



## FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

**DRAFT Minutes of the Flitwick Town Council meeting held on  
Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026 at the Rufus Centre at 7:45pm**

Present:

Cllr J Roberts (Chairman)  
Cllr A Snape  
Cllr C Thompson  
Cllr L Bandy  
Cllr M Platt  
Cllr F Patterson  
Cllr R Wilsmore  
Cllr I Blazeby  
Cllr P Earles  
Cllr L Hart  
Cllr A Crawford  
Cllr D Toinko  
Cllr T Parsons  
Cllr T Harald

Also Present:

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

### **5984. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies.

### **5985. 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.

### **5986. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Thanks were extended to Cllr Platt for chairing the previous meeting.

The Town Mayor thanked the grounds team for their work maintaining the area beside the station.

Thanks were extended to everyone who attended the Civic Reception at the Rufus Centre, a fantastic evening that raised over £600 for the Town Mayor's charities.

The Easter Wreath Making Workshop had been a success, with 'So Very Crafty' running the event. Thanks were extended to this business owner, the Community Services Officer and the Town Mayor's wife for their assistance.

An initial meeting was planned with resident Mark Rankine, CBC Cllr Adams, Persimmon Homes, and the Town Mayor to discuss options for street art in the Steppingley Road field development and a potential revamp of the Airmen Memorial at the Rufus Centre.

The Town Mayor had attended the following civic engagements:

- Sandy Town Council Civic Service
- Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets Awards Evening
- Leighton Buzzard Town Council Civic Service
- Dunstable Town Council Civic Service
- Jigsaw Club's Anniversary Event
- Luton Borough Council Civic Service
- Best Bar None Event at Priory House
- Walk to Commemorate the Anniversary of the Airmen Crash

**5987. Leader Update**

The Leader gave the following update:

- The Town Clerk would give an update on 3 Station Road following the informal Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting the previous day.
- It was encouraging to see that the Council were edging closer to completing the land sale that would bring 25 affordable homes that were much needed by local people.
- Thanks were extended to the Officers for compiling the list of potential capital projects. Cllr Snape believed that the next step was to adopt a more strategic approach to distinguish between what must be done, what should be done, and what could be done. He was interested in hearing whether Members had any other project ideas.
- Referring to the upcoming capital receipt from the land sale, Cllr Snape emphasised that the funds did not need to be spent immediately and that it was important to think about future provisions. Members noted that the Council was unlikely to be in this position again.
- Regarding the Steppingley Road field development, Cllr Snape advised that he had requested the item on the agenda for Members to consider writing a letter of complaint to Persimmon Homes (contractors responsible for managing the site). He felt it was important for the Council to represent residents on this, especially as several Members had been contacted about the inappropriate parking and the disruption caused by the traffic lights. Cllr Snape thanked CBC Cllr Townsend for her efforts in holding the contractor to account on the present issues.
- Cllr Snape had met with Cllr Baker, the CBC Executive Member for Finance & Highways, to discuss the Crisis & Resilience Fund. Cllr Baker was informed about the number of people turning up at the Town Council Offices about this, and the lack of awareness about the support available to people. Cllr Snape believed that the Council should do this for Flitwick residents. The meeting was positive and data-led. CBC had yet to contact the community to inform them who qualified for the funding. Members noted Cllr Adams' update, which included that the voluntary sector might qualify for the fund.
- Cllr Snape advised that he would be stepping down from his role as Leader at the Annual Meeting as he felt it was time for him to step back and allow other Members to take things forward. He advised that this had not been a quick decision, but it was the right one. Cllr Snape stated that he was proud of what the Council had achieved over the 5 years and that it had delivered some amazing outcomes. Members noted that Cllr Snape would continue in the Councillor role, but he wanted to use the last year of his term focusing on community initiatives. He wanted to spend more time on progressing the Community Fridge to allow time to look at the model and how it was working. Cllr Snape thanked the Members for their support.

The Chairman announced that he was shocked to hear that Cllr Snape would be stepping down from the leader role in May, but thanked him for all the work he had done and commented that the Council would do something to honour his time as leader.

**5988. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS**

Members had been sent the update from Cllr Adams and were asked to email any urgent comments to him directly.

**5989. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No items.

**5990. INVITED SPEAKER**

No items.

**5991. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

No items.

**5992. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. For Members to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 17th March 2026**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

It was **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 held at the Rufus Centre as a true record.

- b. For Members to receive and consider the resolutions and recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, held on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

The resolutions of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were noted.

**5993. MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026**.

The Chairman thanked Members for their decision to agree the changes he had presented for the Town Mayor's Award Scheme.

- b. Members to receive any updates from Officers.

No items.

**5994. OUTSIDE BODIES**

No items.

**5995. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. **Code of Conduct**

It was **resolved** to adopt the circulated Code of Conduct for Flitwick Town Council.

*Action: TC*

- b. **Scheme of Delegations Review**

The Chairman introduced the item by reminding the Members that the number of Councillor seats was set to reduce to 13 through the CBC Governance Review. The proposal presented in Option 2 was to merge the Business Improvement & Development Board with the Finance & General Purposes Committee as a way of streamlining the Committee Structure to help with this.

Cllr Toinko did not see the logic of merging the two Committees as he commented that the Council finances were significantly different to the commerciality of the Rufus Centre business. He asked if the meetings could now be held online and he was advised that this was not possible under current rules in legislation.

Cllr Snape commented that when the Council's Membership dropped at the next election, the current Committee Structure would prove difficult to fill seats at the various meetings. He advised that Members could continue with the current structure until after the election; however, there was a requirement to plan for moving forward with 13 Members. Cllr Snape did not feel strongly about progressing with the current structure or merging from this year's Annual Meeting onwards.

Cllr Thompson agreed that the Council needed to forward plan, but flagged that there was already tension with expenditure on business versus community activities. She asked if merging the finance and business committees could risk a degree of bias. Cllr Thompson reminded Members that she had chosen to be part of the Community and Business Committees this year, as there was value in ensuring someone was a representative on both. She supported the suggestion presented in the report but thought it would be good for the Council to monitor the tension she mentioned earlier.

Cllr Blazeby asked Members to appreciate that the suggestion was not too dissimilar to a previous version of the Committee Structure, under which finance matters were reported to the now disbanded Corporate Services Committee. He mentioned that the merger of Committees suggested in the report would not address Cllr Thompson's point above, but wanted to clarify that the change would mean longer meetings and increased frequency.

Cllr Parsons was in favour of merging the two Committees due to the number of crossovers with remits and discussions. He believed the meetings would need to be well structured and commented that the merger could help break down the barrier Cllr Thompson mentioned. Cllr Parsons discussed logistics and the possibility of fewer Members in the future, and supported merging the Committees from May.

It was **resolved** to progress with Option 2 for the Scheme of Delegations and merge the Committees discussed to create a Business & Finance Committee.

*Action: DTC*

**c. Step Free Access Petition**

Members had an extensive discussion about this item and made the following points:

- The petition was driven by the Conservative Party, which meant several Members did not believe it was appropriate to sign it under the Council's name. Individual Members were able to sign the petition.
- The Members were in support of continuing to strive for step-free access at the station and agreed that they should push for this in some way.
- The Council were concerned that the step-free access plans had been delayed and noted that the enhancement would cost more than originally anticipated. Further comments were made regarding the concern that funding for this project had been available in the past, and Members wondered why this was no longer the case. Comments were made about the MP not raising this matter in

Parliament. A Member suggested that the funding had been withdrawn after the site design changed.

- The Members commented on the work the Council had done previously to assist the resident leading the original campaign.
- Another option was to initiate a politically neutral petition on the Government website.
- Officers were asked to write to the Department of Transport, the Bedford Commuters Association and the Mid Beds MP to ask where the funding for the step-free access had gone.

It was **resolved** that the Council not sign the petition as a corporate body, but to write to the listed organisations and the MP as stated above. The resident who made the request would be informed of the outcome and the Council's reasons for it, but he would be advised that the Council supported pushing for step-free access at the station.

*Action: Town Clerk*

**d. Capital Plan**

**i) Members were asked to note the capital plan ahead of the land sale that is nearing completion.**

Cllr Snape had spoken to the Town Clerk about the Capital Plan and expressed the need to use MOSCOW to assist with prioritising the projects listed. He believed it was useful to look at the scale, effort and costs. Cllr Thompson agreed that an effort impact matrix was a good idea.

Cllr Thompson mentioned the play equipment project listed and informed Members that it would be prudent to consider provision for multiple years for forward planning, otherwise the Council would be in the position of having to find funds for the required capital enhancements at the play areas. She noted that next year's improvements were the most important, but reiterated that the capital plan could be used to incorporate future works.

Cllr Toinko asked for better quality roadways at the allotments, and this was noted as another project for the plan.

*Action: DTC*

**ii) Hub Refurbishment**

The DTC informed Members that she had incorrectly listed expenditure for this item from the Ops Reserve on the agenda; however, if supported, this proposal would be spent from the Central Projects Fund (CPF).

Members noted that there was £53,200 in the 2026-27 CPF.

Members noted that the presented hourly rate was high and asked for a comparison of the cost of the 3 Station Road feasibility study. Officers did not have this information to hand.

Cllr Parsons suggested asking the contractor who provided the quote for this work to do it in two stages: initial feasibility for phase one and architectural drawings for phase two.

It was **resolved** to contact the contractor and request a two-phase quote for the Feasibility Study in relation to a potential Hub refurbishment project. Another quote would be sought from an additional contractor for consideration alongside this one.

*Action: BFM*

e. **Office Space Refurbishment**

Members were informed that this item, like the one above, contained an error on the agenda regarding the source of the funds. Members noted that if supported, this expenditure would be from the CPF.

Cllr Blazeby advised that this was the first time a request had been made to fund the refurbishment of an existing tenant's office space, as usually, the Council refurbished the offices as tenants moved out of the Rufus Centre as part of a rolling programme. He asked what the return on investment would be for the £15k spent. The Town Clerk commented that it would take some time to recoup this, but she did not have the information to hand and agreed to email this to Members after the meeting.

Cllr Blazeby highlighted that previously, existing tenants had funded their own office refurbishments.

Cllr Toinko asked whether, if the tenant were to leave after the refurbishment, the Council would need to pay more to refurbish the space again. The Town Clerk confirmed that this would not be required.

Cllr Thompson commented that although she understood Cllr Blazeby's point of view, she believed the Council needed to be decent landlords and was uncomfortable with not refurbishing the office spaces until tenants leave.

Cllr Snape was unsure of the right route for this and agreed with both Cllr Blazeby and Cllr Thompson's points. He thought that the Members should debate this matter and consider whether the tenant might sign a longer lease without a break clause. He also mentioned that dilapidations should be considered.

Cllr Blazeby mentioned that the Rufus Centre now had many refurbished office spaces, and that these tenants were paying higher rates. He asked how long the return on investment was expected to take on these. Cllr Blazeby also highlighted the risk that other tenants could ask the Council to fund their refurbishments, and he believed this matter was a deeper conversation than perhaps initially thought.

Cllr Snape mentioned that the foyer toilets needed work, but he was interested in the year-end surplus for 2025-26 before having this type of debate and a wider conversation. He stated that the Members could approve the expenditure at this meeting and delegate the final decision to the BIDB.

Cllr Thompson suggested that the BIDB discuss the numbers, and Members noted that new leases were being drawn up to better protect the Council as a landlord.

Cllr Hart asked for clarification on the differing costs presented in the quotations, as no breakdown was provided. She was informed that the costs were in line with the refurbishment programme specification, but this room was a particularly large office.

Cllr Earles commented that this tenant had already taken on an additional office space that had been refurbished.

It was **resolved** to approve the expenditure of £15,700 and delegate the decision to the BIDB on 12<sup>th</sup> May after discussing the year-end Council surplus.

*Action: BFM*

f. **Land South of Steppingley Road – 170 dwellings**

Members had an extended discussion about this item, and the following points were raised:

- Cllr Thompson asked if there were planning rules about managing the dust at the site. The Town Clerk explained that she had met with the contractors who had advised that Anglian Water were setting up a new supply for a fire hydrant. The expected supply was not there so work had paused until this situation was resolved. Members were informed that Anglian Water had supplied a map showing where the hydrant was but when the ground was dug up, there was not one there. The Town Clerk had seen a copy of the map supplied by Anglian Water.
- The Town Clerk reported that at the same meeting, the contractor had explained other circumstances about the traffic lights that were not included in the social media posts.
- Cllr Toinko commented that there were no parking restrictions on Steppingley Road but summarised that the Council were perhaps looking for a bit of consideration from the contractors. He also commented that many residents parked on the bridleway which was deemed appropriate, however people did not like it when it was contractors doing so. He believed that building an ongoing positive relationship with the contractors was worthwhile.
- Cllr Hart explained that at the CBC inspectorate meeting about this development, it was noted that contractors would not park on local streets and that the recent situation had breached this.
- Cllr Hodges commented that rain would be helpful and he understood the due diligence being applied regarding the dust management. He agreed with Cllr Toinko's point and wondered if Anglian Water could supply a timeframe for when the hydrant would be there so that the Council could feed this information back to residents.
- Cllr Wilsmore commented that he had visited the area recently and noticed the dust being an issue. He advised that the information about the hydrant was useful and he suspected this was accurate. He said that the exposed sand that had been heaped up was causing the problems and mentioned that a sprinkler would help. Cllr Wilsmore did not think that the contractor's permit was unreasonable.
- The Town Clerk advised that it had been agreed with the contractor that they would keep in regular contact with each other. The contractor had asked about informing residents and the Town Clerk was confident that they were trying to work with the community as they were aware about the sensitivity of this land. Members were pleased to hear this information.
- Cllr Snape commented that he was frustrated about this because although he agreed about the issues with social media sometimes, he had spoken to active Ward Members about the problems and there were several issues. These included issues with street permits and being fined for the second site entrance. Officers from CBC had been on site and permits were withdrawn. Cllr Snape believed that the contract manager that the Town Clerk had met with was trying to pacify the situation and that the contractor was not working with the community. Cllr Snape went on to explain about the dust problems for neighbouring residents. He was pleased about the good relationship between the Council and the contractor, however he requested that they prioritised residents in their work. Cllr Snape believed that the contractor was trying to push forward regardless.
- Cllr Wilsmore responded that if the contractor had been fined for the second entrance, that this was to the benefit of residents as without this, there would have been another road closure in place. Cllr Snape stated that the contractor was abusing the Streetworks Scheme and there were traffic lights on when no work was happening on site which caused a lot of inconvenience for residents.
- Cllr Wilsmore advised that the lights caused long queues and that this was inconvenient but it was necessary and this situation would be ongoing. He added that vehicles were now removed from the street and apart from connecting services, there would not be any further traffic lights. Cllr Wilsmore commented that the dust issue was the only remaining problem.
- Some residents discussed that it would be appropriate for the Town Clerk to write to the contractor to ask for a more cooperative response.

- Other members did not want to formally complain as the Town Clerk had built a good working relationship with the contractor and the only remaining issue was the dust.
- It was proposed and seconded to write to the contractor about the Council's dissatisfaction with their approach however after a vote, this was not carried.
- The Chairman suggested that members could review the situation monthly at the Council meetings.

**5996. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**a. Delegated Authority Decision - Planning application Land between Brogborough, Lidlington and Marston Moretaine CB/18/01969/OUT**

Cllr Hodges, Chairman of the PIWG, commented that he had missed the Amenities Officer's email about this application. He advised the members that this development would likely be approved. Members noted the decision circulated in the report.

**b. Delegated Planning Decisions**

No items.

**5997. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No items.

**5998. 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. Confidential Report**

The Confidential Report from the Town Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 was noted.

**b. Burial Ground**

It was **resolved** to investigate the conversion of the roadway into burial space in more detail and the Town Clerk to present a report with the findings at a future meeting.

**c. 3 Station Road Update**

Members received an update on 3 Station Road.

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.

The meeting closed at 21:26.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

