



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting
held on Tuesday 2nd December 2025 at the Rufus Centre

Present:

Cllr Thompson (Chairman)

Cllr Toinko

Cllr Bandy

Cllr Platt

Cllr Crawford

Cllr Wilsmore

Cllr Snape (Leader)

Stacie Lockey - Town Clerk

Sarah Burgess - Amenities Officer

Aaron Pepper - Public Realm Supervisor

Lisa Simpson - Community Engagement Manager

1329. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Cllr Earles – personal commitment and Cllr Harald – work commitment.

1330. 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.

1331. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their efforts at the Christmas Lights Switch On event and noted its success.

The Chairman also thanked everyone who attended and helped organise the Remembrance Sunday event.

1332. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no Members of the public.

1333. INVITED SPEAKER

There was no invited speaker.

1334. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Members queried whether there was any guidance on the number of attendees at the

Christmas Lights Switch On event. Members and Officers both agreed that this could possibly be calculated approximately using the drone footage.

1335. MINUTES

- a. For Members to receive and adopt the minutes of the Community Services meeting held on **Tuesday 4th November 2025**.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Community Services Meeting held on Tuesday 4th November as an accurate record of the meeting.

1336. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting on **Tuesday 4th November 2025**.

Cllr Toinko requested an update on the Community events he raised at the last meeting. Cllr Toinko clarified his meaning, and the Chairman referred him to the Officer update, which included this information.

1337. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Transport Interchange**

Members asked if the area behind the palisade fencing near to the bank would be included as part of these works. The Amenities Officer advised that this area was not included as it was owned by Network Rail; however, she was in discussion with them about utilising the Community Payback team to clear this area.

Members queried whether inflation would be included in the costs. The Amenities Officer advised that this cost could be built into the service level agreement. Members suggested 5% per year.

A Member opposed this proposal; however, they advised that, if approved, could it be enforced to prevent the use of glyphosate, as has been requested in the past. Officers agreed to include this.

It was **RESOLVED** to instruct officers to prepare a proposal for CBC, including replating, ongoing maintenance, and costs for FTC to maintain this area on CBC's behalf. Subject to approval, Officers will enter into a 5-year SLA agreement (including the use of an environmentally friendly pesticide) with a year-on-year inflation provision.

- b. **Draft Community Engagement Strategy**

The Community Engagement Manager advised Members that the document was only a draft at this stage, and the formatting would be amended to reflect the branding.

Action: Community Engagement Manager

Members were satisfied with the draft document and identified no contentious issues.

The Leader made two comments that he felt should be included.

1. Reference to the ladder of coproduction within the document and how the Council encourages co-design with residents.
2. Include specific examples of previous work as this generally lands well with residents and shows what we have done well and also what is hoped to be achieved moving forward.

Action: Community Engagement Manager

Members commented that the Community Strategy will help to steer the Council towards different opportunities that come arise.

c. **Community Budget 2026/2027**

Members asked for more information about the Festival of Lights event that had been proposed. The Community Engagement Manager advised that the purpose was to celebrate various light festivals and cultural celebrations, including Diwali, Hanukkah, Guy Fawkes, and the Chinese lantern festival. It would feature lanterns, cultural traditions, artists, and traditional foods. This would be held between October/November.

The Chairman advised Members that, in previous years when cost-cutting exercises had led to a tight budget, the Council now found itself in a slightly better position for the next financial year, allowing some budgets to be increased or reintroduced. Given this was announced at short notice, the Chairman suggested increasing the Community General Costs (4618/313) by £4,000 and for Officers to bring a report to the next meeting with options for how to allocate these funds.

Action: Community Engagement Manager

It was **RECOMMENDED** to accept the draft budget with the addition of £4,000 in Community General Costs (4618/313).

1338. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Community Financial Report**

Members noted the financial reports.

b. **Officer Update**

i) **Amenities Officer Update**

Cllr Toinko asked whether Officers were certain that the tubes at the Nature Park were being vandalised. The Amenities Officer advised that this was what she had been told by the contractor and the representative from the Forest of Marston Vale; however, she had a meeting arranged to discuss this further. The Amenities Officer also indicated plans to recruit volunteers to assist with light maintenance and monitoring of the park in the near future.

Members noted that it was nice to see the cattle in Manor Park had proven popular with residents, despite historical issues.

ii) **Community Update**

The Chairman referenced the 'For Men to Talk' partnership within the report and suggested connecting with the Over'60's Men's Club that the Council used to organise, which was now run by the Flitwick Club.

1339. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of public present.

1340. **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.

No items

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

Meeting closed at 20.12.

Signed..... (Chairman)