Minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 1st September 2026 at the Rufus Centre

Present:
Cllr Thompson
Cllr Wilsmore
Cllr Hart
Cllr Toinko
Cllr Earles
Cllr Harald
Cllr Bandy

Also Present:
Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Sue Quinn – Community Services Officer
Sarah Burgess – Amenities Officer
Aaron Pepper – Public Realm Supervisor
2 residents

1401. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Platt – medical.

1402. 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.

1403. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Hart to the Committee. The Chairman advised Members that Officers would be requesting help for the following events as the winter schedule approaches; Remembrance Sunday, Christmas Light Switch-on, Community Fridge Christmas Eve collections and the Over 60's Town Mayors Christmas Lunch.

The Town Mayors quiz will be going ahead on the 27th November.

1404. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

1405. INVITED SPEAKER

There was no invited speaker.

1406. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no members questions.

1407. MINUTES

a. For Members to receive and adopt the minutes of the Community Services meeting held on **Tuesday 7th July 2026.**

It was **resolved** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2026 as an accurate record of the meeting.

1408. MATTERS ARISING

a. Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting on **Tuesday 7th July 2026.**

There were no matters arising.

1409. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Flitwick Car Show

The Chairman thanked the organisers for their proactive efforts in addressing concerns regarding moving vehicles, which had been raised following the previous year's event. The Town Council had also received correspondence commending the organisers for their efforts.

The organisers were present at the meeting and provided an update on the event. They advised that a number of changes were being planned to further improve the event, including staggered entry times to assist with traffic flow. They acknowledged that some vehicles had been moving during the event but confirmed that these had been identified and that the individuals concerned would not be permitted to return in future years.

The Public Realm Team reported that the field had been left in a spotless condition following the event. The organisers questioned whether a litter pick had been undertaken prior to the event, noting that the bins were still full. The supervisor agreed to investigate the matter.

It was **RESOLVED** to allow use of the Millennium Park free of charge on Sunday 15th August 2027 for the Flitwick Car Show.

b. Volunteering Offer

Members considered the report and agreed that it was well presented and that the points raised were supported. Members were supportive of the proposals, although it was felt that the proposed awards element required further consideration.

The Community Services Officer explained that she was exploring the possibility of establishing a central online system, such as SharePoint, where volunteers could access relevant documents and information.

Members commented that any awards scheme would have associated costs and would therefore require further discussion and consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** to;

1. Develop further volunteering opportunities, including opportunities for young people, "Friends of" groups, local business involvement, and support linked to Council events and projects.
2. Recognise and celebrate volunteers by way certificates, volunteer features and holding an event linked to Volunteers' Week.

c. Road Safety Partnership

Members considered the scheme and expressed concerns regarding the principle whereby the Town Council would propose and fund a project, with ownership and ongoing

maintenance subsequently falling to CBC. Members felt that this arrangement was not considered particularly beneficial to the Town Council.

Members discussed previous comments from residents regarding the provision of additional benches throughout the town, including along the Avenue, and suggested that this could be considered as a potential project under the scheme.

A Member queried whether clearance works of roundabouts would be eligible under the scheme. Officers confirmed that this would not be covered.

Members suggested that planters could be installed along the railings within the town centre. This was considered a positive idea; however, concerns were raised regarding the ongoing maintenance of the planters.

The provision of additional 'Welcome to Flitwick' signage was also discussed. Members noted that there were several entrances to the town and felt that providing signage at all locations could prove costly.

Members discussed the potential costs associated with suggested projects, including benches and welcome signage, and queried whether it would be more cost-effective for the Town Council to undertake the works using its own contractors. The Town Clerk advised that this was unlikely to be the case, as the matter had previously been discussed with CBC. Officers agreed to investigate the costs further and report back to Members.

Action: Town Clerk

Members had no recommendations to make to full council.

d. <u>Community Fridge</u>

Members considered the proposed Terms of Reference for the Community Fridge and noted that the current Steering Group had not met for some time.

A Member sought clarification regarding the reference to the Steering Group being chaired by an independent Councillor, while the document also referred to a Flitwick Town Councillor. Members were advised that 'independent' referred to a Councillor who was not currently involved with the Community Fridge.

Members suggested increasing the number of Town Councillors represented on the Steering Group from two to three, to help ensure adequate representation at each meeting.

Clarification was also sought regarding the quarterly volunteer meetings and whether these referred to meetings of the Steering Group or separate meetings. The Community Services Officer confirmed that these would be separate meetings, with volunteers elected to the Steering Group responsible for communicating relevant information and messages to the wider volunteer group.

Members sought clarification on the expected role of Councillors on the Steering Group. The Chairman advised that this would be similar to other Town Council working groups, with attendance and participation at meetings being the main expectation.

Members queried the level of Officer time that would be required to support the Steering Group. Officers advised that the establishment of the group should ultimately help to reduce Officer time by enabling certain matters to be managed more effectively amongst the volunteers, including training, food hygiene, cleaning and stock rotation.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the terms of reference with an amendment to 3 Councillors.

It was agreed for officers to email all Councillors asking for them to self nominate to the group, which could then be added as an agenda item for full Council in September.

Action: Town Clerk

e. Central Bedfordshire Council New Street Trading Application

Members felt the application was vague and it was not clear exactly where in Flitwick they were asking to trade. Members were advised that it would be all over Flitwick as opposed to a fixed location.

A Member asked why the Council were asked for comments on street trading applications if they had no influence on them. The Town Clerk explained that this was a process CBC had always followed and it was likely part of a statutory obligation to seek the comments from town and parish councils.

Members felt there was no legitimate reason to object to the application.

It was **RESOLVED** to support the application.

f. CERT

(i) Members commented that there appeared to be large gaps in the document. The Chairman commented that the Emergency Plan had been to the Committee previously and had been agreed in principle. The Chairman asked Cllr Hart (Chairman of the CERT) what was required from the meeting. Cllr Hart explained that approval of equipment list was required again due to the prices changing since the last meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the spend list on Appendix F.

The Town Clerk advised that the Emergency Plan would need to be bought back to full Council once it was nearer completion. Finer details needed to be worked through with Officers such as storage, 24 hour access etc.

Action: Cllr Hart/Officers

(ii) It was **RESOLVED** to co-opt the following members onto the CERT working group: Andy Smith, Helen Chamberlain, Jackie DuGuard, James Kelly, Mick George, Paul Chamberlain, Shannon Woods.

1410. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Community Financial Report

Members noted the financial report.

b. Budget Overspend

Members noted an approved overspend of £1,210 on the Hub Maintenance budget (nominal code 4132/311) to make the Hub's emergency lighting compliant.

c. Officer Update

(i) **Amenities Update**

The Chairman commented that both reports were excellent this month.

A Member asked for the revised BNG costs associated with the Nature park planning application. The Town Clerk advised that it was in the region of £17k.

(ii) Community Services

The Chairman noted that she was also in attendance at the meeting recently held with The Need Project. One Member made a comment about how he heard the Community Fridge negatively impacted The Need Project, Officers explained that the food collected by the Community Fridge was fresh as opposed to The Need Project collecting tinned goods only. Officers explained that the conversation was very positive about working

together. The Community Fridge had recently offered the project some bread which they had to refuse as they were unable to collect it.

Members were pleased to see the cake and cinema club was a success.

d. National Emergency Briefing

Members noted that the Rufus Centre would be showing a screening of the National Emergency briefing. Cllr Hart advised Members that she had been to the one in Ampthill however she felt the attendees were not prepared for what it was and was unsure if the same format would work in Flitwick. The Chairman advised that the screenings were supposed to include some Q&A sessions to engage residents. Another Member commented that the marketing could be amended to make it more appealing to residents.

A date for the screening was yet to be decided.

1411. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There was no Members of the public present.

1412. 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.

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.

a. Youth Report

Members noted the youth and discussed the report.

The meeting closed at: 20.49.

Signed …….. (Chairman)