

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE ON TUESDAY 9TH MAY 2023 AT 7.00PM

Committee Members present:

S Buck - Chairman, L Anderson, Mrs M Cooper, A Hall, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, D Matthews, B Saunders, J Smith, J Talbot, H Wightwick (CBC Councillor).

Also present:

Ms Caroline Jenkins – Assistant Clerk, Central Beds Council Ward Member Mrs K Woodfine, Helen Child, Administration Assistant.

68/23 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Nominations were requested for the position of Chairman of Stotfold Town Council, who will also take the role of Mayor of Stotfold.

Councillors were also advised that the election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and committee chairs should be carried out by a show of hands, and ballot papers should be only used for co-options in connection with casual vacancies, in conjunction with our Standing Orders, 10b.

Councillors Buck and Saunders were proposed and seconded. A show of hands took place, and it was:

RESOLVED that the Chairman of Stotfold Town Council for year 2023/2024 is Councillor Steve Buck.

69/23 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Buck signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the role of Chairman of Stotfold Town Council.

70/23 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Nominations were requested for the position of Vice-Chairman of Stotfold Town Council, who will also take the role of Deputy Mayor of Stotfold.

Councillor Hayes was proposed and seconded. A show of hands took place, and it was:

RESOLVED that the Vice-Chairman of Stotfold Town Council for year 2023/2024 is Councillor Steve Hayes.

Councillor Hayes signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the role of Vice-Chairman of Stotfold Town Council.

71/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dhaliwal.

72/23 DISCLOSURE 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.

73/23 ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members were previously provided with a copy of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Both documents had been reviewed in May 2022.

RESOLVED that both the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders are adopted, with a review of both to be carried out by the Establishment Committee.

74/23 COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES & STEERING GROUPS

RESOLVED that this Council shall have the following Standing Committees with number of members as follows:

- Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting – 10 members
- Cemetery Management – 8 members
- Buildings Management – 8 members
- Planning Management – 10 members
- Town Strategy – 8 members
- Establishment – between 7 and 9 members (consisting of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council, and Chairmen of each committee)

And working parties, sub-committees and steering groups:

- Town Plan Implementation Group (working party) – up to 12 members, at least 2 of which must be council members
- Etonbury Green Wheel (working party) – 8 or more members, 2 of which must be from the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee
- Stotfold Christmas lights – 2 council members plus residents/businesses (chairman shall be a council member)
- Stotfold Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – 10 members, up to 4 of which shall be council members (chairman shall be a council member)
- Arlesey Road Task & Finish Group – 2 members

And that the terms of reference for each Standing Committee are adopted.

75/22 FORMATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN & VICE-CHAIRMEN – TO INCLUDE SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND STEERING GROUPS

RESOLVED that councillor committee membership and chairmen and vice-chairmen thereof is as follows:

Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee

L Anderson, S Buck, Mrs M Cooper, A Hall, S Hayes, J Hyde, B Saunders, J Smith, J Talbot, (1 vacancy)

Chairman – Councillor Mrs M Cooper

Cemetery Management Committee

T Bhasin, S Buck, Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, (2 vacancies)

Chairman – Mrs J Hyde

Buildings Management Committee

S Buck, Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, D Matthews, B Saunders, J Smith, J Talbot
Chairman – S Hayes

Planning Committee

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

Town Strategy

S Buck, S Hayes, J Smith, D Matthews, H Wightwick (3 Vacancies)
Chairman – D Matthews

Establishment

S Buck, Mrs M Cooper, A Hall, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, D Matthews, B Saunders, J Smith, J Talbot
Chairman – S Buck

Etonbury Green Wheel

L Anderson(chair), Mrs J Hyde
Chairman – L Anderson

Stotfold Christmas Lights

S Buck, A Hall, S Hayes
Chairman – S Buck

Stotfold Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

L Anderson, J Smith, J Talbot, H Wightwick
Chairman – L Anderson

Arlesey Road Task & Finish Group

S Hayes, B Saunders

Vice-Chairmen are to be elected at the next appropriate committee meeting.

76/23 MEETINGS SCHEDULE FOR ORDINARY AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2023-2024

RESOLVED that the meetings schedule for ordinary council and committee meetings for the period May 2023 to April 2024 is adopted. Noting that meetings may be subject to cancellation or postponement if there are no items for the agenda, the meeting will be inquorate or for other reasons determined by council or relevant committee.

At this point Central Bedfordshire Councillor Kathryn Woodfine left the meeting.

77/23 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER OR NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that members are nominated or confirmed as representatives (where role continues) on the following outside bodies:

Community Governor for St Mary's Academy
Councillor Liz Anderson

Community Governor for Roecroft Lower School
Councillor Steve Buck

Community Governor for Etonbury Academy
Councillor Andrew Hall

Stotfold Football Club Committee
Councillors S Dhaliwal, J Smith, D Matthews (sub)

Mossman Management Committee
Councillor B Saunders

Stotfold Bowls Club Committee
Councillor Mrs M Cooper, S Buck

Stotfold Scouts Committee
None elected

Trustees of Eleemosynary Charity of William Field
Councillors S Hayes and J Hyde will continue to be the Town Council's representatives on the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field, as per their terms of office.

Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils
Councillors J Smith, B Saunders

78/23 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED that the following appointments of member representatives to serve the council are made:

Tree Warden
Councillor Mrs M Cooper

Highways Representative
Councillor J Smith

Bedfordshire Police & Priority Setting
Councillors J Talbot and J Smith

Stotfold Community Safety Plan Group
Councillors S Buck, J Smith and J Talbot

79/23 AUTHORISED REGULAR/ANNUAL PAYMENTS

The regular and Annual payments will be considered at a further Council meeting.

80/23 APPOINTMENT OF BANK SIGNATORIES

RESOLVED that signatories to bank accounts held by the council are as follows:

Unity Trust Bank – Councillors S Buck, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, B Saunders, the Town Clerk and Acting Town Clerk

Barclays Bank – Councillors S Buck, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, B Saunders, the Town Clerk and Acting Town Clerk

81/23 INTERNAL AUDITOR

Members were asked to confirm that Mrs Julie Betts continues in the role as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for 2023/2024. The Clerk has undertaken checks to ensure that Mrs Betts is competent and suitable to carry out the role. Mrs Betts' fee is £150 for half-year audits.

RESOLVED that Mrs Julie Betts is appointed as the council's Internal Auditor for 2023/2024.

82/23 COUNCIL POLICIES

RESOLVED that the council's policy documents, and their relevant review dates (accessible to members via Teams and website) are noted. As per Standing Order 6 (j) xvi, xvii, xviii, xix, following review of the council's complaints procedure, press policy, and policies and procedures relating to employment and obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation, these were also noted and adopted.

Any future changes will be raised at the next Establishment committee and referred back to Full Council for adoption.

83/23 ASSET REGISTER

Members were previously provided with a copy of the council's Asset Register. It was noted that some play equipment items are grouped together on the register. Council play equipment does not depreciate in value, in any insurance claim we would receive new for old.

RESOLVED that the council's Asset Register is adopted.

84/23 INSURANCE COVER

Details will be submitted to members at the next Council meeting.

85/23 COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RECORD

These were provided for members, but were not reflective of the true percentages. This item will be deferred to the next Council Meeting

84/23 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & CIVIC ATTENDANCE

These will be provided to members at the next Council meeting.

85/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

None present.

86/23 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Nothing at present

87/23 COUNCIL MINUTES

Members were asked to note and sign as a correct record, the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th April 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th April 2023 be taken as read and confirmed and signed as a correct record.

88/23 1 YEAR DRAFT ACTION PLAN – APRIL 2023 TO MARCH 2024

Members considered the review of actions taken on the plan ending March 2023, together with a draft 1 Year Action Plan for period April 2023 to March 2024.

RESOLVED that the review of the plan for period April 2022 to March 2023 is noted, and that the 1 Year Draft Action Plan for period April 2023 to March 2024 is adopted.

89/23 REPORTS

a) Final Central Beds Council Ward Member Report

Councillor Brian Saunders:

It was agreed to write to Ex Central Bedfordshire Councillor, Steve Dixon to convey our thanks for all his support over the years to this council, he has brought a new interest in Stotfold.

It was noted that between 22nd May 2023 and 13 June 2023, Biggleswade recycling centre will be closed.

Following the election there were great changes at Central Bedfordshire Council, with new and interesting times. Best wishes were given to our new Central Bedfordshire councillors.

It was noted that bin collections have been put back by 1 day for the bank holiday. This will unfortunately coincide with the Mill Weekend and may cause some disruption. It has been advised that collections in that area of the town should be ideally completed by 9.30am.

b) Central Beds Council Ward Member Report

Councillor Helen Wightwick

An interesting time at Central Bedfordshire Council as it is now a hung council. There have so far been meetings for all new councillors to assist them in their new roles.

b) Roecroft School Report

Councillor Steve Buck:

It was noted that Roecroft School had an Ofsted inspection which they were deemed for improvement. There was an anomaly with their records, and after investigation into this, sadly they are still to be monitored for 6 months. The school has 95 spaces, 90 of which were applied for, with 85 children starting next year. Added funds are available to the school and support for the Head Teacher.

93/23 ACCOUNTS

- a) Members considered the Expenditure Report for approval for May 2023 and the income received during April 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 April 2023.

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

94/23 PLANNING COMMITTEE – 12th APRIL 2023

Members of the Planning Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 12th April 2023 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

95/23 RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE – 12th APRIL 2023

Members of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 12th April 2023 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

97/23 ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE – 26th APRIL 2023

Members of the Establishment Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 26th April 2023 are a correct record. Members considered recommendation contained within minute 34/23:

RECOMMENDED that the following grants are approved:

Organisation	Purpose of Grant	Amount Awarded
Pix Gymnastics Club	Qualification fees for coaches	£600.00
Magpas Air Ambulance	Funding for Doctor and Paramedics	£1500.00
Stotfold Bowls Club	Lighting improvements to clubhouse	£500.00
Respite at Home	Funding for grants officer	£900.00
Stotfold Conservative Club	Purchase of defibrillator	£720.00

St Marys Church of England Academy	Purchase of Binoculars	£750.00
The Barn, Stotfold	Upkeep of defibrillator, housing unit, Batteries, Pads etc	£162.00
Just Out	Improve facilities at the Roecroft Centre – recommended installation of full concrete slab for entire bike shelter	£1000.00
Stotfold Parish Church	Funding for Coronation celebrations	£225.00
Stotfold Salvation Army	Purchase of defibrillator	£750.00

Members were informed that the requests for grants far outweighed the Grants budget this time. Not all applicants received the whole of their grant request, as there was a need to hold back some of the budget for the next round of grants in September/October 2023.

The recommendations were **RESOLVED** and the minutes were noted by council.

98/23 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS ON ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

There were none

99/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

- The Good Neighbour Group have been hiring the Memorial hall since December 2022 via a free let from the Council. They are now chasing their invoice to pay.
- Members expressed how bad the grass cutting in the town is looking, with grass on the pavements and areas at 3-4 inches high. It was noted that there is a new contractor in place and this will be monitored.
- EV charging points – it was noted that Central Bedfordshire Council will enforce the parking and claim the money for charges.
- Olivers Lane at the top of Home Close, a house has a fence covered with ivy that is now pulling the fence over. The Town Council is aware of this.
- Members were notified that a local survey had been carried out regarding the recently installed EV Charging points. The town council has asked to be made aware of the findings, but has been refused. Local businesses, people on foot and people using the car park were asked to comment over a few weeks. It is unknown whether owners of electric cars were surveyed. 95% of people were against the EV charging points, even though these were completely free to Stotfold and a future facility. The Town Council noted from a past survey that residents complained that the facilities were not keeping up with the size of the town. Unfortunately, the Town Council cannot comment on this unless it has more information.

Signage has been installed by Central Bedfordshire Council. Stotfold Town Council will be reviewing their signage at the car park to include details of restrictions.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.07pm.

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: