

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 5th APRIL 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, J Talbot, H Wightwick

Also present:

Assistant Clerk – Ms Caroline Jenkins

50/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Russell.

51/23 DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillor Talbot declared an interest in item 7 – He is an executive member for Stotfold Scouts. 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.

52/23 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & CIVIC ATTENDANCE

March 2023

3rd March – Mayor of Dunstable Civic Service - Attended

5th March – Mayor of Sandy Civic Service – Attended

10th March – Mayor of Dunstable Charity Fundraiser Deputy Mayor Steve Hayes and Mrs Lyn Hayes - Attended

12th March – Mayor of Biggleswade Civic Service – Attended

April 2023

15th April – Houghton Regis Afternoon Tea on the Bowls Green – Declined

25th April – Flitwick Town Mayor Charity Quiz Night – Accepted Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Mrs Buck and Mrs Hayes to attend.

26th April – Lord Lieutenant Service of Thanksgiving – Accepted

29th April – Leighton-Linslade Tea and Tour of All Saints Church – Declined

30th April – Houghton Regis Civic Service – Accepted

53/23 PUBLIC SECTION

None present.

54/23 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

The 2nd Town Ranger position has now been advertised. Closing date is 28th April 2023
Date for DCK accountants to visit office to check over finances has been arranged for 27 June 2023.

The new contract for Street Lighting is to be finally checked before sending out.
The ward councillor grant has been received from Central Bedfordshire Council.
A boot scraper for Arlesey Road has been ordered.

55/23 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the council meeting held on 1st March 2023 be taken as read and confirmed and signed as a correct record.

56/23 STOTFOLD SCOUTS – INSTALLATION OF GAZEBO AT GREENACRE CENTRE

Stotfold Scouts have asked permission to site their gazebo in front of the Greenacre Centre on Monday 8th May 2023. The Scouts will be hosting an orienteering day as part of the Kings Coronation and would like to distribute maps and guides for this event.

RESOLVED: that this is approved, providing the Gazebo is secured to the grass and anchored down properly. Scouts should be made aware that the centre will be closed so toilets will not be accessible.

57/23 RETIREMENT OF COUNCILLORS

Councillors Alan Cooper and Brian Collier were asked to stand by the Mayor. They were applauded for their work and dedication to the Town Council over the years. Their knowledge of the town, especially regarding planning matters would be a great loss to the council. They were both wished the very best for their retirements.

Councillor Glenn Russell was also thanked for his time and work for the Town Council as he is also standing down this year.

58/23 REPORTS

Central Bedfordshire Council

Ward Member B Saunders gave the following report:

Upon my retirement after 12 years involved with Central Bedfordshire Council I noted the following moments:

In 2011 when I started at Central Bedfordshire Council, we were looking forward to the Olympics in 2012, and Fairfield was still a part of Stotfold.

The rehoming of the Football club was just a discussion then, 10 years later and we have a new Football Club development

Stotfold was hardly known by many Towns across Central Bedfordshire. I think we have Mr John Clark to thank for attending meetings, pushing on issues for the town and raising the profile so people now know about Stotfold.

As Chairman of Central Bedfordshire Council, I met Princess Anne at Marston Vale, during the opening of the country park.

I took over Chairman duties in 2019 which was straightforward until the election results, followed by Covid. I am not great with IT, so conducting a meeting with 86 people online, when you can't see them, and they all want to speak was challenging.

Overall, I am pleased with what I have achieved and I hope that I have helped to raise the profile of Stotfold.

Central Bedfordshire Council

Ward Member S Dixon gave the following report:

Councillor Saunders took on the Chairmans role at a particularly difficult time. He is the only Chairman to hold this position for 3 full terms, ie 3 years.

Recent success with flytipping in Central Bedfordshire, 2 cases have recently been prosecuted, although not from Central Bedfordshire area but were fined £2000. Not a great deal of money but hoping this will continue to be a deterrent.

Another 2 years of the Levy grant for local EV infrastructure funding
It was noted that some units in Leighton have recently been vandalised.
Hopefully an isolated incident.

Julie Oggley – Adult and Social care Director has retired this week. She was also the Chair of ADAX, the Adult social care professional body. Thanks were given for her work over the years.

Warm Spaces Action Group

Cllr H Wightwick gave the following report:

A meeting of the Warm Spaces Action Group was held on 16 March 2023. This will be the last one scheduled until Autumn 2023. The group are looking to use fewer venue next year with the Need Project and Town Council being asked to host. Councillors were asked to consider the use of a Council building. This will be raised with the Buildings committee members but it was thought that by Winter, the Library may have moved to the Greenacre Centre, allowing both to co-exist.

Stotfold Good Neighbour Group

Cllr J Talbot gave the following report:

The Warm Spaces organised by the Stotfold Good Neighbour Group would continue, as they are now a more social activity. Now known as "Friends on Friday" they will hopefully continue into this year and beyond.

61/23 ACCOUNTS

- a) Members considered the Expenditure Report for approval for April 2023 payment run, and the income received during March 2023 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 March 2023.

RESOLVED that the monthly committee budget reports and bank balances for month end March 2023 are noted.

62/23 COMMITTEE MINUTES

Members noted the minutes of the following Committee meetings:

- Planning Committee – 8 March 2023
- Planning Committee – 22nd March 2023
- Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee – 8 March 2023
- Cemetery Committee – 15th March 2023
- Buildings Committee – 15th March 2023
- Establishment Committee – 15th March 2023
- Establishment Committee -29th March 2023

63/23 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS ON ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

Congratulations were again given to Councillors Collier, Cooper and Saunders on their retirements from Stotfold Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council respectively.

64/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

There were none

65/23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

PASSED BY MEMBERS

67/23 STAFFING MATTERS

Members continued to discuss staffing matters.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.11pm

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: