



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of Flitwick Town Council Meeting
held on Tuesday 19th September 2023 at the Rufus Centre at 7:45pm

Present:

Cllr A Snape – Chairman
Cllr J Gleave
Cllr I Blazeby
Cllr C Thompson
Cllr R Wilsmore
Cllr T Connell
Cllr J Roberts
Cllr T Harald
Cllr D Toinko
Cllr T Parsons
Cllr M Platt

Cllr H Townsend – Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Member

Also present:

Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Stephanie Stanley – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO

Carly Ruffhead – Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets
Nigel Cross – Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets

Members of the public – 2 (1 via virtual access).

5512. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr Badham (work) and Cllr Hodges (holiday).

5513. 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.

5514. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor referred to former Councillor Russ Shaw's resignation as a Councillor for Flitwick (Part) East and thanked him for the work he had done on the Council. The casual vacancy was being advertised and two candidates were interested. The Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor would meet with the candidates with a view to making any recommendations for co-option at the October meeting.

The Town Mayor had attended the following civic events:

- Flitwick Classic Car Show

- Flitwick Football Centre 3G Pitch Opening
- Lord-Lieutenant's Coffee Morning
- Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets Ceremonial Event
- 'Flitwick: A Living History' event

The Town Mayor congratulated Cllr Blazeby on his work for the 'Flitwick: A Living History' event the previous week. He mentioned that this event was very well supported by the community.

The Deputy Mayor had attended the topping-out ceremony and the first Steering Group for the Steppingley Road Care Facility. He asked Members to forward any questions or feedback on the development to him. Other Members were welcome to attend future meetings.

5515. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS

Cllr Townsend reported that the Ward Members were still not receiving the Council agendas.

Action: Deputy Town Clerk

Transport Interchange

Cllr Townsend explained that a further issue had been identified with Stand B by the bus companies. Further work would be undertaken to resolve this issue before Grant Palmer or Stagecoach would utilise the bus interchange. Works were planned to commence in mid-October, including changed routes for crossings, which would be followed by a 42 day notice period.

Traffic Lights

Members were informed that the two sets of traffic lights – gas works by Cadent on Steppingley Road and roadworks for the Aldi Site (Ampthill Road) – would be gone soon.

The Avenue

The Avenue would be resurfaced in November with an intended timeframe of 2 weeks to complete the work.

Concrete – School Buildings

Cllr Toinko referred to a recent social media post from Cllr Adams regarding school safety concerns due to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and asked Cllr Townsend for an update on the current situation in Central Bedfordshire District. Members were advised that the Assets Team at CBC had confirmed that all maintained schools within the District had no issues. Cllr Townsend said that so far, there were also no issues with RAAC identified at any academy school, but not all responses were back yet.

Cllr Wilsmore asked if CBC would be liable for repairs if the concrete issue was in an academy run school. Cllr Townsend did not know the answer to this question, but she would find out and report back.

The Chairman requested for an opportunity for Town Councillors tour the new crematorium site in Steppingley and Cllr Townsend agreed to investigate.

5516. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

5517. INVITED SPEAKER

No invited speaker.

5518. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No questions.

5519. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. **For Members to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on Tuesday 15th August 2023, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.**

This item was discussed under Exempt.

- b. **For Members to receive and consider resolution and recommendations of the Business Development Improvement Board Meeting, held on Tuesday 12th September 2023, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre.**

Members noted the resolutions of the Business Development & Improvement Board meeting held on Tuesday 12th September 2023 at the Rufus Centre.

3 Station Road

The Chairman referred to the note on the agenda regarding fees relating to 3 Station Road (BI&DB item 1478b ii) explaining that Members needed to clarify which budget the expenditure was coming from. He requested for a separate nominal code to be set up to track expenditure. Officers stated that the funding should not come from reserves as mentioned in the recommendation, but that Members were required to consider agreement to the overspend on Professional Fees (4506/422).

It was **resolved** to permit an overspend on Professional Fees to the value of £10,000 to work with a property developer and architect to review options for the development of 3 Station Road. A new nominal code would be set up to track expenditure appropriately.

5520. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 15th August 2023 – no items.
- b. Members to receive any updates from Officers – there would be an update given under Exempt.

5521. OUTSIDE BODIES

No items.

5522. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Scheme of Delegations Review**

- i) Members were asked to elect 3 or 4 Members to the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

It was **resolved** to elect Councillors Parsons, Snape and Blazeby to the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

- ii) Members were asked to adopt the circulated Terms of Reference for the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

It was **resolved** to adopt the circulated Terms of Reference for the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

- iii) Members were asked to consider the circulated report and Officer recommendation regarding communications responsibilities.

(A resident joined the meeting via virtual access at 20:04).

A discussion took place about options for reporting on corporate communications. Cllr Thompson asked if the Forward Plan for social media content would remain an agenda item for the Community Services Committee. Cllr Blazeby advised that the report circulated indicated this would not be the case, but the Officer's recommendation included a section about electronic file sharing for communications for interested Members. The Chairman suggested including a report to the Council on a quarterly basis regarding communications of big events as he reported that there was often a member behind the scenes championing them. Members were informed that Officers had been asked to send all members calendar invites for events. Members requested for Officers to be proactive with file sharing.

It was **resolved**:

1. To progress with Option 4, putting business-as-usual communication responsibilities (Terms of Reference points 8.1 – first half, 8.2, 8.3 & 8.5) within Officers' remit.
2. For Council to consider the Comms & Marketing Strategy, Annual Residents Survey and point 8.4 in appendix 1. Other large-scale surveys to be approved by relevant Committees.
3. For the BI&DB to consider any Comms & Marketing Plans created which focussed on the Rufus Centre or Rendezvous Café.
4. To use electronic file sharing with interested Members on specific tasks if required.

Action: Comms & Marketing Manager

b. Local Organisation Leases

The Chairman advised that he had attended an event hosted by the Sea Cadets the previous week where he had a conversation with Carly Ruffhead (CR) and Nigel Cross (NC) from the organisation about the former changing rooms which are in the same building as the Headquarters. The Sea Cadets had expressed an interest in having this additional space and the Chairman had mentioned coming to the Council meeting to address Members.

CR, one of the representatives present at the meeting, stated that the Sea Cadets had looked at the former changing room space and were investigating options to develop the cadet experience by being able to enrol more young people. The additional classrooms for learning would enable this. Details of how the additional space might be divided up were suggested, and CR asked the Council to consider increasing the Sea Cadets lease term from 15 to 20 years to assist with grant funding. CR informed Members that from the initial quotations sought, the project to convert and use the changing rooms space was in the region of £53,000.

Cllr Blazeby advised that Officers needed to look at re-rating the ground rent (that was not charged) considering the Sea Cadets' use of the whole building going forward.

Action: Deputy Town Clerk

It was **resolved** to assign a 20-year lease to the Sea Cadets that incorporated the former changing rooms space.

(CR and NC left the meeting at 20:10).

5523. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Finance Reports Part 1

Members were asked to note the following finance reports:

- i) Flitwick Town Council Summary, Investments & Loans – noted.
- ii) Corporate Services Summary – noted.
- iii) Civic Expenses Summary – noted.
- iv) RCF & Grant Funding Review – noted.
- v) Bank Reconciliations – noted.

RIALTAS Reports:

- vi) Consolidated Bank Reconciliations – noted.
- vii) Income & Expenditure (Corporate & Community) – noted.
- viii) Cashbook (CB1 & CB2) Transactions – noted.

The Chairman explained that Council would continue to have sight of the following reports once the Finance Scrutiny Working Group was operating:

RCF & Grant Funding Review
Cashbook
Balance Sheet

b. UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Members noted the supporting paperwork and were informed that the Town Clerk was due to meet with CBC's Lead Officer for the fund on 21st September.

c. Planning – Responses to CBC including Officer Delegated Decisions

Decisions were noted.

d. Planning – CBC Decisions

Decisions were noted.

5524. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

(Members of the public left the meeting).

5525. 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.

a. Minutes & Recommendations

It was **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 15th August 2023 as a true record with minor amendments to those present.

b. Finance Update

It was **resolved** to accept the recommendations presented in the Officer's report.

c. Finance Reports Part 2

Members noted the finance reports.

d. Steppingley Road/Allotment Access

It was **resolved** to accept the proposal as presented with a request.

e. 4YP Update

Members received an update on 4YP.

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.