



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT Minutes of the Flitwick Town Council meeting held on
Tuesday 15TH July 2025 at the Rufus Centre at 7:45pm

Present:

Cllr J Roberts (Chairman)
Cllr A Snape
Cllr I Blazeby
Cllr A Crawford
Cllr R Wilsmore
Cllr F Patterson
Cllr P Earles
Cllr L Bandy
Cllr H Hodges
Cllr T Harald
Cllr D Toinko

Also present:

Cllr Adams – CBC
Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Stephanie Stanley – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO
3 members of the public

5847. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **resolved** to accept apologies for absence from Cllrs Parsons, Platt (holiday), and Thompson (work commitment).

5848. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Cllr Adams entered the meeting at 19:48.

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.
- (b) Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.

5849. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The End of Project Celebration for the 3 Station Road Refurbishment on 8th July was a success, and the Town Mayor thanked those involved in the event's organisation and the Members who attended.

The Town Mayor had attended the following civic engagements since the last meeting:

- Amptill Vs Cancer 5K Run/Walk Event

- 35th Annual Games for Teenagers & Adults with Learning Disabilities
- RAF and Tesco employee Chris McDowell's Welcome Party in Flitwick on his cycle journey from Edinburgh to Welwyn Garden City for Armed Forces Day
- Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets Parent/Cadet Boating & BBQ Evening

The Town Mayor expressed his gratitude to the Public Realm Supervisor and his team for the improvements to the town's grounds.

5850. Leader Update

No items.

5851. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS

Members noted the circulated report.

The Chairman asked for an update on the parking situation outside the Vape Shop on the Avenue. Cllr Adams responded that he needed to follow up on this matter again. CBC had agreed to put the lines there, but so far, this has not been implemented. The same situation remained for Maulden Road.

Cllr Adams left the meeting at 19:52.

5852. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

5853. INVITED SPEAKER

No items.

5854. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No items.

5855. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. For Members to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 17th June 2025**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

It was **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 17th June 2025 at the Rufus Centre as a true record.

- b. For Members to receive and consider the resolutions and recommendations of the Community Services Committee meeting, held on **Tuesday 1st July 2025**, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre.

The resolutions of the Community Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 1st July 2025 were noted.

5856. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 17th June 2025**.

No items.

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

5857. OUTSIDE BODIES

No items.

5858. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Post Office

Members received a report from Officers and the Leader and considered recommendations within the report.

Cllr Snape provided an overview to explain the background information about the Post Office service, including the investigations that had gone into its viability at the Rufus Centre (on two separate occasions) and through the marketing exercise for tenants at 3 Station Road as part of the refurbishment project. All investigations had proven that the finances did not work. The 'best offer' for the retail unit at 1 Station Road came from the Cottage Bakery, but this did not include a Post Office counter.

Officers had reapproached Post Office Ltd. in the most recent investigations for having a Post Office counter as part of the Council's Reception Services. Post Office Ltd. had visited the site, provided forecasts, and adaptation options for the reception area. Cllr Snape thanked the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk for their work on this. There was a large capital outlay to progress this project, and based on the finance forecasts provided by Post Office Ltd., it was showing difficulty in breaking even, even with the utilisation of existing Admin staff's time.

Cllr Snape commented that the Council had become more evidence-led. The Rufus Centre, being outside the town centre, meant that there was no comparable data.

Some Members commented that it was a difficult decision, as residents regularly asked them to reinstate the Post Office service.

Cllr Snape believed that Members needed to decide on a direction for this at this meeting. He concluded that the Council could hold its head high, as all routes had been explored. However, even though he would like to progress with a Post Office at the Rufus Centre, he did not believe it made financial sense, given the use of taxpayers' money.

Cllr Wilsmore commented that there were different forms of post office counters, and the one locally that was comparable to the one investigated for the Rufus Centre was in Maulden. From the services offered, residents could access most of these elsewhere in Flitwick, apart from depositing cash. He added that progressing with the project for the Rufus Centre would be very expensive for minimal benefit.

Cllr Toinko agreed with Cllr Wilsmore and commented on the large capital outlay. He did not think that the Post Office Ltd. estimates for the finances were conservative. Cllr Toinko questioned if people would return to a Flitwick Post Office now that alternative arrangements for its services had been found. He added that the Annual Residents' Survey response indicated that residents did not want to subsidise the costs. Cllr Toinko also raised the point about the impact a Post Office would have on the business services of the Rufus Centre and the disruption it could cause in reception.

The Chairman agreed with the economics of the situation discussed, but he commented that the Post Office service is something that has been frequently raised with him by residents in his role. The Chairman was conflicted on the best route for the Council.

Cllr Blazeby raised concerns about the required changes to the building's entrance/foyer area, and how this could negatively impact the flow of people in and out of the Rufus Centre, particularly for those wanting to send parcels via the Post Office. Cllr Blazeby

believed that residents had moved on since the service was lost, as they had found alternative ways to access the services.

The Chairman suggested that the Council could advertise in places where other services were provided in Flitwick and asked if Members would agree to revisit this in a year. Members were not in support of revisiting the idea.

Cllr Hodges requested that the supporting paper be made public, and he was advised that it had already been published on the website.

It was **resolved** to close the investigations of having a Post Office counter at the Rufus Centre and take no further action.

b. Match Funding – UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Community Grants

Members were asked to consider allocating £5,000 from the Ops Reserve EMR (319) for the Council's UKSPF Community Grants funding application 2025/26.

Officers were submitting a bid to improve accessibility at the Hub, and a verbal update about the project was provided at the meeting to give more details.

The project must be delivered with all funding spent by December 2025.

Cllr Snape asked if the project included the removal of the falsification of entry on the building (i.e., large-scale, heavy barriers across the back door, etc.), and it was confirmed that it did.

Cllr Wilsmore inquired about the Paxton system, and a response was provided.

It was **resolved** to allocate £5,000 from the Ops Reserve EMR (319) for the Town Council's UKSPF Community Grants funding application 2025/26.

5859. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Finance Reports

Members are asked to note the following finance reports:

- i) Balance Sheet - noted.
- ii) Projects Fund – noted.

b. Councillor Attendance Record

Members were asked to note the circulated Councillor Attendance Record for meetings (Civic Year 2024-25).

Cllr Harald explained that the numbers were incorrect, and not all lines presented were based on the total number of meetings. Cllr Harald was required to withdraw from the Business Improvement & Development Board (BIDB) now that he was a tenant of the Rufus Centre, and this had not been included in the spreadsheet.

Cllr Blazeby congratulated Cllr Toinko on his 100% attendance.

Cllr Patterson advised that he was recorded as not giving apologies for BIDB in May 2024, but he was not a Member of this Committee. He also stated that there was no record of his attendance at the May Town Council meeting.

Cllrs Roberts, Snape, and Harald had given apologies for one of the BIDB meetings, but this was not on the document.

There were missing lines for Cllr Earles on the Town Council meetings and Cllrs Bandy and Crawford at Community Services.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that these errors would be corrected, and Officers needed a new system for recording attendance and apologies. It was agreed for Members to note the Councillor Attendance Record for Civic Year 2024-25 at the next Full Council meeting.

Action: DTC

c. Delegated Authority Decision

Members noted that the following decision was made via delegated authority on 27th June 2025:

To fix the gas contract for two years with Corona for £18,748 per annum from 2027 to 2029. The RFO advised that this contract was from February 2027 to February 2029.

5860. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Mr Culman had attended the meeting to talk to Members about the decision made to close vehicle access to the Steppingley Road allotments at one working day's notice to enable the contractors of the Senior Living Development to complete the road works. He advised the following points:

- There was no time for plot holders to plan how to cope with the situation
- It caused problems in the height of the growing season, especially with a heat wave
- Mr Culman believed that the Council had put the construction company ahead of residents' needs
- Vehicle access would not have affected any work being done on Monday
- The new pedestrian gate could have provided access on Tuesday – Friday, and vehicles could have been provided access sooner if Farrans had planned evening work and other changes
- Mr Culman anticipated further closures being required to make good
- He requested that the Council refuse any future closures until there were what he considered to be proper plans set with adequate notice provided to allotment plot holders
- He wanted the Council to liaise with allotment representatives before taking any action for future closures

The Town Clerk advised that the Council had access rights, but Farran's request was not unreasonable. After seeking legal advice, it was confirmed that the construction company did not need to provide any notice and that the Council did not have the right to refuse the work from progressing. The Town Clerk appreciated that the situation was frustrating for plot holders, but there was no legal right to refuse the work. All plot holders were notified about the closure of the roadway, and three of them raised concerns.

Based on this explanation, Mr Culman commented that there was no right of access to the site. The Town Clerk replied that this was Mr Culman's interpretation.

Mr Culman asked if there was a possibility that Officers could negotiate with Farrans if this situation came up again, based on the terms he had presented. The Town Clerk advised that the request from Farrans was reasonable and the site was still accessible by foot (all

allotment holders were Flitwick residents). Officers had offered assistance with plot maintenance during the period and a lot of thought had gone into mitigating the impact.

Cllr Snape proposed under Standing Order 1r ii) to move to the next item of business.

It was **resolved** to proceed to the next item of business under Standing Order 1r ii).

A resident commented that it was disappointing to hear that the Council was not progressing with the Post Office, as she preferred this service to the others available. The resident asked why the service was so expensive and what was involved, considering other smaller towns had a Post Office.

The Chairman advised that there were various reasons for the high costs, including set-up costs, staff time, and the premises themselves. He informed the resident that other towns had a retail provider willing to cover these costs as part of their business, making it a viable service. The resident expressed her disappointment with the Council's decision and asked if any other retailers in the town would be willing to take it on. Members advised that this idea had been explored, but none of the business owners were willing to move forward with it. Cllr Wilsmore advised that the Post Office counters were located inside other shops, and it was the owners who chose to do this, but it did not generate any revenue.

The Chairman asked the resident what they would use the Post Office for. She answered that she accessed the service for sending parcels, collecting stamps and withdrawing cash.

Residents left the meeting at 20:33.

The meeting closed at 20:33.

5861. EXEMPT ITEMS

No items.

Recommendations and Resolutions of the Community Services Committee 5th August 2025

The Town Council are asked to note the **RESOLUTIONS** and **approve** the **RECOMMENDATIONS** of the Community Services Committee 5th August 2025

1293. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies for Cllr Earles (holiday) and Cllr Toinko (holiday).

1299. MINUTES

- a. For Members to receive and adopt the minutes of the Community Services meeting held on **Tuesday 1st July 2025**.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes from the Community Services meeting held on **Tuesday 1st July 2025** with no amendments.

1301. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Village Hall Car Park

The Chairman reiterated the request made at the Community Services Committee meeting on 1st July by the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) to reinstate barriers between the Village Hall and Hub car park. The Chairman also clarified that the Council had taken legal advice, and reminded Members that the Council were within their rights to leave the single white line as adequate delineation. The Chairman explained the alternative option to install temporary barriers between the car parks on a Friday and advised Members that the barriers could potentially be stored at The Village Hall but would belong to Flitwick Town Council, meaning the Council could also use these for other occasions. The Chairman also told Members that the Council had informed the VHMC that they would look into the alternative barrier options.

Cllr Wilsmore queried whether the Council had confirmed with the VHMC whether they were able to store the barriers at the Village Hall and whether they would allow the Council permission to put these up between the car parks on a Friday. The Chairman advised that they did not believe the Council had confirmed this information with the VHMC yet and that they would need to clarify this before purchasing any of the barrier options.

Cllr Wilsmore told Members that he believed the Traffic Chapter 8 Barriers were too heavy and difficult to maneuver, so were unlikely to be a suitable option. He also asked for clarification as to whether it was essential that the Crowd Control Barriers were red, as he had found alternative options online which were built to the same standard and from the same materials as the barriers included in the Amenities Officer's report, however the barriers he had seen were cheaper (approximately £16 each).

Cllr Harald queried whether the Council would have much use of the barriers aside from the use to separate the two car parks on a Friday. The AO suggested that the barriers could also possibly be used for events such as Family Fun Day.

Cllr Snape requested clarification as to whether the Village Hall had an up-to-date risk assessment for the car park and also queried how the Council proposed to pay for the barriers. The TC advised Members that they would need to review the Community revenue budget.

Cllr Snape explained to Members that he appreciated that he was not present at the July Community Services Committee meeting, however he believed that it seemed as though the responsibility for the issue was being put solely on the Council when it should be a joint responsibility between the Council and the Village Hall.

Cllr Wilsmore suggested that the Village Hall could potentially trial a different layout of their stalls at the market on a Friday in order to create a temporary barrier between the car parks, however the Chairman explained that there was no guarantee as to which stall holders would be present at the Friday market, so this may not always be possible.

Cllr Harald did not believe that the Council should purchase temporary barriers as he believed what they had already done was adequate. Cllr Bandy argued that the Village Hall currently had lower funds as they were completing projects such as roof so believed the Council should take some responsibility while thinking of the safety of the public. Cllr Wilsmore agreed with Cllr Harald and believed that it was not entirely the Council's responsibility to install barriers, but he also agreed with Cllr Bandy.

Cllr Snape informed Members that historically, access for The Hub car park had been an issue and there were letters dating back into the 1980's regarding issues in relation to the car park.

Cllr Snape objected to the idea that this was solely the Council's issue and believed as it was a joint issue, the costs to purchase barriers should be split between the Council and the Village Hall.

Members questioned that although the VHMC had stated that the single white line currently separating the car parks was a problem, there was no actual proof of this in terms of specific individual incidents that have occurred.

The Chairman told Members that there seemed to be three options in which Members could choose to progress with: purchase temporary barriers, do nothing, or contact the VHMC to propose splitting the costs of the barriers.

It was **RESOLVED** to contact the VHMC to check their capacity, confirm whether they had a risk assessment in place, and propose splitting the cost of purchasing temporary barriers.

b. Christmas Lights Display

The Chairman explained to Members that the Council's contract with Lamps & Tubes Illuminations Ltd was coming to an end and, given the current resources of the Community Services team, they were proposing that the Council extend the contract. The Chairman also highlighted to Members that Officers were happy with the service received from the company thus far.

Cllr Wilsmore explained that he believed Christmas Lights were for the purpose of attracting Christmas trade, and due to the location of the lights, did not believe they would be of benefit to anyone. He suggested that the Christmas Lights display should be reduced to just cover Station Square.

Cllr Snape thought that it made sense to extend the current contract, even though

he would love to see a different display. The Chairman agreed with Cllr Snape.

It was **RESOLVED** to extend the current Christmas Lights Display contract for a further two years to 2027 (inclusive).

c. Event Booking Protocol Policy Review

Cllr Snape requested clarification as to who was responsible for making the decision as to whether something went to the Safety Advisory Group or not. The TC explained that this was currently a 'grey area' and that she would support Officers to make a judgement at the time depending on the type of event. Members felt this needed to be reflected in the document.

Members discussed the fees and recalled a discussion on these at the last meeting. The AO advised that a report would be coming to the next meeting to discuss fees for various upcoming events.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the reviewed Event Booking Protocol with one amendment regarding SAG approval.

d. Allotment Facilities

The Chairman advised Members that the Council had previously looked into providing a compostable toilet facility; however, this option was expensive, so the Council would need to look at getting a grant to fund this.

The TC advised Members that whichever decision was made during this meeting would be the decision going forward and that this agenda item would not come up again next year, as it was believed to be difficult to continue to communicate different decisions to plot holders each year.

The Chairman recommended that, once Members had decided whether or not to install toilet facilities at the allotment sites, plot holders, including the reps, would need to be informed as soon as possible, before their plots were due for renewal for next year.

Members questioned whether the toilet facilities currently on site were used much. The Chairman advised that there were a number of plot holders who really appreciated the facilities; however, overall, they were not used to a great extent. Cllr Wilsmore argued that the costs were an extensive amount of money to spend on facilities which only a small number of people use.

Cllr Snape felt that it was not appropriate to use the Allotment EMR to supply portaloo's.

The Chairman requested that the allotment representatives be informed of the decision made regarding toilet facilities at the allotment sites as soon as possible.

It was **RESOLVED** to not reinstate toilet facilities in the future at Station Road and Steppingley Road allotment sites.

e. **Burial Ground & Allotment Fees**

The Chairman reminded Members that, during July's meeting, Members had decided to introduce a fee for the transfer of exclusive rights.

Allotments

The Chairman highlighted to Members that they had just made the decision not to reinstate toilet facilities at the allotment sites and that building works would be starting next to one of the sites, so suggested these factors be taken into consideration when reviewing the allotment fees.

Cllr Harald believed that the proposed 5% fee increase was marginal and considered it fair, given the recent lack of fee increases.

The Chairman requested Officers' thoughts and recommendations in terms of deposit amounts for the end of tenancy. The AO explained that other Councils' fees ranged from £30/40 - £100, so advised a median of these would be a sensible figure. The AO advised Members that the deposits would only be introduced to new tenants and would not apply to existing plot holders.

It was **RESOLVED** to increase the Allotment fees for 2027/28 by 5% (£28.56) and to introduce a **£50** deposit for end of tenancy.

Burial Ground

Members did not believe it made sense to change the burial ground fees, considering there were currently no available burial plots.

It was **RESOLVED** for Burial Fees for 2026/2027 to remain the same.

f. **Nature Park Management Plan**

Members thought that the management plan was well-written and comprehensive.

The AO informed members that the grazier at Manor Park was extremely interested in also grazing at The Nature Park. The AO highlighted that the management plan included grazing within the plan, so the AO was looking to proceed with the proposition quite quickly.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the draft Nature Park Management Plan 2025-2030.

g. **Hinksley Road Music Park**

Cllr Harald queried whether the Council had received any additional complaints in relation to Hinksley Music Park. The TC clarified that the Council had not received any further complaints which she was aware of. Cllr Wilsmore suggested that the lack of complaints does not confirm that the Music Park had not been causing upset to other residents.

The Chairman proposed that the Council look into purchasing signage to display at the Music Park to indicate that the park be used during appropriate hours to avoid disruption. Members agreed with the proposal as they believed their options were limited, as the park had already been installed, so it could not be moved.

Cllr Snape raised concerns regarding the disruption caused by the Music Park

during the early hours of Sunday mornings while the Hinksley Park Run takes place. Cllr Snape asked whether Officers had spoken to the organisers of the Park Run to ask whether there were marshals on site to stop this from happening.

It was RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to respond to the complainant with actions the Council would be taking to minimise disruption.



Flitwick Town Council

Report to Town Council ~~:[INSERT DATE]~~ Land between Brogborough, Lidlington, and Marston Moretaine, ~~CB/18/1969/OUT~~

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Implications of recommendations

Corporate Strategy: There are no direct implications from this report

Finance: There are no direct financial implications from this report.

Equality: No equalities implications have been identified from what is discussed in this report.

Environment: There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

That the Council objects to this application as the revisions to the updated application do not sufficiently address the Council's previous objection.

That that Council consider the matters relating to the Land between Brogborough, Lidlington, and Marstone Moretaine raised in this report. The Planning Improvement Group advises that should the Council consider objecting to the application, that it be done on grounds of impacts on health services and insufficient measures being taken to mitigate the impacts of the development on the A507.

Regardless of the Town Council's position, it is recommended that the following conditions be requested should the planning application be permitted:

- A sufficient financial contribution is made to improving the capacity of local health services, in line with contribution recommended by the NHS and CCG, though prioritised on improving the capacity of healthcare facilities in the West Central Beds area;
- The targets for use of non-car modes of transport in the Travel Plan be explicitly included as a planning condition, to mitigate the impact of the development on the A507;
- That a financial contribution be made to junction improvements at the One-o-One roundabout; to mitigate the impact of the development on the A507;
- That a Construction Traffic Management Plan be agreed between Central Beds and the developer, with the involvement of town and parish councils, that actively encourages the use of the M1 and A421 by construction traffic, to mitigate the impact of the development on the A507.

Background

The Planning Improvement Group has been tasked with the consideration of, and making recommendations to, Town Council concerning major planning applications. As well as such

planning applications within Flitwick, this also considers major applications that are likely to have an impact on the town.

The planned development of the 'Marston Valley' – formally known as Land between Brogborough, Lidlington, and Marston Moretaine – has been in consideration for a number of years. This is a significant development that will impact upon Flitwick. Consequently, the Planning Improvement Group has reviewed this application in line with the adopted Planning Guide.

Councillors can view the application documents online on the [Central Beds Planning Portal](#), citing planning application reference CB/18/01969/OUT.

The proposals

The planned development is for a significant-sized new community between Brogborough, Lidlington, and Marston Moretaine, of a scale comparable in size to Flitwick currently. This proposal constitutes the following in a series of 4 'villages' across the area:

- Up to 5000 new homes
- Up to 30 hectares of employment land
- Other land uses such as retail, community, leisure and sport uses, and hotels
- 4 lower schools, 2 middle schools, and 1 upper school
- Woodland planting, waterways, ecological areas, and landscaping works
- Supporting infrastructure, vehicle access, walking and cycling routes, and public transport routes

An overall plan of the development is shown below.



Figure 1 - Overview map

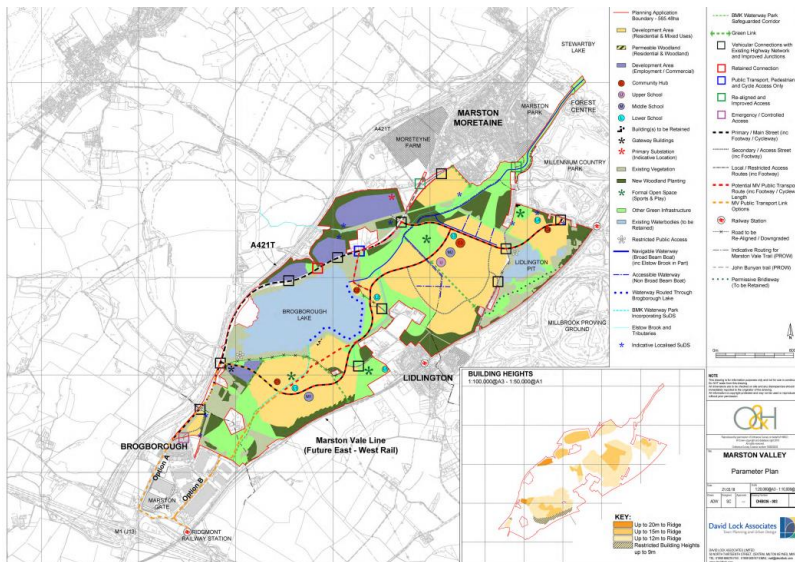


Figure 2 - Parameters Plan for the Marston Vale Development

This planning application has been live since 2018. However, [following the adoption of a Development Brief for the site](#), the original application has been updated, with changes made to a number of key documents. This includes the Environmental Statement, the Transport Assessment, the Design and Access Statement, the Planning Statement, and Landscape and Visual Statement.

Matters for consideration

This is a significant development that is likely to have a major impact on all surrounding areas. In our consideration of the application, the Planning Improvement Group largely focussed our discussions on the impact of the development on infrastructure and services in a manner that will directly affect Flitwick. But we have also considered the principle of the development in our discussions.

Principle of development

The principle of the development is established in both [the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan](#) and [the adopted Development Brief for the site](#). A number of policies in the Local Plan are relevant to the development, with the most significant being Policy SP1 – Growth Strategy, which states that:

“New homes and jobs will be delivered via a combination of strategic and small - medium scale allocations throughout Central Bedfordshire. Strategic allocations will be made at the following locations:

- *Marston Valley (New Villages) – 5,000 homes and 30ha employment land...*”

Policy SA2 of the Local Plan deals specifically with the new growth planned in the Marston Vale, setting out a number of development principles that the site should accord to. The relevant parts of the policy for the Town Council are set out below

The land for Marston Vale New Villages, as identified in the Policies Map, is allocated for a mixed-use development comprising of approximately 5,000 dwellings and approximately 30 hectares of employment land. The employment land is allocated for new non-strategic E(g) and B2 uses, intended specifically for employment relating to research and development, office, services and tourism to contribute towards meeting local employment needs.

Development proposals will be permitted where the principles set out below are met. These principles will be defined in more detail through the preparation of a Development Brief which will include a concept plan and an indicative phasing plan. Planning permission will only be granted for development following the Council’s endorsement of this Development Brief. A site wide Design Code(s) will also be required, followed by area specific Design Codes for each phase, to be prepared by the developer and approved by the Council. In order to ensure the development will be supported by the local and strategic infrastructure needed to ensure sustainable development, the Council will refuse any piecemeal planning permission that would undermine the Council’s ability to deliver such infrastructure...

...The development shall provide dedicated and safe pedestrian and cycle links between the new and existing villages, connecting new local centres, employment opportunities, schools, shops, public transport nodes and community facilities with existing pedestrian and cycle networks in the wider Marston Vale...

...the development will provide supporting transport infrastructure to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, including a deliverable scheme of improvements at J13 of the M1 and improvements to the strategic and the local highway network as necessary, to mitigate the impacts of development. The development shall deliver viable and efficient public transport routes and segregated cycling routes through the development that enable links with key destinations including the nominated East West Rail stopping station and employment areas...

...The development shall provide commensurate contributions towards the provision of appropriate off-site infrastructure improvements including towards public transport interchange facilities relating to the enhancement of the nominated stopping station for East West Rail...

The development brief takes these and other principles outlined in the policies, and develops them in more detail. For example, by identifying site access arrangements and the locations of planned housing and employment facilities. This brief was adopted by Central Bedfordshire Council at its Development Management Committee on 16th March 2022.

The Planning Improvement Group advises that the principle of development in this area is well established in Local Plan policy. And therefore it would not be possible for the Council to object to the application on the basis of the principle of development.

Impacts on healthcare

The Planning Improvement Group has noted that the new development itself will provide up to 1750m² D1 floorspace, which will be split between health facilities (up to 1200m²) and Learning and non-residential institution (up to 550m²). The number of patients that this is expected to serve is uncertain, however the application notes that there are two nearby GP surgeries at Marston Moretaine (that is at capacity) and Cranfield.

The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has noted the capacity issues at local surgeries, and has requested a "contribution of £2,445 per dwelling...towards the proposed new primary care centre in Marston Valley, West Mid Beds Integrated Health and Care Hub and improvement of capacity at Bedford Hospital and Milton Keynes Hospital."

There is uncertainty as to how this development will be phased. However, there are known capacity issues at nearby NHS facilities, including Flitwick Surgery. It is uncertain as to whether this contribution will mitigate the impact of the development on local healthcare facilities sufficiently. This is matter not clarified either by the application documents or the CCG's response. This in itself may be a material consideration on which to object to the application.

This matter could potentially be overcome by requesting a planning condition that specifies the planning contribution requested by the CCG, but prioritises such funding towards improving local healthcare facilities (a new facility in the Marston Vale and the West Mid Beds Integrated Health and Care Hub). Furthermore, a condition could be requested where the provision of funding towards additional healthcare facilities be provided at an early stage of the development, so that the worst impacts of the development could be mitigated.

Should such a contribution be sought, the choices of the NHS of the location of the West Mid Beds Integrated Health and Care Hub is only a planning matter relevant to the application in that it is likely to be spent in a location 'relevant' to the development – i.e. within close proximity. Therefore, the Town Council will need to engage with the CCG at a later time on the location of this Hub.

Impacts on local schools

The Planning Improvement Group reviewed the application for its impacts on local schools. The assessment of the capacity of the local schools in the immediate vicinity of the development highlights that several schools in Marston Moretaine and Cranfield have issues in terms of insufficient capacity for new pupils. However, the Group is concerned that one of the closest Upper Schools to the site at Redbourne has not been assessed in terms of the impact on capacity. There are no comments from the Education department at Central Beds Council on the application either.

This impact is primarily mitigated by the scale of the school construction on the development site – 4 lower schools, 2 middle schools, and 1 upper school. Whilst no numbers are given for the planned schools, the Planning Improvement Group considers that this is likely to be a substantial

increase in capacity that will cater for the planned development. The delivery timescales for these are slightly uncertain.

Whilst ultimately the impact of the development on local school capacity will be mitigated, the plans do not consider the impact of the development on that capacity as it is delivered. This could be mitigated by requesting a planning condition that provides a plan for the delivery of this additional capacity.

Impacts on transport and roads

The plans of the development place a significant emphasis prioritising sustainable modes of transport, namely walking and cycling for local trips, and public transport for longer distance trips. This includes providing segregated walking and cycling infrastructure throughout the development, and providing new bus links.

For longer distance trips, the Transport Assessment notes that it is likely that the majority of such trips are likely to be to and from Bedford and Milton Keynes, and as such will use the A421 and M1. The Planning Improvement Group considers that this is a reasonable assumption, although there will be impacts on the A507 and Flitwick.

It should be noted that the planned East-West Rail link has been factored into the development. The application anticipates that the link will use the existing Marston Vale Line between Bedford and Bletchley, and has also taken account of planned closures and diversions to existing level crossings planned as part of the link. Also, the application assumes that the Wixams station between Bedford and Flitwick will open as planned in 2024/25.

The proposals also put forward a new bus service running between Flitwick and Cranfield, via the new development. No route details are set out, but it is reasonable to assume that this bus will run at least as far as the new interchange at Flitwick Station. For Flitwick, this could result in a new, frequent bus service operating down Steppingley Road, and providing for new public transport journeys towards the Marston Vale and Cranfield.

Traffic modelling as part of the Transport Assessment forecasts that, assuming nothing is done, the development will result in traffic congestion issues on the A507. Most notably for us, the Transport Assessment notes:

- At the Millbrook roundabout, traffic will be queuing on the approach to the roundabout coming from Millbrook. Traffic levels will also grow on all other approaches, but not to a significant degree;
- At the One-o-One roundabout, traffic will be queuing on all approaches to the roundabout as the development is constructed

For the Millbrook roundabout, the developer proposes to mitigate the issues by encouraging residents of the new development to use the planned new bus service. The sites Travel Plan proposes non-binding targets to encourage a shift to using public transport, and a series of actions to do this. For the One-o-One roundabout, the developer has indicated that it will provide a contribution to an unspecified junction upgrade being planned by Central Bedfordshire Council.

The Planning Improvement Group is concerned that, should the development go ahead, these will be insufficient in mitigating the impact of the development. Targets for encouraging the use of buses to and from Flitwick (and the use of non-car modes of transport generally) need to be binding on the developer, and secured by planning condition. For the bus service itself, this also needs to be delivered from an early stage of the development, and financially supported by the developer. It also needs to be frequent, and timed to meet commuter trains from Flitwick from early in the morning until late in the evening. There is also no evidence given of the impact of the planned improvements to the One-o-One roundabout.

The plans do not include any details on how construction traffic will be managed as part of the development. It is standard practice that a Construction Traffic Management Plan is agreed prior to the development commencing, and it is essential that this is done here through a planning condition. As part of this Traffic Management Plan, construction traffic should be encouraged to not travel through Flitwick, owing to the availability of alternative routes (the M1 if heading south) and the impact on communities. We also recommend urging the developer and Central Beds Council to consider strong enforcement measures should construction traffic contravene this plan,

Finally, the Planning Improvement Group commented that as part of the development, providing a safe cycle route as far as the Millbrook roundabout would be useful. This would enable residents of the development cycling to Flitwick, and even visitors to the country park at the Forest Centre from Flitwick to cycle there safely.

Other matters commented upon

The Planning Improvement Group also observed a number of aspects of the development that were considered to be of interest, although were either not material to Flitwick or were insufficient in scale to warrant further consideration. These included:

~~— A commitment by the development to have a 'net benefit' impact in terms of biodiversity;~~

- The development planning to have a 'woodland contribution' to the Marston Vale of at least 32% of the surface area of the development;
- The development providing a dedicated alignment for the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway



Flitwick Town Council

Report to Council 19th August 2025

Flitwick Town Council – Response to the Universal Destinations Theme Park Proposal

Date: 19th August 2025

For: Planning Authority and Universal Destinations

Introduction

Flitwick Town Council is committed to ensuring that major developments in our region deliver genuine benefits for our residents while protecting the character, safety, and sustainability of our town.

We recognise that the proposed Universal Destinations Theme Park could boost the regional economy, create jobs, and attract investment. However, the application in its current form falls short. It fails to:

- Assess the real impact on our road network, public transport, and air quality.
- Provide solutions for the housing and accommodation pressures the construction phase will create.
- Guarantee fair access to employment and business opportunities for Mid Bedfordshire communities.
- Offer tangible, long-term benefits to offset the disruption our residents will experience.

Flitwick is already dealing with congestion, limited rail capacity, parking pressures, and overstretched public services. The additional strain from construction and visitor traffic will be significant — unless robust, enforceable mitigation is agreed before development begins.

Our position is clear: We will only support this project if the developer and planning authority work directly with Flitwick Town Council to deliver binding measures that protect our community and ensure we share fairly in the benefits.

Our Position

Flitwick Town Council acknowledges that a project of this scale has the potential to deliver regional economic benefits. However, the current planning application does not adequately recognise or address the significant and specific impacts it will have on our town.

Flitwick faces:

- Severe traffic congestion and road safety risks that will worsen without targeted mitigation.
- Rail services that are both overcrowded and unaffordable, with no plans for capacity or service level improvements.
- Pressure on local housing from an influx of construction workers and increased demand for

short-term lets.

- Environmental and community disruption without any guaranteed local benefits.

We will only support the project if there is genuine engagement with our community and clear, enforceable commitments to protect our residents and infrastructure.

Traffic and Road Pressures

Everyday congestion is already bad — the Theme Park will make it worse.

The A507, A5120, B530, and surrounding local roads are frequently used as diversion routes when there are incidents on the M1. This will only intensify once millions of additional visitor journeys are added to the network. Key junctions and roundabouts in and around Flitwick are already operating at or above capacity, meaning even minor increases in traffic will cause significant delays and gridlock.

Road condition is deteriorating.

- The B530 to Bedford is in a severe state of disrepair.

- Steppingley Road, Dunstable Road, and High Street (A5210) already suffer from worn surfaces, potholes, and limited maintenance.

Heavy construction traffic will accelerate this decline unless resurfacing and repair are carried out beforehand.

Air quality will worsen.

More vehicle journeys mean higher levels of air and noise pollution, affecting residents' health and wellbeing.

Rail and Bus Capacity

Our station is already under strain — and the current service doesn't meet residents' needs.

- Affordability: Train fares are already out of reach for many local people.

- Service levels: Thameslink services have not been restored to pre-pandemic frequencies, despite passenger numbers bouncing back and significant growth in demand from Luton Airport Parkway.

- Capacity: Peak-time trains are overcrowded; no additional trains are planned for the Theme Park's visitor numbers.

Without affordable fares and extra capacity, visitors will simply drive rather than use the train.

Construction traffic will also slow local bus services, reducing their reliability and making them a less attractive alternative to car travel.

Construction Traffic – A Serious Local Risk

We know from experience with Centre Parcs that signage to M1 junction 13 will not prevent construction traffic from taking shorter routes through Flitwick. During its construction phase, HGVs and other large vehicles regularly ignored official routing advice, causing disruption, delays, and road surface damage in the town.

Even now, long after opening, Centre Parcs creates congestion issues on changeover days, with heavy vehicle and visitor movements putting pressure on local roads. This demonstrates the lasting nature of traffic impacts from large-scale leisure developments.

Flitwick Town Council requires:

- A legally enforceable ban or limit on construction traffic through Flitwick and Ampthill, including weight limits on Steppingley Road and Fordfield Road to protect residential areas from heavy vehicles.
- Effective enforcement to make sure restrictions are followed.
- Funding from the developer to repair any road damage caused.

Parking Pressures

Flitwick Station is at full capacity. Visitors seeking to access Wixams Station by train could choose to park here, displacing local commuters and residents. Without regular enforcement by Central Bedfordshire Council and expansion of station parking, surrounding streets could be overwhelmed.

Housing and Accommodation

The construction workforce will place intense short-term demand on local housing:

- Short-term rentals will become more expensive, pushing out local families.
- No clear plan exists for where workers will live, risking informal and unsuitable accommodation.
- Growth in short-term lettings (e.g. Airbnb) could change the character of Flitwick.

We expect Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Council to coordinate to prevent displacement of residents and to deliver a joined-up housing strategy.

Employment and Economic Opportunities

We welcome local job creation — but it must be fair and accessible:

- Prioritise recruitment of Flitwick and surrounding residents.
- Provide apprenticeships, entry-level jobs, and clear training pathways.
- Offer equal access to all Mid Bedfordshire communities, with no preferential treatment for Bedford Borough residents.
- Ensure local suppliers and businesses are included in procurement.
- Guard against rent rises and business displacement caused by Theme Park-driven demand.

Environmental and Community Concerns

Noise and Light Pollution: Even with fireworks limited, nearby homes and wildlife will feel the impact. Night-time lighting could alter the rural landscape and harm biodiversity.

Biodiversity: On-site biodiversity net gain should be connected to wider local nature recovery plans.

Community Benefits: Flitwick residents deserve direct benefits in return for disruption — such as annual concessionary passes for households and a developer-funded community grant scheme.

What We Require

For the project to proceed responsibly, Flitwick Town Council calls for:

- Inclusion of Flitwick in all traffic modelling and mitigation plans.
- Pre-construction resurfacing and repairs on the B530, A5210, and connecting roads.
- A legally enforceable ban/limit on construction traffic through Flitwick and Ampthill, with weight limits on Steppingley Road and Fordfield Road.
- Expanded Thameslink capacity and affordable fares.

- Increased parking at Flitwick and Wixams Stations plus regular enforcement.
- Measures to reduce air and noise pollution.
- A coordinated housing plan with Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Council.
- Equal access to jobs, training, and business opportunities created by the new Theme Park across Mid Bedfordshire. This development sits on the border of Bedford Borough, but communities do not live by administrative boundaries — Central Bedfordshire residents, and specifically those in Mid Bedfordshire, deserve the same opportunities.
- Delivery of tangible community benefits and investment in green space.

Conclusion

Flitwick faces disproportionate impacts from both the construction and operation of the Universal Destinations Theme Park unless these measures are agreed and delivered. We call on the planning authority and Universal Destinations to work with us now — not after problems occur — to protect our community while securing fair benefits for local people.

Flitwick Town Council – Impact and Demands Summary

Date: 19th August 2025

For: Planning Authority and Universal Destinations

Key Concerns for Flitwick

1. Traffic & Road Safety – The A507, A5120, B530 and local roads are already congested and used as diversion routes when the M1 is blocked. Key junctions and roundabouts operate at or above capacity. The B530 to Bedford is in poor condition; Steppingley Road, Dunstable Road and High Street (A5210) are deteriorating.
2. Rail & Bus Capacity – Trains are overcrowded, fares are unaffordable for many, and services have not returned to pre-pandemic levels despite demand growth. Construction traffic will slow buses, making them less reliable.
3. Construction Traffic Risks – Experience with Centre Parcs shows that signage to M1 J13 will not prevent HGVs from using local roads. Centre Parcs still causes congestion on changeover days, demonstrating long-term impacts.
4. Parking Pressures – Flitwick Station is at capacity. Without enforcement and more parking, surrounding streets could be overwhelmed.
5. Housing Pressures – Construction workforce demand will push up rents and reduce housing availability. Short-term lets could displace residents.
6. Jobs & Opportunities – Equal access for all Mid Bedfordshire residents is essential. No preferential treatment should be given to Bedford Borough residents.
7. Environmental & Community Impacts – Risk of noise, light pollution, biodiversity loss, and no guaranteed local benefits.

Flitwick Town Council Demands

- Traffic Mitigation – Inclusion of Flitwick in all traffic modelling; resurfacing of B530, A5210; a ban/limit on construction traffic through Flitwick and Ampthill, with weight limits on Steppingley Road and Fordfield Road.
- Public Transport Investment – Expanded Thameslink capacity, affordable fares, and improved bus reliability.
- Parking Solutions – More spaces at Flitwick and Wixams Stations plus regular enforcement.
- Housing Plan – Coordinated approach by Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Council to manage worker accommodation and prevent resident displacement.

- Fair Opportunities – Equal access to jobs, training, and business opportunities created by the new Theme Park across Mid Bedfordshire.
- Community Benefits – Tangible benefits for residents, including concessionary passes and investment in local green spaces.

Our Position

We will only support this project if these commitments are secured in a binding agreement before development begins.

Balance Sheet as at 31st July 2025

31st March 2025

31st March 2026

Net Value	Fixed Assets	Cost of Asset	Depreciation	Net Value
<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	Long Term Assets			
<u>0</u>			<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	Current Assets			
92,680	DEBTORS	13,684		
5,599	Burial Grounds & Cemeteries	1,421		
19,462	VAT Control Account	0		
28,835	PREPAYMENTS	0		
8,166	Mthly Business Prepays	39,167		
53,989	PrePayment for Land Sale	62,546		
4,532	Accrued Income	0		
3,298	Stock Held - Bar	3,131		
4,346	Stock Held - Food	4,977		
5,569	Current Bank Ac Barclays 009	3,350		
42,231	Barclays Business Reserve 106	117,031		
1,000	PDQ Account	29,231		
46,550	Tenants Deposits Account	52,349		
400	Petty Cash Control (YE)	400		
400	Float - Main Safe (YE)	200		
400	Float - Cafe Safe (YE)	600		
15	Float - Reception Safe (YE)	15		
80	Float - Cafe Till Drawer	80		
1,133,095	CCLA Deposit Fund	925,595		
<u>1,450,647</u>			<u>1,253,776</u>	
	1,450,647 Total Assets			1,253,776
	Current Liabilities			
15,997	DEBTORS Control: Functions	26,578		
0	VAT Control Account	9,105		
0	Barclaycard	584		
3,441	CREDITORS	52,874		
7,943	ACCRUAL - Loan Interest (YE)	0		
12,119	ACCRUALS (YE)	0		

Balance Sheet as at 31st July 2025

31st March 2025

31st March 2026

17,763	PAYE/NIC Due	15,421
10,568	LGPS Pension Control	9,484
3,128	NEST Pension Control	3,251
6,400	Income in Advance (YE)	0
4,722	Past Yr TM Charity (YE)	0
2,291	Past Yr TM Allow & Civic Recep	0
77	Past Yr Leader Expenses (YE)	0
52,188	Tenants Rent Deposits	52,188
500	Refundable Deposits: Functions	600
1,079	Barclaycard Year End balance	0

138,217

170,086

1,312,429 Total Assets Less Current Liabilities

1,083,691
Long Term Liabilities

0

0

1,312,429 Total Assets Less Long Term Liabilities

1,083,691
Represented By

397,766	GENERAL RESERVE	557,651
100	EMR Proud AF Picnic	100
14,000	EMR Compensation Field 2025	7,175
92,164	Central Project Fund	141,703
10,458	EMR Nature Park Annual Grant	5,058
500,000	EMR Do Not Spend Ops Reserves	500,000
1,916	EMR IT Equipment Provision	1,916
17,487	EMR Flitwick Living History	24,266
10,505	EMR Hinksley Music Park 24/25	511
18,187	EMR Allotments	17,232
1,048	EMR Summer Programme	1,048
397	EMR Youth Activities	397
0	EMR Fixed Wire Testing (5yrs)	850
0	EMR Rufus Boilers Provision	57,050
13,351	EMR Cost of Living	8,925
57,050	EMR Steppingley Rd Legal Fees	0
133,566	EMR 3 Station Road Development	(245,298)
722	PROJ - Flitwick Town Sq Defib	722
3,800	PROJ - Heritage Website	2,220
2,000	PROJ - Rural Match Fund Bench	2,000
1,814	PROJ - Nature Park Planning	164

12/08/2025

Flitwick Town Council 2025/26: CURRENT YEAR

16:49

Balance Sheet as at 31st July 2025

31st March 2025

31st March 2026

36,100 PROJ - Skate Park Extension

0

1,312,429

1,083,691

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st July 2025 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :

Chairman

Date : _____

Signed :

Responsible
Financial

Date : _____

FTC Projects Review 2025-26

(315)	Central Project Fund	Opening Balance	£	92,164	
315	PLUS 2025/26: Agreed CPF Precept Funding		£	89,747	(1st Instal £44,874 rec'd April & 2nd Instal £44,873 received Sep)
800s	LESS: 25/26 Projects Opening Balance		£	186,576	
	LESS Projects Overspend		£	-	
	PLUS Projects Underspend		£	4,665	
(315)	Central Project Fund YTD Funds Available		£	0	Working balance (315) less 2nd precept instal (Oct)=-£44,874

Accepted Project budget variance at 5%.

Last Updated: **31 July 2025**

2025-26 Capital Projects Funding

As at April 25, the Central Project Fund is committed spend to 3 Station Road project.
All identified capital projects to be considered on a case-by-case basis and funded through the Operations Reserves (EMR 319).

	PROJECT Details					Project Details								24/25 FUNDING Details				Comments		
	Project Code	N/C	Project Description	Committee	Minute Ref	Project Start Date	Whole Project Funds Committed	Previous Year's Project Spend	25/26 Opening Project Balance	GRANT Received	25/26 Project Spend to Date	Overspend Funded by CPF	Underspend Returned to CPF	Project Commitment Remaining YTD		TOTAL Approved Grants/ Funding	Prev Yrs Funds Received		25/26 Funds Received	Grants/ Funding Budget Remaining
Ongoing Projects	800	4212 110	Proj - Nature Park	Community	Del. Auth	Apr-21	£ 3,000	£ 13,490	£ -	£ -	£ -			£ -	0%	£ 283,385	£ 10,490	£ -	£ 272,895	S106 remaining: Phase 1 £7,106.89, Phase 2 £274,728 & Plans £1,550 (CBC to be invoiced for S106 once works completed). SL 7/9/22. Planning Consultant RCF approved July 23. Jan 25 : CPF Fund & 24/25 Grant Instal complete. Outstanding approved grant fund (£272,895) not yet claimed. No further CPF spend committed. £10,490 received oo.ETCR584 June 2024.
	801	4819 110	Proj - Flitwick Town Sq Defib	Community	5213d	Feb-22	£ 1,770	£ 1,048	£ 722	£ -	£ -			£ 722	41%					Defib Purchased and installed March 2024. Further costs anticipated due to possible relocation fees.
	802	4823 110	Proj - Heritage Website	Corporate	753a 5252a)j	Jun-23	£ 3,800	£ -	£ 3,800	£ -	£ 1,580			£ 2,220	58%					
	803	4837 110	Proj - Rural Match Fund Benches	Community	5226e	Mar-22	£ 2,000	£ -	£ 2,000	£ -	£ -			£ 2,000	100%					Resolution made at Council March 2022 confirmed March 2023 to be match funded by CBC - amount TBC
	808	4853 110	Proj - Nature Park Planning	Community	5622c	Apr-24	£ 23,673	£ 21,859	£ 1,814	£ -	£ 1,650			£ 164	1%					
	814	4859 110	Proj - Skate Park Extension	Community	5681gii	Jul-24	£ 9,600	£ 9,600	£ 36,100	£ -	£ 36,100			£ -	0%	£ 64,900	£ 64,900	£ -	£ -	£38,400 match funding from CBC UKSPF Community Grant £26,500 from CBC S106 Funding PROJECT COMPLETED & CLOSED - June 25
NEW Projects: 2025/26	106		3 Station Road Project	FTC			£ 137,476		£ 142,140											Please refer to full project schedule for details
			Historic Project Refund										£ 4,665							Refund from UKPN (Chq rec'd, paying in reference 201765) for historic project dated 25/10/2022 in relation to feeder pillar installation credited to CPF.