

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, ON WEDNESDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2022, AT 7.00PM

Members present:

Councillors Mrs L Anderson, S Buck, B Collier, A Cooper (Chairman), Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, D Matthews, G Russell, B Saunders (& CBC Cllr) and J Talbot

Also present:

Mrs K Elliott-Turner, Town Clerk

13/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Bhasin.

14/22 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of members interests, and there were no requests for dispensations. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

15/22 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & CIVIC ATTENDANCE

There have been no recent civic attendances, but members were reminded of the forthcoming Stotfold Civic Service taking place on Sunday 13th February. As part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, snowdrops will be planted in the Churchyard. March Council agenda will include considerations of activities/events for the Jubilee, and an update on work on this so far. Organisations are invited to let us know of any Jubilee events or activities they are undertaking, so that we may produce a 'programme of events' in the run up to the long June bank holiday Jubilee weekend.

16/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

None present.

17/22 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

Clerk's Report

Following the passing of Councillor Mrs Clarey, Central Bedfordshire Council has issued the usual notice. If no request for election is received by 15th February, we may proceed to fill the vacancy by co-option. In this case, we will be considering applications for the two current vacancies.

18/22 COUNCIL MINUTES

Members were asked to note and sign as a correct record, the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the council meeting held on Wednesday 5th January 2022 be taken as read and confirmed and signed as a correct record.

For clarification, reference in the Ward Member's report to vehicle access currently not being processed, refers to things such as dropped kerbs, etc.

19/22 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members considered a request from Councillor Anderson to join the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee, following the vacancy left by the passing of Councillor Anne Clarey.

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Anderson joins the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee for the remainder of this municipal year.

Additional vacancies to be filled by the passing of Councillor Mrs Clarey, which include Chairman of the Town Plan Implementation Group and Community Governor for St Mary's Academy, will be included on the March Council agenda.

20/22 REPORTS

a) Central Beds Council Ward Member Report

Councillor B Saunders

- Forthcoming road closures – High Street from Brook Street junction up to Norton Road from 21st to 25th February for resurfacing, and Norton Road from A507 to junction with Baldock Road from 24th to 28th March
- Central Bedfordshire Council's Chairman's Civic Service – in past years it has been held in Stotfold whilst Councillor Saunders has been Chairman, however this year, the Bishop of Bedford has asked for it to include a service for the Jubilee. This year the service will become a Civic Jubilee Service, however due to the size of the service, this year it will be held at St Mary's Church, Woburn, as it is a larger church and more central within Central Bedfordshire
- Councillors Saunders and Dixon are asking people to let them know of any misinformation they are aware of being in circulation. For example, that UK Land have planning permission and are starting to build soon – this has come from a member of the public and is complete misinformation. Another is that the library is moving, the Simpson Centre is going to be demolished, and flats being built on the site. Again, a further example of misinformation. These incorrect rumours could have come via social media or word of mouth. If any further similar rumours can be reported to Councillors Saunders and Dixon, they will try to get to the bottom of where this has come from and ensure that correct information is distributed
- Business grants – there are currently additional grants available – the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure grant to support business which offers in-person services where the main service and activity takes place in fixed business places – hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors and applications for this grant are open for four weeks from 21st February. The additional business grant is open until Friday 4th March.

Councillor S Dixon

- Has a meeting on Monday with Central Bedfordshire Council's Head of Public Health, and the Director of Public Health in Bedfordshire, to ask specifically about Covid-19 cases in our Ward area. The rate is not of

concern at this time. First vaccinations, the lowest percentage in our CCG area is 69% and we were 86%, second vaccination 62% was the lowest and we were 81%, and for third jabs and boosters the lowest is 38% and we are currently at 64%. Compliance in Central Bedfordshire is really good, and thanks were given to residents for their attitude towards the pandemic and the vaccination measures. We are now plateauing in Central Bedfordshire.

- With regard to the toucan crossing on Arlesey Road, a contractor has been out on site to wire it up but it is yet to be commissioned. This was supposed to have been actioned after a certain trigger point in the Linden Homes development. It is hoped that the crossing will finally be opened this week.
- In Silver Birch Avenue, Highways are trialling a new system for footpaths where there is an over-banding put over it. They are doing the whole of Silver Birch Avenue using this new system. It will give at least another 25 to 30 years before you start to see degradation.
- Budget consultation – this has now closed, and it went through. The budget level was kept at a reasonable amount. The police voted for a £10 per Band D rise in their precept, so it will be tight for residents, particularly with rising energy costs.
- Thanks to Councillors Cooper and Collier for coming along to the Development Management Committee meeting regarding the proposal at Regent Street, even though it ended up being approved. Some strong principles about what has been accepted and not accepted in the town have been established.
- Land south of Arlesey Road (UK Land application), the appeal against refusal is due shortly. This will be a public inquiry.
- School place planning – Victor Wan, Head of School Place Planning will be meeting with the town council in March to explain the figures. A review has been carried out on the cluster school places.
- Central Bedfordshire Council is one of the authorities in the Government's Levelling Up White Paper, with money specifically for education. It is focused on performance of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
- Former Roecroft Lower School Playing Field – he is very conscious that something needs to be done with it. He would like to come up with some ideas, as a joint venture between the Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council and would like Councillor Mrs Anderson to work with him on this with her expertise and knowledge. He has approached the Head of Sustainability about the possibility of the site becoming a community orchard.

This last item will be included on the agenda for next week's Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee.

A member advised that the UK Land public inquiry is due to start on 4th May and will last around 9 days.

The toucan crossing supposed to be completed before the 1st occupation, and they are now on the 40th occupied dwelling.

With regard to the Central Bedfordshire Council Chairman's Civic Service, it is suggested that Stotfold's Salvation Army Band and Reverend Bill Britt might be asked to participate.

21/22 STOTFOLD & ASTWICK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members noted the meeting notes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, held on Tuesday 25th January 2022, and considered the recommendations therein.

RESOLVED that approval is given to:

- i) The recommendation that funding of an initial £1,000 from the Town Strategy budget or EMR Town Strategy Projects is allocated for the Stotfold & Astwick Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to use for community engagement/consultation/promotional purposes – a breakdown of expenditure will be provided to council.
- ii) The recommendation that the Town Council meets costs for required Neighbourhood Plan promotional/engagement pages in the Stotfold News, as required.

These will be the Town Council's contributions towards funding for the Neighbourhood Plan.

22/22 ACCOUNTS

- a) Members considered the Expenditure Report for approval for February 2022 and the income received during January 2022 in the Income Report.

RESOLVED that all payments on the Expenditure Report are approved and are to be paid, and the Income Report be noted.

- b) Members considered the monthly bank balances as at end January 2022.

RESOLVED that the monthly bank balances for month end January are noted.

23/22 RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE – 12TH JANUARY 2022

Members of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 12th January 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

24/22 PLANNING COMMITTEE – 12TH JANUARY 2022

Members of the Planning Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 12th January 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

25/22 PLANNING COMMITTEE – 26TH JANUARY 2022

Members of the Planning Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 26th January 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

26/22 CEMETERY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 19TH JANUARY 2022

Members of the Cemetery Management Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 19th January 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

27/22 BUILDINGS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 19TH JANUARY 2022

Members of the Buildings Management Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 19th January 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

28/22 ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE – 26TH JANUARY 2022

Members of the Establishment Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 26th January 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council. There were none.

29/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

Nothing to report.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.43pm

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: