



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Flitwick Town Council meeting held on
Tuesday 20th May 2025 at the Rufus Centre at 7:45pm

Present:

Cllr J Roberts (Chairman)
Cllr A Snape
Cllr C Thompson
Cllr M Platt
Cllr H Hodges
Cllr R Wilshire
Cllr L Bandy
Cllr P Earles
Cllr A Crawford
Cllr T Parsons
Cllr I Blazeby
Cllr T Harald
Cllr F Patterson
Cllr D Toinko
3 members of the public

Also present:

Cllr I Adams – Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Member
Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Stephanie Stanley – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO
Beverley Jones – Comms & Marketing Manager

5806. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR FOR THE YEAR 2025-2026

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Roberts as Town Mayor for the civic year 2025-26.

5807. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Roberts gave his Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Town Mayor.

5808. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR THE YEAR 2025-2026

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Platt as Deputy Town Mayor for the civic year 2025-26.

5809. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Platt gave his Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Deputy Town Mayor.

5810. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

5811. 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.

5812. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Roberts thanked the Members for re-electing him as the Town Mayor for the ensuing year. The following civic engagements had been attended:

- Mayor of Luton's Civic Service
- Community Café Morning at Flitwick Market – fundraising for the Community Fridge
- The Chiltern Youth League Under 14's Trophy Final
- Remembrance Service at Flitwick War Memorial – VE Day

The Deputy Town Mayor thanked the Members for their support in re-electing him to the role. He had attended the following civic events:

- Lord Lieutenant's Evening of Shanties, Sea Songs and Laughter
- Remembrance Service at Flitwick War Memorial – VE Day

5813. LEADER UPDATE

Local Plan Call for Sites

Cllr Snape referred to the correspondence received about the Local Plan and commented that Flitwick would likely have some large-scale development. Cllr Snape was meeting with Ward Members this week, and the Local Plan would be one of the topics discussed. Following communication with Cllr Baker at CBC, the Town Council and Ward Members could write a joint list of infrastructure projects to be prioritised, which would be a significant step forward.

Cllr Snape had reviewed the Head of Terms agreement for the Steppingley Road field development and was disappointed that some matters were not included. However, there was an opportunity to influence this list. There were some challenges around Section 106 funding, as the infrastructure development plan was outdated.

Following an action from the previous meeting, Cllr Snape was scheduled to meet with the Chairman of Steppingley Parish Council later this week, which was timely considering the Call for Sites announcement. Cllr Snape would keep the Council updated on the discussions surrounding this matter.

Cllr Snape requested a point of order to suspend Standing Order 8b – voting on appointments will be conducted by secret ballot.

It was **resolved** to suspend Standing Order 8b and progress with public votes for appointments at this meeting.

5814. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS

Call for Sites – Local Plan

Cllr Adams emphasised that the Council should not overreact to the information provided in the Call for Sites. He explained that anyone could submit a site for consideration, even if they were not the landowner. At the same time, Cllr Adams highlighted the importance of not including sites in the Local Plan without proper engagement.

2026 would focus on a consultation on the procedure, including a strategic suitability assessment, and 2027 would focus on the details behind this, specifically what the list of sites includes.

Cllr Adams mentioned that some sites would be removed, and he had noticed that other sites had been reinstated to the list from previous years. Cllr Adams explained that he was elected to represent the interests of residents, but stood by his earlier stance of agreeing to 'appropriate' development.

Cllr Adams commented that it was right to engage in the Section 106 discussions and that there was an opportunity to challenge the agreement. Members were informed that there was an interactive map on CBC's website showing the land put forward, as well as a list of rejections. Cllr Adams had posted on social media about the sites in Steppingley and Flitwick that Members could refer to.

Members were informed that the Development Management Committee (DMC) were due to consider the Steppingley Field application on 4th June. Cllr Adams said that someone from FTC could attend and he would encourage this to happen, as well as wider attendance from Flitwick residents.

Questions

Cllr Hodges asked if Cllr Mackey was the Chairman of the DMC and whether he would have a vote on the application. Cllr Adams responded that Cllr Mackey remained the Chairman of DMC. However, Cllr Mackey had sought legal advice since he could be considered predisposed. The outcome from this was unknown, but Cllr Adams informed Members that if Cllr Mackey did not chair the meeting, he would join the other Ward Members and the Vice Chairman of the DMC would chair the meeting.

Cllr Adams left the meeting at 20:02.

IA left meeting 20:02.

5815. MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES

a. For Members to determine membership of the Town Council's Standing Committees, Boards and Working Groups that report to Council.

Business Improvement & Development Board (BIDB)

Cllr Roberts withdrew his interest in being a member of the BIDB.

It was **resolved** to elect the following members to the BIDB: Cllrs Snape, Blazeby, Thompson, Parsons, Hodges, Patterson.

Community Services

It was **resolved** to elect the following members to the Community Services Committee: Cllrs Thompson, Wilsmore, Earles, Crawford, Platt, Bandy, Toinko and Harald.

Finance & General Purposes (GP)

It was **resolved** to elect the following members to the Finance & GP Committee: Cllrs Parsons, Snape, Blazeby, Harald and Roberts.

HR Committee

It was **resolved** to elect the following members to the HR Committee: Cllrs Roberts, Harald, Snape, Blazeby and Parsons.

Appeals

It was **resolved** to elect the following members to the Appeals Committee: Cllrs Wilsmore, Thompson, Earles, Toinko and Hodges.

Planning Improvement Working Group (PIWG)

It was **resolved** to elect the following members to the PIWG: Cllrs Hodges, Wilsmore, Earles, Crawford, Platt and Patterson.

b. For Members to appoint Chairmen for Standing Committees.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Thompson as Chairman of the Community Services Committee.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Parsons as Chairman of the Finance & GP Committee.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Snape as Chairman of the BIDB.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Roberts as Chairman of the HR Committee.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Toinko as Chairman of the Appeals Committee.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Hodges as Chairman of the PIWG.

5816. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

a. Police Priority Setting Representative

Cllr Patterson commented that he would be willing to be the Sub for the Police Representative role and leave Cllr Wilsmore as the elected representative.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Wilsmore as the Police Priority Setting Representative.

Cllr Patterson was proposed and seconded as the Sub for the Police Priority Setting Representative; however, this vote was not carried.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Roberts as the Sub for the Police Priority Setting Representative role.

b. Flitwick Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) Representative

Cllr Thompson advised that the Flitwick VHMC meetings took place during the daytime.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Bandy as the VHMC Representative.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Platt as the Sub for the VHMC Representative role.

c. Planning Improvement Representative to attend CBC Development Management Meetings

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Platt as the representative to attend CBC DMC meetings.

d. **Patient Group (Flitwick Surgery) Representative**

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Hodges as the Patient Group Representative.

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Crawford as the Patient Group Representative Sub.

5817. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

5818. INVITED SPEAKER

No items.

5819. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No items.

5820. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. For Members to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 15th April 2025**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 15th April 2025 at the Rufus Centre as a true record.

- b. For Members to note the minutes of the Annual Assembly meeting held on Tuesday, 29th April 2025 at the Rufus Centre.

Cllr Thompson suggested a minor amendment to the wording in item 6 about surveying the attendees of the Lunch Club. She stated that this sentence should state that the Council had explored the option of surveys, but that this process did not seem to be effective, which led to the Officers speaking directly to attendees of the Lunch Club instead.

Cllr Roberts noticed a typo in the date for the minutes.

Members noted the minutes of the Annual Assembly meeting held on Tuesday 29th April 2025 at the Rufus Centre and the above amendments would be made.

- c. For Members to receive and consider the resolutions and recommendations of the Community Services Committee meeting, held on **Tuesday 6th May 2025**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre.

The resolutions and recommendations for the Community Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 6th May 2025 at the Rufus Centre were noted.

5821. MATTERS ARISING

- a. **Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 15th April 2025.**

Cllr Hodges advised that Mr Culman, a resident, had reached out to show him the drainage issues in the Steppingley Road area, but he had not agreed to meet with him. Cllr Hodges planned to walk the route with Cllr Adams soon, and he would keep Members informed.

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

5822. OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Platt advised that he had circulated an update on the Beds Association of Town & Parish Council business. Cllr Snape requested copies of the minutes, and Cllr Platt stated that he would obtain them when he attends the next meeting on 4th June.

Cllr Thompson had attended the VHMC Annual General Meeting and updated Members that the committee was continuing its fundraising efforts and making repairs to the building as and when possible. Cllr Thompson reported that the committee were struggling with membership numbers and that there seemed to be a new energy to rectify the Wi-Fi issues. There were some discussions about the delineation of the car park, and the Town Clerk commented that she had received an email regarding this matter.

5823. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. **Flag Flying Policy**

Cllr Wilsmore asked why the policy was being discussed, and he was informed that it was due for renewal. Members discussed the situation and agreed that the policy should be upheld until the end of the calendar year so that all occasions are marked with a flag flying. Cllr Toinko suggested reviewing the policy in September or October, so that any amendments would be in place by December.

It was **resolved** to continue with the existing Flag Flying Policy and review this in October or November so that a new policy was in place within the calendar year.

b. **Town Mayor's Allowance Budget**

It was **resolved** to add the unspent budget of £1,988.88 from the Town Mayor's Allowance/Civic Reception nominal code (4209/102) to the amount raised for the Town Mayor's Charities for the Civic Year 2024-25.

5824. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. **Finance Reports**

- i) **Balance Sheet** – noted.
- ii) **Project Fund Summary**

Cllr Thompson commented that the sum for the Central Project Fund (CPF) for 2025-2026 looked healthy, but that no capital projects had been suggested yet. She referred to the 3 Station Road refurbishment project, noting the Council's awareness of the substantial works involved. Cllr Thompson asked about seeing a list of capital projects that may need to happen over time.

The RFO advised that a list of suggested future capital projects was discussed at the Finance and GP Committee meeting the previous evening, with the priority being the installation of replacement boilers at the Rufus Centre. Members were informed that capital projects and their fund allocations would need to be considered differently this

year, and a further update on this would be provided within the 3 Station Road Officer Update in the exempt section of the meeting.

5825. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

Three members of the public left the meeting at 20:33.

5826. 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.

It was **resolved** to adjourn the meeting at 20:34.

It was **resolved** to restart the meeting at 20:40.

a. Confidential Report – noted.

b. 3 Station Road

It was **resolved** to accept one of the offers discussed and instruct the Town Clerk to continue negotiations with the preferred retailer, proceeding with the Heads of Terms and contract, with consultation from the Leader.

It was **resolved** to continue negotiations with two proposals for the restaurant unit and bring future proposals to a Council meeting for a decision. Alternative proposals received in the meantime would also be considered.

c. Post Office

It was **resolved** that Officers produce a Business Case for the discussed proposal, which will be considered at the next 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.

Signed (Chairman)