

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 4TH JANUARY 2023, AT 7.00PM

Committee Members present:

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

Also present:

One member of the public, Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Member S Dixon, Town Clerk – K Elliott-Turner, and a staff member attending virtually

1/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Talbot. Councillor Russell was absent without apologies.

2/23 DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests or 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.

3/23 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & CIVIC ATTENDANCE

3rd December – Houghton Regis Christmas Carol Service
10th December – Mayor of Leighton Linlade Carol Concert
16th December – Stotfold Good Neighbour Group Christmas Panto
17th December – Mayor of Sandy Carol Service
7th January – Restoring the River Ivel
27th January – Houghton Regis Charity Dinner TBC

4/23 PUBLIC SECTION

No requests to speak.

5/23 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Members were advised that the RevIvel organisation will be attending the Annual Town Meeting in March as guest speaker, and that our new Safer Communities Engagement Officer is Steve Blake and will be meeting the Clerk next week.

6/23 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the council meeting held on 7th December 2022 be taken as read and confirmed and signed as a correct record.

7/23 YOUTH PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Members considered making a response to Grand Union Housing's Youth Participation Team questionnaire, on their activities over the last year, our views on their youth team provision and activities and expectations for the coming year.

RESOLVED that the following response is forwarded:

What impact / outcomes do you think the youth involvement team have had in the community?

Liaising with other agencies to bring a coordinated approach to problem families.
Monitoring the areas around the town where young people gather and where problems may arise.

Being a visible presence around the town that brings reassurance to young people.
It is difficult for us to evaluate the impact and outcome, however our faith in the team means we believe that their presence amongst our young people wherever they are engaging with them, means that they will be helping young people and making a positive impact on their lives.

Have the youth involvement team youth activities / work met the councils expectations?

Yes

Which activities would you like to see the youth team deliver over the next year? Please tick or highlight all that apply:

Youth Mentoring Schools, Youth Mentoring Community, Half term activity programmes, Community Safety Initiatives, Detached Youth Work (engagement in parks/street), Youth Certificates/training, Youth Employment Skills and training, Drop-ins/Hubs, Other (please specify)

All, particularly the mentoring in the schools and the community and engaging in parks and in streets, but all are important. Also, working collaboratively with other young organisations/providers in the town.

Is there something the youth team should do more or less of? if so please state

Unable to answer

Is the cost of the service the youth team provides value for money?

Yes, it is down to our belief in the effectiveness of the youth team.

8/23 PANEL FOR CONTRACT

The Clerk outlined the process for receiving, opening and evaluating tenders received for the Grounds Maintenance & Grass Cutting Contract.

The invitation to tender was issued on 22nd December, is on the Government's Contract Finder website, our Facebook page, website and an invitation was sent to those who had previously expressed an interest. Those tendering have been provided with detailed specification of works, which includes detailed maps of all open spaces, recreation grounds, amenity areas and each verge to be cut or maintained. A total of 15 documents have been supplied, which includes the Form of Tender. This document allows the contractor to submit their costs, broken down into separate works.

The deadline to return tenders is 12noon on Monday 30th January, and they are to be opened in by the Clerk in the presence of at least two councillors – suggested the Council Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Tender evaluation, by the evaluation panel, will take place on Tuesday 31st January. In terms of the evaluation process, those submitting tenders are required to meet a list of compliance objectives, and failure to provide these will result in disqualification. This

includes production of a valid copy of Public Liability Insurance to at least £10m, copy of their Business Health and Safety Policy, etc.

There are some 'desirable' objectives, but failure to provide won't result in their tender being marked down. This includes evidence of continuing professional development.

Marking for criteria is also set out in the Form of Tender document, and focuses on Price, Quality, Experience, Environment/Ecology, Social Value, with each weighted by percentage score out of 100.

We also require evidence of the tenderer's annual turnover, their financial accounts, and all insurances. This to ensure that their economic financial standing gives confidence to council that the company is able to fulfil their obligations.

Lastly, the tenderer is obliged to make a declaration that they will agree to complete the work in accordance with the Invitation to Tender and Specification of Works, and that they have not calculated their tender by agreement or arrangement with any other person. They also accept that the council is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender or part thereof, under our Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

RESOLVED that the following members form the evaluation panel for the Grounds Maintenance & Grass Cutting Contract (2023-2026) tenders: S Buck, S Hayes, B Saunders, J Smith, D Matthews (J Hyde reserve)

9/23 CORONATION BAND STAND

Members considered the recommendation from the Establishment Committee minute 100/22:

'That the council pursues a project to install a new, modern style, 5m band stand on Greenacre Park, on the school side of the park, with electricity and lighting and a hard-base, subject to being successful with grant applications for funding. The council will put in up to £30,000. Grant are to focus on bringing the community together, performance space, working with the library, school and the arts. A working party is to be put together to assist the Clerk in making the grant application.'

RESOLVED that the minute is approved, and the working party will be an Officer, and Councillors S Hayes, J Smith and B Collier.

10/23 PRECEPT 2023/2024

Members considered the recommendation from the Establishment Committee minute 101/22, to be read in conjunction with the minutes and report contained therein.

'That the Stotfold Town Council precept figure of £913,926 for 2023/2024 be submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council'.

RESOLVED that the minute is approved, and the precept figure of £638,610 for 2022/2023 will be submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council.

11/23 REPORTS

Central Bedfordshire Council

Ward Member S Dixon gave the following report:

- A new bike repair stand has been installed on High Street, outside the parade of shops.
- BP Pulse have confirmed that they are looking to install an EV Charge Point in the Arlesey Road playing field car park, it will be a very quick charger, and they are currently working with Central Bedfordshire Council as head landlord (landowner) on the variation of lease/licence required to install.
- At Pix Brook Academy, he met with the Headteacher and the new Community Safety Officer, Steve Blake.
- Whilst at that meeting, they also discussed the possibility of installing CCTV at the school end of their service road, where antisocial behaviour is taking place. Assets advise that this is not the best solution at this stage. He has requested that the verges along this road are tidied.
- The fencing and gate at the Manor Farm site has now been installed. The property will go back on the market soon, however planning permission has lapsed. There has been concern expressed about the structure condition of the barn.
- The Central Bedfordshire Council budget for next financial year is stretched, however they have managed to achieve a balanced budget. Consultation on their budget proposal is now out.
- The Local Cycling and Walking Plan has now received over 3,500 responses.

A member advised that the traffic lights at the crossroads appear to have had their flow direction changed – Councillor Dixon will investigate this.

12/23 ACCOUNTS

- a) Members considered the Expenditure Report for approval for January 2023 payment run, and the income received during December 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 and bank balances as at end December 2022.

RESOLVED that the monthly committee budget reports and bank balances for month end November 2022 are noted.

The Clerk was asked to move some money from the Unity Trust current account to the savings account, to make best use of the current interest rate.

13/23 COMMITTEE MINUTES

Members noted the minutes of the following committee meetings:

- Planning Committee – 15th December 2022
- Planning Committee – 20th December 2022
- Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee – 15th December 2022
- Establishment Committee – 20th December 2022

14/23 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS ON ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

Not at this time.

15/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

A request was made for the Establishment Committee to meet to discuss the facilities team contracts, as a matter of urgency.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.37pm

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: