with vintage fun fair package option 2 (£10.5k), outdoor cinema, food court and local business stalls within Millennium Park.
4. To hold a Family Fun Day on Saturday 25th September, with vintage fun fair package option 2 (£10.5k), outdoor cinema, food court and local business stalls on Millennium Park, The Swan car park (dependant on permission).

See Appendix 002 for options expenditure

Susan Eldred
Community Services Manager

Vintage Fun Fair Packages

Option 1:

Lighthouse Helter Skelter
Adult Ferris Wheel
adult Carousel
Swing Boats
Wave Swing
Children's traditional chair o planes
Traditional Fun Fair side stalls x 2
Mini Ferris wheel
= £12k. for your date times and location.

Option 2:

Or we can swap the lighthouse Helter Skelter for the inflatable Helter Skelter and add on one more side stall and this package comes to
= £10.5k

Option 3:

If you want to get down lower we can swap the swing boats, chair-o-planes and mini Ferris wheel for the family runaway train coaster and this brings the package down to
= £9.6k

Ferris Wheel



Lighthouse Helter Skelter



Adult Carousel



Swing Boats



Wave Swing



Childs Chair-O-planes



Mini Ferris Wheel



Large Inflatable Helter Skelter



FAMILY FUN DAY		EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE
	INCOME	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Fun Fair		£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£10,500.00	£10,500.00
Cinema		£2,220.00	£2,220.00	£2,220.00	£2,220.00
Toilets		£744.00	£744.00	£744.00	£744.00
First Aid		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Biffa Bin (Approx)		£200.00	£200.00	£200.00	£200.00
Movie Licence x 3		£1,650.00	£1,650.00	£1,650.00	£1,650.00
Genny Petrol		£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00
Security x 3		£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00
Lighting (Food Court, Park)		£800.00	£800.00	£800.00	£800.00
Popcorn Machine		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Popcorn cornels		£60.00	£60.00	£60.00	£60.00
Popcorn boxes		£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00
Food Court approx	£1,000.00				
Total		£18,004.00	£18,004.00	£16,504.00	£16,504.00
Additional Needed		£2,004.00	£2,004.00	£504.00	£504.00



Flitwick Town Council

Standing Orders

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These Standing Orders were adopted by Council on 15th September 2020 and replace all previous versions, the most recent being 16th April 2019. They are based on model standing orders of 2018 by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

Standing Orders are one of the council's three principal governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. They must be observed in conjunction with the council's **Financial Regulations** and **Standing Orders for Contracts**.

The word "councillor" is used in the standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights.

INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE STANDING ORDERS

Standing orders are the written rules of the council. Standing orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. The council may also use standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders of the council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.

Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework and these Standing Orders [incorporate and](#) reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. The statutory requirements to which [this](#) council is subject [to](#) apply whether [or not they](#) are incorporated in a council's standing orders.

The standing orders do not include model financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of the council. The financial regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of the council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer. [The Council also operate under their Standing Orders for Contracts.](#)

NOTES

Standing orders that are in **bold type** contain legal and statutory requirements. Standing orders not in bold are designed to help the council operate effectively but they do not contain statutory requirements.

1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

- a** Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- b** A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c** A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d** If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e** An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f** If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g** An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h** A councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i** If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- j** Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k** One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient, but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l** A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m** The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n** Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.

- o** Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p** During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.
- q** A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and their decision shall be final.
- r** When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s** Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.
- t** Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.
- u** If, at the Chairman's discretion, urgent business is added to the Agenda, the

item may be discussed **but no formal decision may be made.** The Town Clerk does have delegated authority to deal with urgent matters in consultation with specific members.

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- a** No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b** If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c** If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

Full Council meetings
Committee meetings
Sub-committee meetings

- a** **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b** **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c** **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- d** All items of business will be set out on the agenda for all meetings and sent out with the summons to councillors. Members of Council or members of committee may make a request to the Town Clerk to include relevant items on agendas if relevant to the respective terms of reference. The Town Clerk will where possible include the requested item, however their decision is final. If the Town Clerk declines the request, they will notify the councillor of their decision and explain the reason for it.
- e** **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which**

shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.

- f** Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- g** Each period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- h** Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes and may only speak once].
- i** In accordance with standing order 3(f), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a response to a question by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an Officer for a written response.
- j** During public participation at Planning Committee, equal opportunity shall be given to persons supporting applications and to persons opposing.
- k** A person, Councillor or member of the public shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and remain seated when speaking.
- l** A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- m** Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking. Where there is more than one public participation section of a meeting, the chairman will give members of the public who have not already spoken priority over those who have previously spoken.
- n** **Subject to standing order 3(o), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.** The Chairman should have regard if filming takes place, that members of the public may not wish to be filmed. This right must be taken up without disturbing the meeting.
- o** **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- p** **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**

- q** Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- r** The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- s** Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.
- t** The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.

See standing orders 5(i) and (j) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

- u** Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- v** The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - vi. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vii. the resolutions made.
- w** A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is

subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.

x Councillors have a *duty* to attend meetings

y The quorum of the Council is 6 councillors. No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.

Apologies should be sent directly to the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk by email prior to the meeting. It is not acceptable for other Councillors to apologise on behalf of colleagues.

- i. It is the responsibility of the Member to arrange for a nominated substitute to attend on their behalf which also must be notified as per 3v(ii) above.
- ii. If a Member is unable to attend and has not arranged for a nominated substitute to attend of their behalf, the Chairman may at his discretion agree for another Member present at the meeting to substitute.
- iii. If a member does not attend a meeting of the Council for six (6) months and has not submitted a reason for long term absence that has been accepted by Resolution of the Council, they will no longer hold the office of Councillor.
- iv. In line with the Local Government Act 1972 s85 (1) & (2) apologies will be shown as:

Apologies accepted, with the *reason given*.

z No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.

See standing order 3(x) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

aa If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

bb A meeting shall not exceed a period of 3 hours.

cc The statutory requirements for meetings are mainly contained in the Local Government Act 1972 ("the 1972 Act") and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 ("the 1960 Act"). Usually, there is a requirement for local authorities to hold public meetings in person with all members present in one place.

~~The Corona Virus Act 2020 S78 gives power for regulations to be made regarding local authority meetings. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime~~

~~Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”) came in to force on 4 April. These enable local councils to hold remote meetings (including by video and telephone conferencing) for a specified period until 7th May 2021. They also remove the requirement to hold an annual meeting. The 2020 Regulations apply to local council meetings, committee and sub-committee meetings in England.~~

~~The substantive Standing Orders continue to apply but will be interpreted in the light of the 2020 Regulations. In addition, however, the following addendums will apply until 7th May 2021.~~

- ~~• The Council may hold its council and committee meetings remotely where face to face meetings are not considered to be the safest option.~~
- ~~• Remote meetings will be held via video platforms whenever possible. If this is not possible audio only links will be used.~~
- ~~• Unless the press and public are excluded by virtue of Standing Order 3e, the public will be able to “attend meetings” by video and or audio communication within the limits of the technology used.~~
- ~~• Public Participation sessions will continue at remote meetings subject to any limitations of the technology being used.~~
- ~~• The Council will maintain a revised calendar of meetings on its website indicating whether remote or face to face meetings and regularly update instructions for members of the public on how access remote meetings.~~
- ~~• The Council will in the next Terms of Reference/Delegation for full Council, make provision for additional delegation to the Town Clerk in times of an extended emergency and these will be used as necessary to supplement the use of remote meetings.~~

~~The Council will continue to hold remote meetings if deemed necessary after 7th May 2021, providing that the this is permitted by further regulation.~~

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:**
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference; and any delegation to its committees.**
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a**

standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;

- iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
- iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
- v. The Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor have ex-officio powers to vote at any committee meeting;
- vi. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 3 clear days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
- vii. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
- viii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
- ix. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
- x. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
- xi. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee.
- xii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
- xiii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.
- xiv. A member who has proposed a resolution which has been referred to any committee of which they are not a member, [must attend that Committee to explain their](#) resolution to the committee but shall not vote. [The item will not be considered if the member requesting the resolution is unable to attend.](#)
- xv. Any Council member is entitled to be present as a spectator at the meetings of any committee or sub-committee of which they are not a member, except if a resolution has been passed to exclude the press and public. The Council member may speak on an item on the Agenda with the permission of the Chairman but may not join in the debate or vote.

5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a** In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the Councillors elected take office.
- b** In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.
- c** If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7:45pm.
- d** In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.
- e** The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- f** All Members are eligible to be proposed as Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council
 - I.** The Chairman of the Town Council shall be known as the Town Mayor and the Vice-Chairman as the Deputy Town Mayor.
 - II.** The Chairman of the Town Council should serve for one year, but this may be varied by Resolution of the Council if circumstances are deemed appropriate for a longer Term of Office.
 - III.** The custom and practice of outgoing Town Mayor / Chairman proposing the Deputy Town Mayor / Vice-Chairman is not mandatory.
 - IV.** It is preferable that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council have experience of Chairmanship prior to election to these posts.
 - V.** The Chairman of the Council should during their office involve the Vice-Chairman as much as practically possible.
 - VI.** It is expected that the Vice Chairman will attend functions that the Chairman is unable to attend, if practicable.
- g** The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- h** The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- i** In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect

of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- j In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- k Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:**
 - i. In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date.**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;**
 - iii. Consideration of the recommendations and resolutions made by a committee;**
 - iv. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;**
 - v. Review of the terms of reference for committees;**
 - vi. Appointment of members to existing committees;**
 - vii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;**
 - viii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders, standing orders for contracts and financial regulations;**
 - ix. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.**
 - x. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;**
 - xi. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future.**
 - xii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;**
 - xiii. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all**

insurable risks;

- xiv.** Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies, unless this has been undertaken as part of the budget process
- xv.** Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
- xvi.** Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
- xvii.** Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- xviii.** Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
- xix.** Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence, unless it is to be undertaken at a meeting of the Council to approve year end accounts and the annual governance statement.
- xx.** Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

- a** The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
- b** If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.
- c** The chairman of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.
- d** If the chairman of a committee or a sub-committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee or the sub-committee, any 3 members of the committee or the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or a sub-committee.

7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- a** A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee. [To consider a previous resolution there must have been a material change or further information that has come to light since the previous resolution was](#)

made.

- b** When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

- a** Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

- a** A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and, in any event, shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b** No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 5 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c** The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d** If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 5 clear days before the meeting.
- e** If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f** Subject to standing order 9(e) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g** Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h** Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:

- i.** to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
- ii.** to move to a vote;
- iii.** to defer consideration of a motion;
- iv.** to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
- v.** to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi.** to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii.** to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii.** to require a written report;
- ix.** to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x.** to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi.** to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii.** to not hear further from a Councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii.** to exclude a Councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv.** to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv.** to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
- xvi.** to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii.** to close the meeting.

11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 20.

- a** **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b** **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal**

data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).

- c The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

12. DRAFT MINUTES

Full Council meetings
Committee meetings
Sub-committee meetings

- a** If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b** There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).
- c** The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d** If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the Council, Committee or sub Committee held on [date] in respect of (-----) were a correct record but their view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e** **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f** Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed. The approved minutes will be published on the Council's website within 2 weeks of approval.

13. **CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS**

See also standing order 3(v).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- c Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest if so, required by the Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Town Clerk, or Proper Officer in accordance with the Councils Scheme of Delegation and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business.**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the**

Council's area; or

- iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a** Upon notification by the Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11, report this to the Council.
- b** Where the notification in standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take.
- c** The Council may:
- i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
- d.** **Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. PROPER OFFICER

- a** The Proper Officer shall be ~~either~~ the Town Clerk **or in the absence of the Town Clerk the Corporate Services Manager**, or other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b** The Proper Officer shall:
- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
 - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residence or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda, (provided the Councillor has consented to service by email and**
 - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 4 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer;
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(*see also standing order 23*);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the next available meeting of the Planning Committee.
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a

resolution to that effect.

The Town Clerk and other officers of the Council shall have the authority and duties given to them under the Council's Scheme of Delegation and will report decisions taken under such delegation to each Council meeting.

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

- a** The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a** "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b** All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c** The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each Councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i.** the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii.** the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii.** the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d** As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i.** each Councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii.** to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e** The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all Councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to

external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity.**
- d. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;

- v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one Councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
- vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- e. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £181,302 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.**
- g. **A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract; or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a. A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council, or Personnel Committee is subject to standing order 11.
- b. Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman of the Council or, if they are not available, the vice-chairman of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Personnel Committee at its next meeting.
- c. The chairman of Personnel Committee or in their absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance of the Council staff appraisals and job titles. The reviews and appraisals shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Personnel Committee.
- d. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff shall contact the chairman of the Personnel committee or in their absence, the vice-chairman of the Personnel

committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of Personnel committee, or Appeals committee.

- e** Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- f** In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).
- g** The council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured appropriately, and electronic records shall be password protected and encrypted.
- h** Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above if so justified.
- i** Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above shall be provided only to employees authorised by Town Clerk or the Personnel Committee.

20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 21.

- a** In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.
- b.** The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 11.

- a** The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.
- b** The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.
- c** The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.
- d** The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.
- e** The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.

22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

- a** Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).

- a** A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b** **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

24. COMMUNICATING WITH UNITARY COUNCILLORS

- a** An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillors of the Unitary Council representing the area of the Council.
- b** Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the Unitary Council shall be sent to the ward councillors representing the area of the Council.

25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

- a.** Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
 - i.** inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii.** issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

- a** All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b** A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- c** The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.

- d** The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

These Standing Orders were adopted on the 00/ 00/ 2021

Signatures:

Town Mayor

Town Clerk



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

Report to Town Council 20th July 2021: Flitwick Foodie Fest

Implications of recommendations

Corporate Strategy: In accordance with aim to develop the Council's potential.

Finance: N/A

Equality: Increases inclusivity.

Environment: Takes forward policy objectives directly.

Background

In 2019 Flitwick Town Council began working in partnership with Pick 'n' Mix Events, an events company that supplies children's entertainment and food markets.

The Community Services Committee agreed to host 'Foodie Friday' events on the hardstanding area of Millennium Park from May 2020 – September 2020. Unfortunately, due to COVID 19, all Foodie Friday events in 2020 were cancelled.

It was resolved at the Community Services Meeting in January to host 'Flitwick Foodie Fests' on Millennium Park from April 2021 – September 2021, Government restrictions permitting.

Due to Government restrictions, the first 'Flitwick Foodie Fest' was due to take place on Sunday 27th June. Unfortunately, this event was cancelled due to logistics issues with the SAG team at CBC.

Introduction

Currently the Event Protocol Policy for Flitwick Town Council states that all events held on FTC owned land must have SAG approval. This document is currently being reviewed as issues with event bookings have been identified due to gaps in the policy by the Environmental Services Manager and Community Services Manager.

Pick 'n' Mix Events have taken on aboard advice given to them by the SAG team, making amendments to their event management plan and risk assessments. Pick 'n' Mix Events hold foodie festivals at various locations across the country, engaging with a number of Town Councils.

In my opinion, the event is able to be run in a Covid secure manner and some of the requests from the SAG team are unreasonable for an event of this size and type.

Additional Matters

The SAG team work in partnership with emergency services, environmental services and take guidance from industry officials to support large scale events.

The purpose and scope of a SAG:

‘SAGs provide a forum for discussing and advising on public safety at an event. They aim to help organisers with the planning, and management of an event and to encourage cooperation and coordination between all relevant agencies. They are non-statutory bodies and so do not have legal powers or responsibilities, and are not empowered to approve or prohibit events from taking place. Event organisers and others involved in the running of an event, retain the principal legal duties for ensuring public safety’.

Taken from HSE website (Health and safety Executive)

Post Monday 19th July, the SAG team have no legal obligation to enforce any COVID restrictions.

The Foodie Fest events are primarily being organised by Pick ‘n’ Mix Events, with support from FTC. Pick ‘n’ Mix events hold their own Public Liability insurance up to the value of £5 million.

There are a number of local foodie festivals going ahead without SAG approval, this is due to a SAG application not being submitted by local Town Councils as the event is low risk. All vendors have their own Public Liability Insurance, Food Hygiene, Risk Assessments, Covid Risk Assessments and Fire Safety.

Recommendations

1. To allow ‘Flitwick Foodie Fest’ as organised by Pick ‘n’ Mix Events, with support from Flitwick Town Council to go ahead on Millennium Park without the approval of the SAG team as they are Covid – compliant and low risk.

Susan Eldred
Community Services Manager

Flitwick Town Council

Internal Audit Report 2020-21: Final Report

Sally King

For and on behalf of Auditing Solutions Ltd

Background

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Return. Auditing Solutions Ltd provides this service to Flitwick Town Council.

This report sets out all the work undertaken in relation to the 2020-21 financial year, during our visits on 28th April 2021, 7th May 2021 and in our office in June 2021.

Internal Audit Approach

In undertaking our review for the year to date, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Annual Governance and Accountability Return. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in a number of key areas in order to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and fit for the purposes intended.

Our programme of cover has been designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems are robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the Council's Annual Return, which requires independent assurance over a number of internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

We are pleased to conclude that, in the areas examined to date, the Council continues to have effective systems in place to help ensure that transactions are free from material misstatement and that they will be reported accurately in the Annual Return and detailed Statement of Accounts for the financial year.

We are again pleased to acknowledge that Council members and officers continue to operate a sound, pro-active approach to risk management and corporate governance issues, together with the development and management of effective internal controls and procedural documentation. Consequently, we have completed and signed the 'Internal Audit Report' as part of the year's AGAR process having concluded that, in all significant respects, the internal control objectives set out in that report were achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

Detailed Report

Review of Accounting Arrangements & Bank Reconciliations

The Council's accounts are maintained on an accounting system, Rialtas, and comprise three cash books. DCK accounting provide support with the year-end close-down and accounts. Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. To that end, we have:

- Confirmed closing balances from 2019-20 have been correctly brought forward to the current year.
- Checked to ensure that a comprehensive, meaningful and appropriate nominal coding schedule together with cost centres remains in place;
- Checked and agreed transactions (both receipts and payments) in the Council's main Current and Business Saver account cashbooks to the relevant Barclays Bank statements for May 2020 and December 2020 including the daily "sweep" transfers to retain a level of £5,000 in the Current account;
- Checked and agreed the relevant bank account reconciliations for each account as at 31st May 2020, December 2020 and March 2021 to ensure that no long-standing, uncleared cheques or other anomalous entries exist.
- Confirmed with officers the arrangements for backing up the computer system; and
- Discussed arrangements for processing journals (manual adjustments) in the accounts.
- Verified the year-end bank balances for all Barclays bank accounts, ensuring the accurate disclosure of the combined balance in the year-end Accounts & AGAR

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation; we have ensured the accuracy of the year-end balances reported in the detailed Statement of Accounts and AGAR.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has a robust regulatory framework in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders; that financial transactions are made in accordance with the extant Financial Regulations and that we have a reasonable chance of identifying any actions of a potentially unlawful nature that have been or may be considered for implementation. Consequently: -

- Concluded examination of the minutes of the Full Council and its various Standing Committees for the year to ensure that no issues affecting the Council's financial stability exist in the short, medium or long-term, also that no legal issues appear to be in existence whereby the Council may either be considering or have taken decisions that might result in ultra vires expenditure being incurred;

- We note that since the beginning of this financial year the Council and its Sub-Committees have reviewed Financial regulations and Standing Orders in October 2020 and September 2020 respectively.
- Reviewed the external auditor's report, issued since our last visit, to confirm they are raising no matters regarding the Councils accounts and governance.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area, warranting further comment.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that, in addition to confirming that sound financial control procedures are in place: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and / or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- An official order has been raised for all purchases and service delivery where one would be expected;
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed;
- There is a satisfactory process for the approval of grants and donations (where no invoice is appropriate) and that they have been approved for payment by members under the correct expenditure code; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We have reviewed this area selecting a test sample for compliance with the above criteria comprising all payments individually in excess of £5,000 plus every 50th cashbook transaction, irrespective of value, covering the period April 2020 to March 2021 . Our test sample comprised of 91 payments, totalling £480,564 and represents 53% of all non-pay related payments with all the above criteria met.

Finally, in this area, we have examined the content of the quarterly VAT reclaims submitted to HMRC prepared with no issues arising.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area warranting formal comment.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

- Noted that the Corporate Risk Register has been reviewed in April 2020.
- Reviewed the Council's insurance policy with RSA which commenced in September 2020 noting that it includes; public liability cover of £15million and employers liability cover of £10m and employee dishonesty of £1.8m.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area warranting further comment.

Precept Determination and Budgetary Control

We aim in this area of our work to ensure that the Council has appropriate procedures in place to determine its future financial requirements leading to the adoption of an approved budget and formal determination of the amount of the precept placed on the Unitary Authority, that effective arrangements are in place to monitor budgetary performance throughout the financial year and that the Council has identified and retains appropriate reserve funds to meet future spending plans.

We also reviewed the level of retained funds at the year-end, assessing their adequacy to meet the Council's ongoing revenue spending requirements and future development aspirations. At 31st March 2020, the General Reserve balance stood at £655,283. Additionally, the Council holds earmarked reserves of £276,781.

We are pleased to note that, at the meeting of the Town Council held on January 2021 the Council agreed that the precept for 2021-22 be set at £854,243. This represents a zero % increase from 2020-21.

Conclusion

No issues have arisen in this area. The Council has satisfactory arrangements for managing its finances.

Review of Income

In considering the Council's income streams, we aim to ensure that robust systems are in place to ensure the identification of all income due to the Council from its various sources; to ensure that the income is invoiced in a timely manner and that effective procedures are in place to pursue recovery of any outstanding monies due to the Council.

In addition to the annual precept the Council has a variety of income sources arising mainly from the Rufus Centre lettings and rentals, allotment income, café, cemetery fees, also the letting of sports pitches, miscellaneous grants and interest.

The Allotments are managed using Rialtus software. There are 2 sites containing 58 plots. New tenancy agreements are issued each year along with the invoices and chased if not returned with payment. We are pleased to note that the Council has reviewed it's allotment fees and has agreed no increase in 2020/21 and an increase of 5% in 2021/22.

We have reviewed the Burials Register and Exclusive Rights of Burial records, examining a sample of 11 entries relating to each area for the April 2020 to March 2021 to ensure that each is supported by all relevant and legally required documentation and that the appropriate fees have been levied in accord with the published scales and recovered within a reasonable time period. We are pleased to report that robust procedures are in place for this area of income.

The Council reviews it's Cemetery fees at the Community services committee meeting on an annual basis.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no significant issues have been identified in the areas reviewed and robust procedures have been implemented.

Petty Cash Account & Credit Cards

We are required, as part of the annual Internal Audit Certification process in the Annual Return, to indicate the soundness of controls in this area of the Council's financial activities. The Council has an imprest style petty cash scheme it also holds floats for the café. We confirmed this was within the limits set in Financial Regulations and confirmed controls over access to the safe where the money was kept.

Conclusion

No matters arise warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Salaries and Wages

In examining the Council's payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) legislation as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, together with meeting the requirements of the local government pension scheme, as regards employee contribution bandings. To meet this objective, we have: -

- Confirmed arrangements for processing and authorising salaries and wages via the bespoke IRIS payroll software in use by the Council;
- Reviewed the establishment listing and tested a sample of employees to correspondence confirming the employee's pay point;

- For a sample of staff, we checked the tax, NI and pension deductions for July also confirming overtime payments were correctly approved.
- Checked to ensure that the Council has reviewed and approved appropriate pay scales for staff;
- Checked and agreed the amounts paid to individuals by reference to the approved new pay rates verifying payments made in August 2020;
- Ensured that the appropriate month's deductions and contributions have been paid over to HMRC and the County Pension Fund in a timely manner;
- Checked that any overtime paid is properly supported by authorised timesheets.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have been identified in this area.

Asset Register

The Governance and Accountability Manual requires all councils to develop and maintain a register of assets identifying detail of all land, buildings, vehicles, furniture and equipment owned by the Council.

We are pleased to note that the asset register has been updated by DCK for additions and disposals during the 2020-21 financial year.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that there are no significant issues arising in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation. We have ensured the appropriate recording of these assets in the AGAR.

Investments and Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is investing "surplus funds", be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis, in appropriate banking and investment institutions and that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on the funds held, with any interest earned brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records, also that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

During our visits we tested repayments of PWLB loans as recorded in the Council's accounts to independent PWLB statements. We have agreed the cash balances to the bank statements as reported earlier in relation to our work on accounting reconciliations and bank reconciliations. We have also verified the accurate disclosure of the residual year-end loan liability in the year's AGAR by reference to the advice received from the PWLB.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have currently been identified in this area and have verified the accurate disclosure of the residual year end loan liability in the AGAR.

Statements of Account and Annual Return

The Annual Return provides the Council's statutory Statement of Accounts subject to external audit inspection. We also note that more detailed Accounts and Supplementary Notes have again been prepared by third party contract accountants (DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd) for presentation to members in order to further inform them of the underlying financial performance of the Council and provide comparative information with the previous year.

We have checked and agreed entries in the Statement of Accounts generated by the accounting software to the underlying Trial Balance and other documentation provided. Similarly, we have checked and agreed the financial data reported to the AGAR.

Conclusions

No issues have been identified in relation to the verification of detail in the Statement of Accounts and AGAR this year.

On the basis of our detailed work during the course of the year on the Council's systems of financial control and content of the detailed Statement of Accounts and that summarised detail set out in the AGAR, we have signed off the Internal Audit Report of the AGAR assigning positive assurances, in each relevant area.

Date :- 16/07/2021

Observations on the following Planning Applications

<u>Application No</u>	<u>Date Recd</u>	<u>Case Officer</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Support on the following applications;				
21/00379/TRE	08/07/2021	Joanna Baker	TBC	Land at rear of Compton Close Flitwick MK45 1TA
Proposal : Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order: MB/TPO/76/00007/G2 To repollard to Lime Trees previous points, remove basal and epicormic growth. Arising will be removed.				
Observations : FTC - Support (Vote - all in favour)				
21/02614/FUL	02/07/2021	Fenella Hackney	Mr R Adams	49 Chapel Road Flitwick Beds MK45 1EB
Proposal : Extension of an original outbuilding.				
Observations : FTC - Support (Vote - all in favour)				
21/02761/FUL	24/06/2021	Nicola Stevens	Mr Burgoine	Land Rear of 48 Elmwood Cres Flitwick Beds MK45 1LH
Proposal : Remove existing single storey garage and replace with a single storey 1 bedroom bungalow with associated parking and garden amenity space. Widen existing dropped curb to provide access to the forecourt on plot parking				
Observations : FTC - Support subject to ownership of land is proven. (Vote - all in favour)				
21/02869/FUL	24/06/2021	Sarah Fortune	Mrs Jo Wingell	31 The Quantocks Flitwick Beds MK45 1TG
Proposal : Single storey front extension				
Observations : FTC - Support (Vote - all in favour)				
21/02951/FUL	02/07/2021	Fenella Hackney	Mr Adam Cassell	2 Arundel Close Flitwick Beds MK45 1RR
Proposal : Two storey and single storey rear extensions.				
Observations : FTC - Support (Vote - all in favour)				

Date :- 16/07/2021

Observations on the following Planning Applications

<u>Application No</u>	<u>Date Recd</u>	<u>Case Officer</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
21/03045/FUL	08/07/2021	William Comber	Air Equipment Ltd	Station Garage Flitwick Beds MK45 1ED

Proposal : Change of use of existing rear showroom to office use.
Observations : FTC - Support
 (Vote - all in favour)

Signed _____ Date _____

Rob McGregor Mr

Date :- 16/07/2021

Observations on the following Planning Applications

<u>Application No</u>	<u>Date Recd</u>	<u>Case Officer</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
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Object on the following applications;

21/02517/FUL

23/06/2021	Nicola Stevens	Mark Moloney	14 Hinksley Road Flitwick Beds MK45 1HH
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Proposal : Erection of six x 1 bedroom flats and demolition of existing garage block

Observations : FTC - Object
Members objected the the planning application and agreed with the obejctions made by the CBC internal consultees.
(Vote - all in favour)

21/02914/FUL

28/06/2021	Julia Ward	Mr & Mrs Coleman	24 Dew Pond Road Flitwick Beds MK45 1RT
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Proposal : Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension and first floor side extension over existing garage.

Observations : FTC - Object
Memebtrs objected to the application due to the following material planning considerations:
Layout and density of building design, visual appearance and finishing materials
(Vote - all in favour)

Signed _____ Date _____

Rob McGregor Mr