



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

Draft - Minutes of Flitwick Town Council Meeting held on 21st March 2023 at 7:45pm at the Rufus Centre

Present:

Cllr A Snape (Chairman)
Cllr R Shaw
Cllr P Earles
Cllr A Lutley
Cllr D Toinko
Cllr H Hodges
Cllr C Thompson
Cllr K Badham
Cllr J Gleave
Cllr I Blazeby
Cllr A Chacko

Also present:

Cllr Bunyan - Ward Councillor
Stacie Lockey - Acting Town Clerk
Susan Eldred - Community Services Manager
Glyn Chambers - EQ Harmony
Public - 2

5366. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr B M Shaw – holiday, Cllr Daly - unwell, Cllr M Platt – holiday, Cllr J Dann – family commitment, Cllr J Roberts – work.

5367. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

- (a) No members declared Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda items.
- (b) No members declared Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda items.

5368. TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor had attended the following Civic events in the past month;

- Flitwick Quiz Night – special thanks to Cllr Thompson and Cllr Lutley for their help
- Leighton-Linslade Civic Service
- Dunstable Civic Service
- Amptill & Flitwick Student COP2 Event
- Sandy Civic Service

The Chairman reminded Members that the pre-election period began on 13th March which meant the Council would be considerate in what material was being published.

The Chairman thanked Members who attended the opening evenings for prospective new Councillors.

5369. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS

Cllr Bunyan informed Members that the Steppingley Road retirement village was progressing at pace. A date had not been set for the opening of the Station Interchange however, buses had tested the road layout and were able to get in and out.

Cllr Bunyan had carried out a walkabout around the east side of Flitwick and located new sites for dog and rubbish bins. The Acting Town Clerk agreed to send Cllr Bunyan a list of FTC-owned bins in the East ward.

Cllr Thompson asked if overflowing drains should be reported to CBC, Cllr Bunyan advised that it would need to be reported via fix my street.

Cllr Toinko asked what CBC to do offset trees that are cut down and commented that a large amount of trees had been cut down along the footpath between Eagle Drive and Manor Way via the Mount. Cllr Bunyan advised that additional trees are planted to offset those cut down and agreed to investigate the area in question.

5370. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items.

5371. INVITED SPEAKER

No invited speaker.

5372. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no questions.

5373. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Community Services Committee Meeting, held on **Tuesday 7th February 2023**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre.

Members noted the resolutions and recommendations of the Community Services Committee held on **Tuesday 7th February 2023**.

- b. Members moved to exempt the approval of the Town Council Meeting minutes for the meeting that took place on **Tuesday 21st February 2023**.

- c. Members to receive and consider the **resolutions and recommendations** of the Corporate Services Committee Meeting, held on **Tuesday 28th February 2023**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

Members noted the resolutions and recommendations of the Corporate Services Committee held on **Tuesday 28th February 2023**.

- d. Members moved to exempt the approval of the Personnel Committee Meeting resolution and recommendations for the meeting that took place on **Friday 3rd March 2023**.

- e. Members to receive and consider the **resolutions and recommendations** of the Business Improvement & Development Board Meeting, held on **Tuesday 14th March 2023**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

Members noted the resolutions and recommendations of the Business & Development Improvement Board held on **Tuesday 14th March 2023**.

5374. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 21st February 2023 - no matters arising.
- b. Members to receive any updates from Officers.

The Acting Town Clerk advised Members that the Rural Match Funding scheme that Members resolved to take part in last year had now been progressed. Utility checks were currently being carried out by CBC for installation of two new benches in the Town. These would be located on the green at Station Road and the grassed area between Townfield Road and Lyall Close.

5375. OUTSIDE BODIES

To receive reports from representatives on outside bodies – there were no reports.

5376. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Environmental Audit

Members discussed the environmental audit and Glyn Chambers (EQ Harmony) answered queries in relation to some of the content.

Members asked what the next steps would be in terms of progressing the objectives. The Acting Town Clerk advised that should Members resolve to be go ahead with the Environmental Improvement Working Group a suitable way forward would include tasking the group with some of the objectives.

A comment was made in relation to transport on page 12 of the document and a recommendation was made to change the paragraph to read as follows;
The Council should use planning consultation opportunities to prioritise walking, cycling and other sustainable modes of transport over private cars.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Environmental Audit with one amendment as follows;
Page 12 to be changed to; The Council should use planning consultation opportunities to prioritise walking, cycling and other sustainable modes of transport over private cars.

b. Environmental Working Group

Members were in favour of setting up a working group. Members agreed that it would require somebody to take the lead and drive the group forward including co-ordination of meetings etc.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Agree to form an Environmental Improvement Working Group as part of the post 2023 Council Election Process based on the terms of reference included within the supporting paperwork.
2. Ensure that a maximum of 8 Councillors are elected as part of the annual Committee and Working Group election process.
3. Promote the formation and tole of the group to residents, in order to encourage people to come forward and be part of the group.

4. Ensure those residents wishing to put themselves forward for permanent membership of the group are formally confirmed as Working Group Members and are replaced as churn requires.

c. Town Mayors Charity

The Chairman advised Members that 20% of money raised at Town Mayors events had been lost to VAT when hosting events at the Rufus Centre, the Council were also unable to 'Crowdfund' due to not being a registered charity.

Members advised that setting up a charity would not be a quick process and could take up to 7 months.

Members queried whether there were enough staff resources to be able to progress this. The Chairman advised that the trustees would be responsible for the administration which included the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Members raised concern around adding the additional responsibility to these roles and felt that consideration needed to be given to ensure it does not put prospective Members off standing for these roles.

Members agreed that a feasibility study into setting up a charity should be carried out, and Cllr Thompson offered to assist in the process.

It was **RESOLVED** to allocate Officer time to investigate the feasibility of registering the Flitwick Town Mayor's Charity Fund as a registered charity and bring this back to a future meeting.

d. Key Priorities

Members noted in the report that the Council would be coming out of the Environmental Stewardship Scheme and asked for clarity from Officers. The Acting Town Clerk advised that the current scheme ended in November 2023 and upon various discussions with stakeholders, the decision to leave the scheme was made to ensure that the highlighted projects from the newly created parkland management plan could be delivered effectively. The grant funding received each year was a very modest £2,000. The current scheme had restrictions around the use of the park, which would potentially impact the delivery of certain projects such as the lake.

Members agreed that the Banking Hub bid needed to be removed and replaced with 3 Station Road.

Members raised concerns with the priority column and felt that it was not an accurate reflection of the council's priorities.

The Acting Town Clerk advised that the following projects could be completed within the next quarter:

- Community Fridge – continued ongoing work to expand where possible.
- Flitwick – A Living History Website – hold resident engagement meetings
- CCTV
- Skate Park Lights
- Flitwick Town Square Furniture
- FTC/Rufus/Rendezvous Branding

Members were also advised that this would not mean no action would be taken on other projects, such as the Nature Park, and that background work would still proceed.

f. Christmas Lights Tender

Members raised concern within the report where it stated that prices might vary dependant on decoration selection. The Community Services Manager advised that since issuing the

report, this had been confirmed with all three contractors and confirmed that there would be no increase in the cost as designs had been submitted.

Members commented that the procurement policy included using local contractors and had an element of environmental impact. The Community Services Manager advised that all contractors use LED energy-efficient bulbs but would have to clarify information on the use of local contractors.

Members agreed to move this time to EXEMPT.

5377. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Planning – Responses to CBC including Officer Delegated Decisions

Members noted the Planning Responses including Delegated Decisions.

b. Planning – CBC Decisions

Members noted the CBC Decisions on Planning Applications.

c. Rolling Capital Fund (RCF)

Members noted the RCF summary.

d. Year End Finances

Members noted the key dates for the year-end preparation. Members asked if the Council would be able to see the final accounts at the May Corporate Services Meeting to be able to scrutinise them before adoption at the June Council meeting.

5378. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items.

5379. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution was **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

a. Minutes & Recommendations of meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes from the Town Council meeting held on **Tuesday 21st March 2023**.

Members received and **approved** the resolutions and recommendations of the Personnel Committee held on **Friday 3rd March 2023**.

b. Delegated Authority Decisions

Members noted the delegated authority decisions.

c. Avebury Update Report – Land off Steppingley Road

Members noted the report.

d. Attendance Register

Members noted the attendance register.

e. 3 Station Road Update

Members received a verbal update on 3 Station Road.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

Meeting ended at 21.40