



## FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023  
at the Rufus Centre at 7:45 pm

Present:

Cllr A Snape (Chairman)  
Cllr I Blazeby  
Cllr R Wilsmore  
Cllr M Platt  
Cllr T Parsons  
Cllr S Livens  
Cllr F Patterson  
Cllr D Toinko  
Cllr T Connell  
Cllr J Roberts

Cllr I Adams – Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Member

Also present:

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

### **5526. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted for:

Cllr Badham (unwell)  
Cllr Thompson (holiday)  
Cllrs Gleave, Harald and Hodges (family commitment)

### **5527. 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 - Cllr Roberts Declared an Interest for Item 15C – UK Shared Prosperity Fund - his wife worked for CBC and was involved in the project.

### **5528 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor had attended the following Civic Events:

NALC LGBT+ Councillor Network (Cllr Snape is the Co-Chair)  
High Sheriff Justice Service  
Aldi Flitwick Store Opening  
Shefford Civic Service

Bedfordshire Hospitals Community Engagement Event  
Leighton-Linslade Town Mayor's Ceilidh event

Flitwick Football Centre 3G Pitch Opening (Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor)

The Deputy Town Mayor had attended a Charity Pop-up Art Exhibition in Bedford.

The Town Mayor thanked those who had attended the Flitwick Civic Service on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Remembrance Sunday was on 12<sup>th</sup> November at 3 pm. All Members were welcome to attend the parade, for which the staff would send out details. The Chairman was on holiday for this event; therefore, Cllr Roberts would be stepping in. The High Sheriff and Chairman of Central Bedfordshire Council, Cllr Mackey, will attend.

Members were disappointed to hear that Cllr Townsend, CBC Ward Member, had informed the Chairman that she would not attend any future Town Council meetings as she did not feel it was a positive forum. Cllr Townsend had requested an alternative forum for discussions.

#### **5529. Councillor Co-Option**

The Chairman referred to the Co-option reports circulated and advised that he and Cllr Roberts had met with the candidates. There were no questions from Members.

It was **resolved** to co-opt Fraser Patterson to the Office of Councillor for Flitwick West Ward. Cllr Patterson read aloud and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

It was **resolved** to co-opt Sue Livens to the Office of Councillor for Flitwick East Ward. Cllr Livens read aloud and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

#### **5530. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS**

A written report was previously circulated.

Cllr Adams explained that CBC's Executive Committee had met the previous week, and prior to attending this meeting, he sought advice on what aspects of the discussions he could share and what was confidential. He explained that CBC had discussed their land east of Flitwick Leisure Centre, and it had been decided to test this for sale on the open market. CBC had previously discussed delegated authority for two senior Officers and 2 Executive Members to have powers to agree terms; however, the delegated authority decision had been removed. Cllr Adams and Cllr Townsend had spoken at this meeting with their views against this proposal, particularly the delegated authority aspect, since the Ward Members did not feel four individuals should make these decisions because Flitwick residents did not know about it. Cllr Adams referred to discussions at the proposal stage for the Care Village development adjacent to this site. They commented that in 2019, this land being spoken about to go on the open market had been proposed for downsizer bungalow dwellings, but this had not progressed.

Cllr Adams communicated that he felt this item should have a report on the topic in the public domain for transparency due to residents' concerns about the amount of local development and because of its positioning opposite Steppingley Road field. Cllr Adams reported that without the delegated authority to agree on terms, this proposal must go back to CBC's Executive Committee for a decision.

Cllr Adams informed Members that he would be sharing this information on social media in a controlled way, focusing on the lack of transparency.

Cllr Adams reported that the Executive Committee had also agreed to develop a new Local Plan, a technically detailed process with consultation. The current Plan would run concurrently whilst the new Plan was being developed. Informal engagement would begin in 2024, with formal consultation scheduled for 2026.

Members were informed that residents must bring I.D. to use Ampthill's Tidy Tip from 1<sup>st</sup> November.

### Questions

Cllr Blazeby commented that it was surprising that CBC would not use their development company for the mentioned land. He also referred to some of the aspects mentioned by Cllr Adams relating to potential benefits to the Town Council from any commercial land sale. He stated that it needed to be as transparent as possible that the Town Council have not been involved in discussions thus far. He added that the Town Council did not know about the switch of CBC's policy. The Chairman stated that the original 'land swap' paperwork between CBC and FTC was complex, and the Council were waiting for legal advice since members wanted to understand what the 'interest' meant.

Cllr Roberts asked for an update on the inappropriate parking outside the Vape Shop at Station Square/The Avenue. Cllr Adams stated that extra enforcement was being introduced but reminded Members that motorists had two minutes grace before being stopped. Members discussed the option of yellow lines being installed. However, it was agreed, after a suggestion from Cllr Wilsmore, that CBC needed to install no loading chevrons for this situation to be resolved. Cllr Wilsmore and Cllr Adams would discuss this matter.

The Chairman referred significant inconvenience caused to residents by traffic lights for planned and unplanned works in and around the town. Members discussed that CBC needed to publicise these works in advance so that residents could avoid the routes affected. CBC's current policy is to publicise works on the one.network portal, but not to contact Ward Members or Town and Parish Councils.

Cllr Connell asked for the reason behind requesting I.D. for using the tip in Ampthill. Cllr Adams reported that the decision to enforce (there was already a caveat that residents might be asked for ID) was because of issues at the Thorn Turn site, which was sometimes more convenient for Luton residents. The cost of waste processing and disposal to a significant cost to CBC.

Cllr Wilsmore referred to the tarmac path that used to exist at the back of Gardener's Close in Maulden Road and asked if this was due to be reinstated. Cllr Adams agreed to investigate.

Cllr Adams left the meeting at 20:10.

### **5531. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No items.

### **5532. INVITED SPEAKER**

No invited speaker.

### **5533. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

No questions.

**5534. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

a. For Members to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 19th September 2023**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre. **(This item will be taken in EXEMPT)**

b. For Members to receive and consider **resolutions and recommendations** of the Community Services Meeting, held on **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre.

The resolutions and recommendations of the Community Services Meeting held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 were noted.

c. For Members to receive and consider the **resolutions and recommendations** of the HR Committee Meeting, held on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre. **(This item will be taken in EXEMPT)**

**5535. MATTERS ARISING**

a. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 – no items.

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

**5536. OUTSIDE BODIES**

There are no reports.

**5537. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**a. Scheme of Delegations**

Members were asked to consider adopting the Scheme of Delegations circulated following the Council's review of its Committee Structure.

Cllr Blazeby questioned a couple of sections:

- Environment Enhancement Scheme to be reworded to say Nature Park
- Frontage of 3 Station Road to be reworded as Town Square

It was **resolved** to adopt the circulated Scheme of Delegations with two amendments listed above.

**b. Internal Audit – First Interim**

The Chairman thanked the RFO and her team for their work.

It was **resolved** to accept the Internal Audit – First Interim Report circulated.

**c. External Audit for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

Members were asked to approve the Audited AGAR, year-end 31st March 2023 and consider the external auditor's certificate and report.

It was **resolved** to approve the Audited AGAR, year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the external auditor's certificate and report.

**d. Flitwick & Ampthill Scout Group**

As per the lease agreement, the Scouts are to erect a fence (design to be approved by Council) within six months of the lease being signed. Members were asked to consider the options circulated as part of the supporting papers.  
Members had a brief discussion about the options presented.

It was **resolved** to progress with option 2 (mesh fencing).

**e. Rolling Capital Fund (RCF) Applications**

(i) Members were asked to note the RCF Summary document circulated.

Members noted the summary and requested that Officers investigate other projects that could be closed.

(ii) Members were asked to approve the following Committee applications to the RCF:

- Rufus Centre Office Space Refurbishment

It was **resolved** to approve the expenditure of £15,968.53 for refurbishing tenant office rooms 18 and 19 from the RCF.

- Hinksley Road Play Equipment (UK Shared Prosperity Fund)

Members were asked to consider installing play equipment at Hinksley Road playing field at a match-funded cost of £8,000 from the RCF.

It was agreed to defer this item for consideration under item 15c.

**f. Flitwick Footpaths No 13, 14, 22 & Westoning Footpath No 13**

Members were asked to consider a response relating to a consultation on the above from CBC. Members discussed the footpaths involved, and it was agreed to respond to the consultation stating that there were no objections to the proposed changes and that additional footpath was sensible, which would be welcomed by regular walkers.

**g. Committee Vacancies**

(i) Members were asked to elect 1 Member onto the Community Services Committee following the resignation of Cllr Meredith-Shaw.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Livens to the Community Services Committee.

(ii) Members are asked to elect 1 Member onto the Business Development Improvement Board following the resignation of Cllr Shaw.

It was resolved to elect Cllr Patterson to the Business Improvement & Development Board.

**5538. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**a. Finance Reports**

Members noted that the new Finance Scrutiny Working Group had met the previous week.

i) Flitwick Town Council Summary, Investments & Loans – noted.

ii) Balance Sheet – noted. The Chairman advised that this document needed to be signed and the RFO would ensure this happened.

**b. Planning – Responses to CBC including Officer Delegated Decisions**

Members noted the Planning Responses including Delegated Decisions.

**c. Planning – CBC Decisions**

Members noted the CBC Decisions on Planning Applications.

**5539. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No items.

**5540. 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 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as a true record.

The recommendations and resolutions of the HR Committee held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were noted.

**b. Delegated Authority Decisions**

The Delegated Authority decisions were noted.

**c. UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

It was **resolved** to progress with a funding application for play equipment at Hinksley Road playing fields for Round 1 of CBC Community Grants with match funding of £8,000 to be taken from the RCF.

It was **resolved** to apply for Phase 1 of the 3 Station Road refurbishment project as part of the UKSPF capital grants scheme.

**d. Land off Trafalgar Drive**

Members discussed the Land off Trafalgar Drive.

**e. Key Priorities**

The Key Priorities document was noted.

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.