

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2022, AT 7.00PM

Committee Members present:

S Buck – Chairman, L Anderson, B Collier, A Cooper, M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, J Hyde, D Matthews, J Smith, J Talbot, H Wightwick

Also present:

Nic King and Esme Handley – Grand Union Housing Youth Participation Team, K Elliott-Turner – Town Clerk and one virtual attendance by a staff member

159/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Bhasin and B Saunders.

160/22 DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations of interests in respect of items on the agenda, and 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.

161/22 GRAND UNION HOUSING YOUTH PARTICIPATION OFFICER

Nic King outlined their Youth Work Delivery during 2021/2022:

- Multi Sports programme
- Detached youth work – walking around and engaging with young people in hard to reach places
- Supporting the set-up of Just Out youth club
- Pix Brook Academy mentoring
- Pix Brook Academy half term programme
- Academy of Central Bedfordshire student mentoring/group work
- Community mentoring
- Christmas, Easter, Summer activity programme
- Youth Hub – drop in at Greenacre Centre – almost fortnightly
- Community Safety – detached work
- Christmas Fayre
- Next Steps – employment skills and training

This equates to around 12 to 16 hours of youth work in our area.

Over this Summer 2022, the programme was called Zing! They worked with 610 youth people and children, carrying out 207 hours of youth work delivery with a variety of different activities. In Stotfold, 60 hours of youth work was delivered, working with 79 children and young people (ages 8 to 24) – 47 of those are participants (actively engaging for more than 15 – 20 minutes) and 32 are contacts (engaging with people in hard to reach spaces).

Activities over the summer included:

- Multi sports
- Detached youth work

- Pendleton Sports activities
- Arts & Crafts
- Well-being workshops
- Bath bomb workshops
- Graffiti Project at Riverside Playing Field

They also offered some free swimming, Wicksteed trip, bowling trip and team karts trip.

Going forward, with the winter programme – what are the Town Council expecting?

The Council would very much like the team to continue with their work in Stotfold and encourage them to continue their work with the Just Out youth club to help them set up.

The age range Nic and her team work with is 8 to 24, but the target range is 12 to 17 (Not in Education, Employment, Training – NEETs), which therefore involves working with the schools. Within the team, each member has different skills and roles and so works with different young people on different aspects. Esme works with the Academy of Central Bedfordshire and their young people who are leaving year 11 and are now in our community, so her work continues with them as they move on into employment or next steps. The dynamics of the needs of young people and their families changes continually, and so the youth team work also changes.

Esme and Nic were thanked for their attendance and their work and left the meeting.

162/22 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & CIVIC ATTENDANCE

2 nd July	ABF Soldiers' Charity, Howbury Hall, Bedford	Declined
10 th July	Vantage Charity Lunch, Dunstable	Deputy Mayor & Consort to attend
15 th – 17 th July	Stotfold Junior Football Club Summer Tournament	Mayor attended
20 th July	Leighton Linlade Charity Meal	Declined
24 th July	Mayor of Bedford Civic Reception	Declined
4 th Sept	Lord Lieutenant Service of Thanksgiving Bedford	Mayor attended
25 th Sept	High Sheriff of Bedfordshire Justice Service	Mayor attended

163/22 PUBLIC SECTION

None present.

164/22 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Clerk's Report

As noted at the July Establishment Committee meeting (min 65/22), minutes of committee meetings will now be considered by the relevant committee at their next meeting to confirm that they are a correct record of their previous meeting. Council will now only be asked to note those minutes, and to consider any recommendations. Non-committee members may also ask questions about the minutes.

165/22 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the council meeting held on 6th July 2022 and the extra council meeting held on 19th July 2022, be taken as read and confirmed and signed as a correct record.

166/22 COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RECORD 2021/2022

Members noted the councillor attendance record for period May 2021 to April 2022, which will be published on our website.

167/22 RESIDENTS SURVEY 2022

As per the Aims and Objectives contained within Council's [Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement](#) (adopted 2014) and our adopted [Corporate Strategic Plan \(2019-2023\)](#), it is proposed to send out a Residents Survey to gauge the view of residents as to our services and facilities we provide – what they think about us, what they know about us and what they would like us to concentrate our resources on. The intention is to engage with our residents on an annual basis using this survey, and to use the first year's results as a benchmark for future years to ascertain any improvements made over time.

Members considered the Residents Survey 2022 <https://forms.office.com/r/L7ugBwbsTp>, which has a deadline for responses of 18th December, and results to be considered by council in the new year, with survey findings and any actions to be carried out published at the Annual Town Meeting, our website, Facebook page and Stotfold News. The survey will be distributed on our website via a QR code, Stotfold News, our Facebook page, and paper copies will be made available in the Council foyer and hopefully the library.

Initial feedback will be given to members at the October meeting to see what the uptake is, and to consider how we are advertising it and whether it needs more promotion, perhaps via displays in shop windows.

RESOLVED that the Residents Survey 2022 is sent out as proposed, with an amendment to the first question to ask for the first thing people think of when talking about Stotfold, this will help us to establish how residents regard Stotfold and what they see as their town identity.

168/22 OPTION TO OPT OUT OF THE SAAA CENTRAL EXTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT

Members considered correspondence from the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd, which advises that all authorities must be given the option to opt-

out of the central procurement and appointment scheme and appoint their own external auditor for the next 5 year period. Correspondence outlines the key implications. The next appointing period runs from 2022-23 until 2026-27.

RESOLVED that this council does not opt-out of the central procurement and appointment scheme.

169/22 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2021/2022

A copy of the External Auditor's Certificate and completed Annual Return for year end 31st March 2022 was previously circulated to members.

The External Auditor advises that there are no minor issues identified or scope for improvement required in 2022/23.

RESOLVED that the External Auditor's Certificate and Report for year end 31st March 2022 is received and noted.

A copy of the audited accounts has been published on the council's website and Greenacre Centre notice board.

170/22 REPORTS

- a) Central Beds Council Ward Member Report
None present.
- b) Member and Nominated Representatives on Outside Bodies
No report to present.
- c) Town Plan Implementation Group (IG)
No report to present.
- d) Other Member Representative reports
No other reports.

171/22 ACCOUNTS

- a) Members considered the Expenditure Report for approval for September 2022 payment run, including those made in August, and the income received during July and August 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 committee budget report, budget variances report and bank balances as at end August 2022.

RESOLVED that the monthly committee budget reports, budget variances report and bank balances for month end August 2022 are noted.

172/22 COMMITTEE MINUTES

Members noted the minutes of the following committee meetings:

- Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee – 13th July 2022
- Planning Committee – 13th July 2022

- Planning Committee – 3rd August 2022
- Cemetery Management Committee – 20th July 2022
- Buildings Management Committee – 20th July 2022
- Establishment Committee – 21st July 2022

173/22 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Members considered the recommendation from minute 105/22 of Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee meeting held on 13th July 2022.

“That the previous decision to site Jubilee benches at Prince Charles Avenue, the front of the Greenacre Centre and Millennium Green is rescinded, and that the question of proposed locations is put to residents:

We have x3 Jubilee benches, and we have considered siting them in these areas – Millennium Green, Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, Common Road Allotments, Prince Charles Avenue and in front of the Greenacre Centre. You may also have other suggested locations, please let us know where you think the benches could be sited”

The outcome of the engagement with residents to be considered at the September committee meeting.”

RESOLVED that the recommendation from minute 105/22 is approved.

174/22 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS ON ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

None present.

175/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

Councillor Mrs Hyde advised that there is an organised walk along the River Ivel this Sunday, 2pm meeting at Baldock Football Club (The Arena). She has recently attended a lecture at The Settlement in Letchworth, led by RevIvel, where Richard Meredith-Hardy advised that he will be canoeing from the Ivel Springs in Baldock, up the river to Offord near Grafham Water, and is documenting it to raise awareness of the low water level issue. RevIvel will be happy to give a presentation at our Annual Town Meeting in March.

The October council agenda will include consideration of Community Larders/Fridges and Warm Places. With energy prices rapidly increasing, the Mayor has spoken with The Need Project about the food they distribute across Central Bedfordshire. There has been a 68% – 70% increase on April/May’s figures of food distribution to those in need compared to the same time last year, and it is predicted to increase further. The Need Project distributes between £35,000 to £40,000 worth of food a month. There have been discussions about how the council might be able help the situation in our town. Many councils across the country have introduced Community Larders and Community Fridges. The Need Project currently stores ambient food – tins and fresh vegetables, but wants to bring in diary, cheese, milk and perishable items. The Mayor has been discussing with our Ward Member Steve Dixon the possibility of using his Ward Member Grant to purchase a fridge to help extend the service available to residents. Another scheme to help those struggling to heat their homes is Warm Places initiative. In the Greenacre Centre we have two rooms which are under-used – Maple Room and Council Chamber, and as we always keep the building heated it would be an ideal

venue to provide a heated space for people to sit and meet others, do their homework, make a cup of tea, etc.

Councillor Talbot explained that as of 1st July the Stotfold Good Neighbour Group started a social hub on a Friday afternoon in the Memorial Hall, which could feed into the Warm Places idea.

Tomorrow evening at Larksfield Surgery, there is an open event between 6pm to 7pm to 'meet the team' – doctors, nurses, secretaries, receptionists, Managing Director of Milton Keynes GP Plus.

176/22 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Under section 3d of Standing Orders, the Chairman will propose that the press and public are temporarily excluded whilst matters pertaining to staff issues are discussed and that they be instructed to withdraw from the meeting for the following agenda item only.

PASSED by members.

177/22 REPORT FROM GRIEVANCE PANEL

Members considered a progress update report from the Chairman of the Grievance Panel.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.00pm.

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: