



**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 4TH JANUARY 2022
AT 7:45 PM VIA VIRTUAL ACCESS**

Present:

Cllr Thompson (Chairman)
Cllr Toinko
Cllr Dann
Cllr Lutley
Cllr Badham
Cllr Chacko
Cllr Platt
Cllr Earles
Cllr Snape
Cllr Shaw

Mike Thorn – Environmental Services Officer
Susan Eldred – Community Services Manager
Zoe Putwain – Community Services Officer

932. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

933. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (a) No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared
- (b) No Non-Pecuniary interests were declared

934. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair took the opportunity to thank members and staff for their support over the festive season including the over 60s Christmas lunch.

Members were informed that there was a pending suggestion to revise the Community Awards event that was hoped to be included in the January agenda. Unfortunately, due to a clerical error the proposal will be included on the February Community Services agenda.

Clarity was received by the members around the ongoing intention to use remote meetings, as agreed at the extraordinary meeting in December. The Chair expressed that when a new agenda is issued for the committee, members will be requested to identify if they would prefer to meet in person or remotely to the Chair. Until a time when meeting in person would allow for a quorate of the committee to be present, remote access will continue.

935. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No members of the public attend this meeting.

936. INVITED SPEAKER

No invited speakers attended this meeting

937. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No members elected to ask questions

938. MINUTES

- a. Members discussed the minutes and requested more information to be given in relation to the Priorities item, around the green agenda and Manor and Country Parks items, that was discussed in the December meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Community Services meeting that was held on the 7th December 2021 pending additional requested amendments. Revised minutes would be circulated to members before January Town Council for comment.

939. MATTERS ARISING

- a. No members chose to identify any matters arising from the Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting 7th December 2021

940. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Proposed Budget 2022/23

Members considered the proposed Budget for 2022-23 that was circulated and suggested any amendments/additional items. The final proposed budget will be considered at the January Town Council meeting.

Concerns were raised in relation to the portaloos removal from the various sites and how the decision was made. Clarity was given as to the removal of the facilities due to investigation confirming that staff are currently not using the facilities and the financial implications on the budget. Members raised that it would have been preferable to have discussions with the Gardeners Association prior to the proposal to remove, to establish use of facilities by the public.

The Community Services Manager also identified that the budget proposal included the withdrawal of the monthly Bingo activity held at The Village Hall, this is due to other groups offering the same activity in the local area and the large annual financial loss of this activity.

Members raised questions as to the £4000 allocated to pay Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to grass cutting, in reference to previous discussions about allowing reduced cutting in Flitwick. Officers to investigate and confirm if this is basic or additional cuts and therefore a possible additional saving.

The phone mast at station road income was questioned in relation to the document being for the existing mast, new mast or combination of both. Also, there may be a change in legislation and the income from the masts being subject to this was questioned. Members requested more information on this at the February Community Services Meeting.

Members asked as to the removal of phone lines and were informed of the project to move the phone system to an internet platform and that the existing staff who have allocated phones will retain their units, with the budget for these being allocated to the Office / IT budget so no longer accounted for under the community services budget.

The Chair expressed that going forward it should be a priority to engage with groups when proposing to remove items. It was also noted that any identified removal of offer would not

take place until April 2022 when the new financial year begins allowing for information to be given to those affected.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to accept the budget. There was a request to receive additional information on certain areas that were raised in the discussion for clarity, at a future date.

b. Late Grant Application

Members considered a late grant application from Flitwick & District Heritage Group.

It was raised that no information was given as to why the application hadn't been made at the previous designated dates for the grants allocation, which is a requirement of our grants policy for late grants. The Chair reminded the committee that the current Grants Policy had been shared with the committee for review, and if members felt there were amendments to be made to share these with the Community Services Manager to be brought to a future Committee.

The Community Services Manager confirmed that also in the application it was stated that they had previously applied for a grant, this was not in the current financial year.

Members suggested that the Flitwick Town Council logo be incorporated within the design of the display boards being installed.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the grant application.

c. Queens Green Canopy

Members considered the report and proposed sites for the Queens Green Canopy.

The Committee discussed the allocation sites and the disappointment in the lack of CBC support given for this project, although it was mentioned that Ward Councillors had been involved in trying to assist in gaining information and aiding in communication. It was mentioned that pressure should continue to be applied to CBC to gain support for the project.

Other sites were raised by members such as the land to the rear of the new development of Victoria Grove near the railway, which could use attention. Members could not confirm the landowner for this site at the meeting. The Environmental Services officer confirmed that due to the time scales involved in the Queens Green Canopy funding allocations it may be best to work on plans on Flitwick Town Council land with other sites such as this and CBC owned land to be investigated if time allows for this project or future ones.

Clarity was sought in relation to the tree placement and the potential effects of tree positions to the development of either the park or allotments in the future. Also, the effects to light and earth nutrition on land directly near the trees being placed especially near the allotment boundary. Officers confirmed these elements would be part of considerations for final species and placement.

The Environmental Services Officer confirmed on question that the trees near the Scout hut would be not dense planting, but single trees and that the wildflower area would not be affected.

In the proposal it was suggested that local companies and groups be added to the possibility of tree allocations on request along with individuals.

It was suggested by members that S Dixon from CBC be invited to a future meeting to discuss.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the suggested FTC sites for the Queens Green Canopy and recommendations in report regarding funding, but to continue to apply pressure to CBC for support for the project.

d. Family Fun Day

Members were requested to change the previously agreed date for the event due to a clash with the potential Amp Rocks event due to take place on this date.

Members asked if the Amp Rocks event was confirmed as taking place on the 2nd of July and the Community Services Manager confirmed that information received identified that the event was expected to take place at this point.

A suggestion was made to the committee to move the date of the event to the 4th June, The Queens Jubilee weekend as this would allow for a community celebration. The Community Services Manager informed members that there were events planned for the weekend such as the beacon lighting and afternoon tea at The Rufus Centre. The reason the event was not scheduled for the bank holiday weekend was due to an expected large volume of people using the weekend to go away and the lack of staff availability.

It was suggested by Members to allow the Community Services Manager to choose a date that best works for the event without the need to take back to Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the members suggestion to allow for a change of date chosen by the Community Services Manager.

941. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Marketing & Communications Plan 2022-23

Members noted the status of actions for the Marketing & Communications Plan.

b. Marketing & Communications Forward Plan

Members noted the Marketing & Communications Forward Plan circulated.

The Chair informed the Committee that the request for more information in relation to posts shared by FTC but created by other groups had been raised at Corporate Committee and was being looked into

c. Budget

Members noted the Budget.

d. **Manor Park – Stewardship Payments**

Members noted the information given on the Manor Park – Stewardship Payments.

e. **Metal Detecting at Manor Park**

Members noted the correspondence in relation to Metal detecting in Manor Park between the Natural England advisor and County Archaeologist which confirmed that the request for Metal detecting at Manor Park was declined.

It was confirmed that the resident that had request permission had been informed of the decision and reasons thereof.

942. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No members of the public attending this meeting.

943. **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.

12a – Contracts – A Parkland Management Plan for Flitwick Manor Park

The Community Services Committee were requested to approve the quotation received for the development of a Parkland Management Plan for Flitwick Manor Park

It was **RESOLVED** to move item 12a to the exempt part of the meeting.

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.