FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Flitwick Town Council meeting held on
Tuesday 18th August 2026 at the Rufus Centre at 7:45pm

Present:
Cllr Roberts (Chairman)
Cllr Blazeby
Cllr Hodges
Cllr Wilsmore
Cllr Bandy
Cllr Harald
Cllr Parsons
Cllr Patterson
Cllr Earles
Cllr Hart
Cllr Long

Also Present:
Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk & Chief Executive

6052. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Cllr Toinko – holiday, Cllr Platt – hospital and Cllr Thompson – holiday.

6053. 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.

6054. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman acknowledged that former Cllr Andy Crawford had stood down and thanked him for his work and wished him all the best.

The Chairman had attended the following events;

- Flitwick Car Show – the Chairman acknowledged what a great event it was and advised Members that the Council had received an email from CBC Safety Advisory Group commending Jim Snook for all his efforts in organising the event and to state that it was a very well run event and the safety concerns had been addressed from previous years events.
- Army Benevolent Fund Concert
- Red Kite Meadows Care Home – with Deputy Town Mayor.
- Attended the funeral for Bob Cowell, former Royal British Legion member. The Chairman passed on his condolences to the family.
- Coffee Morning in Dunstable
- Baycroft Care Home for an afternoon party – with Deputy Town Mayor
- The Deputy Mayor had also attended the 60th Birthday of McIntyre

6055. Leader Update

The Leader and Cllr Adams had met with CBC officers to discuss the costs associated with the Nature Park planning application. The application had been placed on hold following an indication that the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) costs would be in the region of £300,000 or more. In light of the Government's proposed changes to the relevant legislation early next year, it was considered prudent to pause the application pending further clarification, as this could potentially reduce or remove the Council's BNG liability.

Further information had since been provided to FTC officers and the Council's planning consultants. Officers were also obtaining quotations for the necessary works, with the hope that the majority of work would be covered by the Green Infrastructure (GI) funding.

It was agreed that the application would now be taken off hold, with the intention of progressing it to a conclusion as soon as possible.

6056. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS

Cllr Adams thanked FTC for their response to the Local Plan Call for Sites. He felt the response was very well crafted and covered issues well. FLAG had delivered over 300 responses to CBC and he had delivered a couple of hundred personally.

Cllr Adams advised that he would be raising the farmland inclusion in the call for sites at the Corporate Resources Committee that he chairs. The Farm Strategy for CBC does not provide for mass disposal of council farmland so he would be challenging why so much Flitwick land was included.

Cllr Adams also advised that the land behind Steppingley Field was subject to a pre-emption clause which meant that this had to be offered back to the Duke of Bedford Estate before it could be sold to developers. As such it was likely that this does not fulfil the 'available' and 'achievable' test for it to be included in the Local Plan. CBC would need to give serious consideration to this.

Cllr Adams advised that Ampthill Road and the High Street was due for resurfacing in September. It was a large stretch of road and would inevitably cause some disruption. He was currently trying to understand what would be happening with the raised table near to the Blackbirds. Sharp Lane resurfacing works were now complete.

6057. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

6058. INVITED SPEAKER

There was no invited speaker.

6059. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no questions from Members.

6060. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

a. For Members to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 21st July 2026**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 21st July 2026, at the Rufus Centre as an accurate record of the meeting.

b. For Members to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 11th August 2026**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 11th August 2026, at the Rufus Centre as an accurate record of the meeting.

c. For Members to receive and consider the resolutions and recommendations of the Business Development & Finance Committee meeting, held on **Tuesday 28th July 2026**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

Members are asked to consider the below recommendations for Central Project Fund (CPF) applications discussed at this meeting:

i) It was **recommended** to accept Option 3 to replace and upgrade the external lighting at the Rufus Centre, at a cost of £ 7,719.60 + VAT, to be funded by the CPF.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve this recommendation.

ii) It was **recommended** to proceed with the quote presented and approve £4,243.20 (including the discount offered) to commission a Feasibility Study for the potential refurbishment project at the Hub. The funds would be taken from the CPF.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve this recommendation.

6061. MATTERS ARISING

a. There were no matters arising.

b. There were no updates from Officers.

6062. OUTSIDE BODIES

No items.

6063. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Ampthill & Flitwick Greenwheel Consultation

Members considered the response. One Member suggested that it be amended to include support for improved connections to Greenfield, noting that an increasing number of children from the area were attending schools in Flitwick and that the existing walking route was considered inadequate.

Members discussed the footpath which runs behind Woodland Middle School and suggested this be included within the response.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the response with two amendments; include supporting connections with Greenfield and consider the addition of the pathway at the back of Woodland Middle School.

b. Internal Auditor 2026-27

Members noted the contents of the document circulated relating to the Council's Internal Auditor for 2026-27.

It was **RESOLVED** to;

1. Approve that Auditing Solutions Ltd. are independent from the decision-making process at Flitwick Town Council.
2. Approve that Auditing Solutions Ltd. are competent for the Internal Auditor role based on information included on their company website: https://auditingsolutions.co.uk/.
3. Approve the Internal Audit Programme of Work for 2026-27.

c. Community Services Committee Vacancy

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Hart on to the Community Services Committee.

d. Local Plan

Cllr Long introduced the proposal and explained the implications of the current planning policy position and the potential sites identified through the Call for Sites process. It was noted that the Council may benefit from specialist planning advice to help it understand the emerging Local Plan, assess potential sites and effectively represent the interests of Flitwick residents.

Members considered whether a planning consultant should be appointed at this stage. It was noted that the second formal consultation on the Local Plan was expected to commence in November 2026 and would focus on policies as opposed to sites. CBC's current timetable indicated that the shortlisted sites proposed for inclusion in the Local Plan were not expected to be identified until October 2027.

Some Members felt that it may be premature to formally appoint a consultant before there was greater clarity on which sites CBC intended to progress. However, other Members felt there would be value in investigating potential consultants now, establishing appropriate contacts and obtaining indicative costs, with a view to making provision within next year's budget if required. It was suggested that any future appointment should be based on a clear scope of work and, where appropriate, a defined budget or fee limit, given the potentially significant costs associated with specialist consultancy.

Members noted that other local authorities were undertaking similar processes and that securing appropriate specialist advice could be a worthwhile investment, particularly if the Council wished to make a meaningful contribution to the Local Plan and ensure residents' views were properly represented. It was also noted that the planning issues facing the town were unlikely to go away and that having a suitable consultant identified in advance would allow the Council to respond promptly once further information became available.

Members were advised that the possibility of developing a Neighbourhood Plan had been discussed historically however at the time the Council decided not to progress due to the time and costs associated with this. Members noted that, given CBC's progression of a new Local Plan, the opportunity for Flitwick to influence development through a separate Neighbourhood Plan was now limited.

It was **RESOLVED** to investigate the identification of suitable Planning Consultants to assist the Council with preparing and consulting with residents and delivering a strategy to respond to CBC's preparation of a new Local Plan, seeking at least three quotes if practicable and reported to the Council for a decision on appointment.

6064. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Finance Reports

The finance reports were noted.

6065. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A Members of the public asked if there was any update on the former Barclays building. The Chairman advised that negotiations were underway with an interested party.

6066. 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

Members noted the report.

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 20.37.

Signed…….(Chairman)