

**MINUTES OF THE STOTFOLD ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD IN THE OAK HALL, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD ON THURSDAY 7<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019 COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

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**Councillors present:**

Meeting Chaired by Councillor A Cooper (Mayor)

Mrs S Bundock  
B Collier  
Mr S Dhaliwal  
Mrs J Hyde  
C Phelps  
J Talbot

Mrs A Clarey  
Mrs M Cooper  
Mr S Hayes  
H Pickering  
B Saunders (& CBC)

**In attendance:**

Mrs K Elliott-Turner (Town Clerk) Ms Caroline Jenkins (Assistant Clerk),  
Caroline Romans (Central Bedfordshire Council), Nicola King (Grand Union  
Housing).

38 electors who recorded their names

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Councillor Cooper welcomed everyone to the 2019 meeting, and introduced the Town Councillors present, and Central Bedfordshire Councillors B Saunders and S Dixon. He then asked electors to clearly state their name and their road name before speaking.

**737. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Matthews.

**738. TO ADOPT MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2018**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018 were circulated to electors prior to the commencement of the meeting.

The minutes were taken as read prior to them being confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record. A resident noted that her question raised at the last meeting was not included in the minutes.

**739. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING – FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY**

Minute 736

Hitchin Road Rec changing rooms – the Junior Football Club put together a detailed proposal for refurbishment, which was accepted by the Town Council. This work is an excellent example of true community spirit, as the work was donated by the Junior Football Club and the facility will continue to be of benefit to the whole community. Many thanks to the Club for their hard work.

Footway barriers & obstacles – due to a staff change at Central Beds Council, a site meeting was not carried out, however the new Public Rights of Way Officer at Central Beds Council has recently taken this matter up again and is arranging a meeting with the Chairman of this Council to discuss the resident's concerns. Two barriers are due to have work carried out in due course, the rest are to be discussed.

**740. TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT ON THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES DURING 2018/2019**

Councillor Cooper read out his Annual Report:

Once again, my thanks go to all our Councillors, staff and contractors for the work they have done for Stotfold over the last year.

At last year's meeting I announced that Annette Dabner had joined our administration team in the office and that Mark Richardson had become a keyholder for the Memorial Hall, they are now helping us in providing a reliable service to residents.

Last November our other Administration Assistant, Liz Litchfield, left us to pursue her dream of running her own business caring for dogs and other animals and she seems to be doing well with that. Liz was replaced by Jeanette Everitt, a local resident who has settled in very well to become the 'other face at the window' with Annette on the Greenacre Centre reception desk.

The Council have now fully settled in at the new building which is proving a popular venue for many local activity groups and private functions with most of the initial 'teething problems' now overcome.

**Looking to the future** – Over ten years ago a joint group of Councillors and residents conducted an exhaustive survey of all residents of the town to collate their views and aspirations for the town and produced from the results a document known as the 'Town Plan'. This was formally adopted by the Town Council in October 2009 to act as a guide for future planning in provision of facilities and equipment around the town, it was also an advisory publication for the Local Planning Authority to consider along with their own forward planning intentions under their 'Local Plan'. Progress in achieving these aims is still monitored by the Town Plan Implementation Group who regularly report back to the full Town Council.

Moving on to the present time and with a policy of offering our staff continuous training the town has grown in size and, having a Clerk with the appropriate qualifications, we are able to qualify ourselves to adopt the 'General Power of Competence' and as a 'Quality Status' Council.

We have decided to produce a 'Corporate Strategy' document to identify the Councils vision for the town, its aims, objectives and key priorities over the medium to long term future. This document may at a later stage incorporate a 'Financial Strategy' plan to indicate time scale for delivery of some desired schemes. This is a work in progress by the Town Enhancement Committee and will initially review and include the shorter-term action plans of the individual committees.

**Cemetery developments** – As may be expected with an ever-increasing population the pressure to provide adequate burial spaces for the future has to be planned for. The Council are consulting on the production of plans to allow the 'Garden of Rest' to accommodate interment of cremated remains over the next 50 year period and are hoping to begin construction during the coming year.

So that residents can follow the workings of the Town Council more easily it has been agreed to upgrade the current **website** to improve clarity and be more 'user friendly' so that along with the Facebook pages, telephone, e-mail and counter services as much information as possible is on offer to the public.

Throughout the year, following a great deal of unrest and pressure from the surrounding residents, there has been steady but slow progress by the developers in completing outstanding works throughout the **Greenacre and Trinity Manor estates**. This is being overseen by Central Bedfordshire Council as the Local Planning Authority and we hope that projected completion dates will soon be available so that this large area can be fully adopted and integrated as part of the larger town.

Our direct interest is in the MUGA, play equipment and parkland to the rear of the Greenacre Centre which is physically near completion and mainly needs suitable time and weather for the grass seeding to mature prior to it being offered to the Town Council for adoption and public use – current predictions are for Spring / Summer of this year.

There is an obligation for a piece of '**Public Art**' to be installed within the Greenacre Park and a selection team including the Public Art Officer of Central Beds Council have vetted and approved proposals that Central Beds Council agreed conform with the Artist Brief and timescales suggested.

**Our many individual and groups of volunteers** continue their great works in maintaining and enhancing the facilities we can all enjoy throughout the year, there are too many to list but I'm sure you all know who you are. Of particular note this year is the progress of the Good Neighbour group who have provided support to hundreds of residents of all ages plus introduced 'Chair Based Exercise' sessions for the elderly on Friday afternoons in the rear room of the Memorial Hall – the tea and biscuits after are well earned.

One very large organisation in the town is the **Stotfold Junior Football Club** which has grown tremendously over the years to now involve around 600 young people in around 45 teams of both genders and a variety of ages. The success they enjoy bring the problem of finding enough suitable places for them to both practice and to play their matches.

Realising this the Juniors have generously offered their volunteers to refurbish the changing rooms & toilets at the Hitchin Road recreation ground at their own cost in particular to provide these facilities for ladies matches as required by Football Association rules, they will still be available to other users who hire the area for matches and other activities.

In addition to this some games are played at the **Riverside Recreation Ground** where the small car park facilities in Malthouse Lane lead to on-road parking problems, this is despite some of the vehicles parking in the existing Roker Park car park. The Town Council are planning to extend the car park area at Riverside to alleviate future problems.

The Town Council are delighted that, after many years of discussion and negotiation, work is now underway on construction of the **new football stadium and clubhouse** within the Arlesey Road Recreation site. This scheme, being carried out by the settle group, will eventually release the existing cramped Roker Park site for housing development including much needed social and affordable dwellings.

Following completion of this phase the Town Council will be seeking to expand the other community recreational and leisure facilities within this large area such as a MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area), play and fitness equipment along with other activities still to be identified through consultation with local potential users. Type of facilities and timing of their installation will of course depend on suitable finance being sourced and budgeted over the coming years.

**Stotfold Christmas lights** – Many of our residents have once again enjoyed this display based around the High Street, Grange Drive and the Greenacre Centre and expressed their hopes that this will continue and expand! The main financial support (around 50%) has been donated by the Council with the understanding that the remainder would be raised from local businesses, organisations and individuals to indicate their desire for it to continue. The committee organised a quiz night and also the events in and around the Greenacre Centre at Christmas which both helped tremendously. Council staff, councillors and other volunteers gave their time in supporting these events and are due huge thanks for their efforts (including the mysterious Santa who was so popular with the children). Along with donations from our local retailers and generous giving by the public both to collections at the Co-Op (a very generous supporter themselves) and in collection pots around the town there was a small surplus over cost this year.

Your continued support for this event is required and we ask that further residents step forward to help organise the festivities, including fund-raising, in the future. Please ask at the Council offices if you are interested.

**New Local Shops** – For all those who have craved a local 'coffee bar' to visit with friends please note that Emma now offers the 'Box of Cakes' cake shop & café with a wide menu of lighter meals, situated next to the library in Hitchin Road. A further newcomer in the High Street, opposite the Co-Op, is Mick with the JRA Discount Store, an Aladdin's Cave of useful household & DIY products.

We ask that you support these local shops for your convenience, it's a case of 'use them or lose them!'

**Finally** – Please remember that May 2019 is time for Local Elections to be held. Any qualifying resident who feels they could contribute to the work of the Town Council, or do it better, should urgently contact the Clerk for application papers so they can seek a proposer and seconder to their bid.

We require 15 councillors in total and it would be very pleasing to have enough candidates standing so that those chosen, despite their worth, were democratically elected rather than simply elected by default!

**741. REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES DURING 2018/19 AND THE TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT FOR 2019/2020**

The Town Clerk explained the report for the Town Council's financial activities during 2018/2019, including information regarding the Stotfold Christmas Lights, current use of the Simpson Centre, Investments and the General Power of Competence that the Town Council now holds. Additional information on grants awarded, free or discounted facilities hire and Councillor mileage claims were also included. The Town Clerk then explained the Precept calculation for 2019/2020.

A copy of the report appended to these minutes (appendix A) was provided to those present. There were no questions from those present.

**742. REPORT ON THE ELEEMOSYNARY CHARITY OF WILLIAM FIELD**

As Chairman of the Trustees of the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field, Councillor Mrs Hyde gave the following report.

In Stotfold we are fortunate that in the past, people such as William Field, Octavius Roe and Jane Brooks left money and land for the benefit of the residents of Stotfold. Originally these were administered by the Vicar and Church Wardens, but with the establishment of Parish Councils, some of the responsibilities were then shared by the Town Council and therefore they are answerable to the electors of Stotfold, which is why these accounts are presented to you tonight, as representatives of your community.

The Eleemosynary Charity is made up of a number of smaller charities, which over the last 20 years or so have been amalgamated. Our main source of income was derived from the sale of the old Brook Street Allotments where the new houses now stand. £390,000 was invested with CCLA, an investment company that specialises in investing for charities and churches. That capital sum has now grown to £545,053.17.

The Trustees of this Charity are 2 appointees from the Town Council, the Vicar and the two Church Wardens. The Town Council appoints their Trustees who then serve a 4 year term. The Vicar and Church Wardens serve for as long as they hold that office.

As well as the capital sum invested, the Charity has 8 acres of land on Common Road. Three acres have been returned to allotment land. The other 5 acres is currently being farmed for us. We also own some grazing land at a village called Stocking Pelham near Buntingford.

Further improvements to the allotments have been made, including tidying up the boundaries, putting in extra fencing and planting hedging around the 5-acre section.

Over the years we have distributed in excess of £70,000 to good causes in Stotfold. This year, grants have been made to young people to help them with their education, the Need Project that distributes food parcels, the Roecroft Centre to help with repairs, Stotfold Library, St Mary's School to provide enough tables so that each child in the class can have one during a lesson, Bowls Club at Stotfold and

Fairfield, Citizens Advice, Scouts and St Mary's Church to buy extra tables for the community coffee mornings.

Grants are made half yearly with the deadline for applications being at the end of June and the end of December. Application forms are available at the Town Council offices. If you know of any individual or organisation which might benefit from some funding for a project or a need, then please encourage them to apply.

It is good to know that over the years, the people of Stotfold have benefited from the generosity of benefactors of both money and land, and this year the Charity has received a request of £20,000 plus interest.

**743. ANNUAL POLICE REPORT FROM BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO STOTFOLD**

Due to operational restrictions, Bedfordshire Police were unable to send an Officer to this meeting, but PCSO Ann Jeeves provided a short report relating to Stotfold and Bedfordshire policing in general, which included:

The local Community team are based in Biggleswade and cover 26 parishes including Stotfold.

We have over the last year been looking at reports of Anti-Social behaviour (ASB) at the allotments, also in the car park area of the recreation ground off Malthouse Lane and problems in Baldock Road with cars parking at the bottom and youths in the woodland area.

Patrols were carried out at the locations and individuals spoken to (no offences were found). The ASB was addressed which included talking to occupants in the vehicles giving them advice, taking down a make shift tent/canopy in the woodland area and causing disruption to youth activity so they moved on.

Over the year we have attended the Remembrance Parade, Civic Service, have completed talks at the Scout and Brownie huts and worked with the local school.

We have a priority setting meeting every quarter where representatives from the Parish council are invited to attend and give concerns/priorities for their community. For members of the Community there is a very quick survey that allows you to submit your priorities for your area. Have your say on your Community's Priorities: Complete our survey:  
([www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/bedspolicehaveyoursay](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/bedspolicehaveyoursay))

You can follow us on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/northbedspolice](https://twitter.com/northbedspolice)) to see what work and engagements we are completing.

Sign up to Bedsalert which sends you an email regards incidents in your area, crime prevention etc. Sign up for [www.bedsalert.co.uk](http://www.bedsalert.co.uk) to receive Community Policing Updates.

We encourage all incidents of Anti-social Behaviour and Criminal Activity to be reported to Bedfordshire police via 101 or you may wish to use our new online reporting tool <https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/report/Report> which I am told works very well and is quick to use.

The Mayor advised that Town Councillor J Talbot regularly attends the Bedfordshire Police Priority Setting Meetings on behalf of the Town Council, and shares concerns of residents and the Council with the Police. Thanks were given to Councillor Talbot for his time in attending these meetings.

**744. REPORT FROM A CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCILLOR ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO STOTFOLD**

Central Beds Councillor S Dixon gave the following report:

As with our report of previous years, the biggest concern faced by many, is the spectre of development. Most residents we discuss these concerns with are acceptive of the need for development, but only when supported with a commiserate increase of appropriate infrastructure. It is pleasing therefore that the Local Plan submitted for consideration, has such a balance to it.

We have all suffered as a consequence of development forced upon us through the planning policy that favours developers, but equally accept the need for more homes in this part of the world. That's why it is essential we continue to push our Local Plan for an early adoption. Employment is often an area that suffers most in random development, so it is encouraging to see such an emphasis placed locally on areas such as RAF Henlow to be preserved for jobs. The cumulative impact on our roads is currently being reviewed in some detail and after an initial hiatus, the new rolling stock and timetable of the trains has been well received.

Much of what we do as your Ward Councillors goes unseen. Much attention has been turned to areas such as minimising the impact of development if approved, and as seen recently in Langford, where an application clearly wasn't buildable without significant disruption to residents, that involvement resulted in an application being rejected. Too much disruption has been caused to residents by construction work and we are leading the challenge to the authority to ensure a smoother delivery in the future. Similarly, much work occurred in rejecting an application for a Traveller site in the ward and finally the quashing of a Judicial Review of a similar application in Astwick.

A significant percentage of council tax is spent in areas that aren't particularly evident to residents. Some 60% of Central Bedfordshire Council's spend is in supporting the vulnerable, elderly and in children's services. Central Bedfordshire Council continues to evolve our relationship with the Health Service, recognising the pressures being faced by all those involved in primary and acute health care. Plans are being developed to create new Health Hubs across Central Bedfordshire in an effort to improve the frontline offer in the primary sector and reduce the pressure signposted to the acute facilities.

We have also seen a significant investment in frontline services across the authority in recent years. Starting with a new building in Flitwick, we are rolling out upgrades and new builds for residents in the leisure arena. These range from a new build in Dunstable to a refurb in Biggleswade and in other areas such as new football pitches secured from Section 106 agreements. It was a real pleasure to finally see the diggers roll on to the new Stotfold Football Club facility on Arlesey Road, after many years agreeing the deal between Central Bedfordshire Council, Stotfold Town Council and settle Housing. This facility together with the existing pitches at Etonbury, rear of the new Greenacres Centre and elsewhere provides an enviable level of facilities. It's also pleasing to be able to report that the final surfacing of the roads on the Greenacres development are scheduled to be completed this month, allowing them to be offered for adoption.

Central Bedfordshire Council have equally delivered an impressive number of new school places over the past few years. Since 2015, some 3,500 new places have been created, totalling over £60 million in spend. With nearly 90% of schools rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted, prospects for our children are improving daily, with our levels of those not in education, employment or training some 8% above the national average. Indeed a recent peer inspection concluded that Central Bedfordshire Council was well managed and in first class financial order.

One area that has affected us all has been the indiscriminate encampments on the highway verge across the area and the A507 in particular. The behaviour of one group who occupied an area on the A507 and elsewhere last year, was so appalling it triggered Central Bedfordshire Council applying to the High Court for an injunction against 11 named individuals from setting up unauthorised encampments anywhere in Central Bedfordshire over the following 2 years. Given the particular behaviour of those on the A507, we pushed for a permanent barrier to be installed which will prevent any such future incursion.

In addition to the roles as your Ward Councillors, we continue to promote the Stotfold, Langford and Fairfield ward through our various roles including Deputy Chairman of the Council and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children.

**745. GUEST SPEAKERS:**

**Nicola King, Grand Union Housing, Youth Participation Officer – working with young Stotfold residents.**

Nicola outlined recent work of the youth team.

What Stotfold Youth Involvement looks like

In June/July of this year, they worked one-to-one with children at Etonbury Academy and the Academy of Central Bedfordshire, carried out home and family visits and undertook community mentoring and detachment work. This could be out in the town on the streets, in our recreation areas, meeting and talking on benches, at the café, during the daytime and evening, and involves people between the ages of 8 and 24. Half term and summer projects include fitness in the parks, beauty, art.

They also undertook targeted work, looking at county lines and criminal exploitation, and followed up on reports of antisocial behaviour and monitored social media

Taking the opportunity to consult with young people is important, and 225 young people at Etonbury Academy completed a consultation in December. This found that outdoor education came up as a high priority, together with keeping fit.

NEETS (young people Not in Education, Employment or Training) are put through intensive employment programmes, aimed at 16 to 24 year olds, which identifies barriers to motivation, and provides training opportunities

Their work is very much linked to voluntary organisations, and work in partnership with housing associations, Locality, children's services, the Police and problem solving groups.

Mentoring & themes

The youth team have spent a lot of time in Stotfold over the summer. Unfortunately dealing with county lines produces intelligence, and this takes up a lot of time. Much of their work is based on referrals from other organisations, particularly where there is a concern over exploitation or those at risk. Other topics covered by the team include emotional understanding and development, behaviour understanding, parental issues, providing spaces where young people can be listened to, affirmation and value, understanding how to ask for help, self-esteem issues, self-harm issues, antisocial and criminal behaviour, mental health, perceptions, understanding actions, labelling, isolation, addressing risky behaviours, impact of social media, child sexual exploitation, gang related activity, drugs. The team work to change behaviours and to enable young people to make connections with the wider interventions available.

Youth involvement hours/impact on costs

Hours of youth work delivered in Stotfold since September 2018 = 359

Approximately 92+ young people have engaged with the youth team

Volunteer hours = 39 (x £8.50, saving £331.50)

Grand Union Youth Officer hours = 120 (x £25, saving £3,000)

In order to keep costs down and streamline the youth involvement service, we are looking at the best way to make the resources we have more streamlined. This looks at weekly hours of delivery, school based work and generic youth work provisions.

Achievements

The youth team are attending the TPAS awards in Manchester on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – shortlisted for Youth Mentoring Programme (TPAS is a national organisation that champions tenant’s voices and celebrates individuals/groups making a difference in their communities, by holding annual awards).

#### What next?

The team will be reviewing projects and activities, life skills work, exploitation awareness, producing a summer programme for 2019, sourcing further funding opportunities, streamlining policies and procedures, and recruiting volunteers.

Nicola and her team were thanked for their hard work. She was asked if general advice is available for parents/grandparents surrounding mental health and county lines. Families need to know how to speak to their children, talk about who they are with, where they are and what they are doing. With mental health, communication is key. With regard to county lines, there is a lot of information out there, research, training and literature is available online.

#### **Caroline Romans, Central Bedfordshire Council’s Project Officer for Leisure, Libraries and Countryside – Launch of Stotfold’s Green Wheel.**

Nearly 10 years ago, the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) worked with Stotfold and Arlesey Town Council’s to produce parish-level Green Infrastructure plans. Local consultation identified many access and environmental enhancements.

At a similar time, a Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan was produced for Biggleswade leading to development of the Biggleswade Green Wheel. This multi-user, off-road accessible corridor around the outside of the town was launched in March 2014, by which time the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and Central Bedfordshire Council had been approached by Stotfold Town Council regarding the possibility of a Green Wheel for this area. A review of the GI plans and discussions with Arlesey Town Council and Fairfield Parish Council suggested there was merit in exploring the possibility.

Stotfold Town Council kindly offered to host a Green Wheel steering group, comprising of the constituent Town and Parish Councils, Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and local volunteer groups. With funding from the key partners, including Central Bedfordshire Council and Stotfold Town Council, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity commenced the production of a Masterplan – in effect a feasibility report – to establish the potential for a Green Wheel.

Site surveys, mapping work and landowner discussions indicated that a circular walking route around the 3 communities, with Etonbury Wood as a central focal point, was indeed feasible.

The Etonbury Masterplan which was consulted on during summer 2017 and was then adopted by all key partners in 2018.

The Etonbury Green Wheel is being developed as a walking and cycling route around Arlesey, Fairfield and Stotfold; passing through and beside areas of landscape, heritage and wildlife interest. The Green Wheel is available now to be used as a walking route. The Green Wheel encircles local communities, with a number of access ‘spokes’ linking settlements to both the ‘rim’ of the Wheel and the ‘hub’ of the Wheel at Etonbury Wood. At present, the main walker’s route of the Green Wheel measures 10 miles / 16km.

Over the last 4 years, we have:

- surfaced 2.5km of paths, incl. 550m of new Bridleway at Etonbury Wood
- installed a number of benches; and 2 bridges at Etonbury Wood
- planted the Bedfordshire reference Orchard at Etonbury Wood
- installed a bird hide and extended boardwalk at Stotfold Mill Meadows NR
- funded orchard respiration works at Fairfield



- planted a hedge and small woodland at Astwick
- planted trees, shrubs wildflowers and created a pond at Etonbury Wood

These practical works have been funded through GI Planning Obligations grants from Central Bedfordshire Council, secured by the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity.

Further works are being undertaken to enable the route to be upgraded and used for cycling and horse riding.

We will be formally launching the Etonbury Green Wheel as a walker's route on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May at the Fox & Duck/ Etonbury Wood. There will be guided walks, a tour of Etonbury Wood, local group displays and refreshments provided by the Fox & Duck.

Ahead of the launch we will be:

- producing an Etonbury Green Wheel leaflet
- installing x7 Information boards
- installing x50 signpost arm

The full masterplan (plus the leaflet once it has been produced) can be found at <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/green-wheels/local.aspx>

#### **746. PRESENTATION OF THE CITIZENS AWARDS BY THE MAYOR**

Each year we ask for nominations for Citizens Awards, presented to individuals who have been nominated by others for their contribution to the community of Stotfold.

The Mayor presented each successful recipient in turn with their Citizen Award, congratulating them on behalf of the Town Council and their community.

#### **Mrs Clare Kilby**

These awards were first presented in 2011 and the first of tonight's awards go to the partner of one of those on the original list. This couple have often appeared as a double act, resulting in the production and raising of three sons while also supporting many activities around Stotfold, but they have also volunteered themselves in to multiple roles around the town within different organisations during the 50 years they have shared their home within our town.

But that's enough said about HIM and we should concentrate on the female side of this duo.

While the children were young, she enjoyed helping at the Play Group held in the Memorial Hall and for many years was also involved with the Stotfold Holiday Club. When their sons moved on to become pupils at Roecroft Lower School she became an active member of the Parent Teacher Association. As a Scout supporter over 40 years she has volunteered her time as a Beaver Leader, planning activities to occupy packs of 5-7-year olds, organising parties, trips, camp and the opportunities to earn the famous 'badges' to be worn with pride. She is also a member of the Scout Executive Group and Treasurer for the Cubs and Beavers!

The great American Statesman, Benjamin Franklin, apart from famously flying a kite in a thunderstorm also made many memorable quotes including; "If you want something done, ask a busy person". This could well be applied to our candidate who, apart from working for a living and tending to her own family, juggles her time between multiple activities with maximum effect.

She was an active member of the original Stotfold Theatre Group and, as Secretary and member of the Stotfold Christian Choir can often be seen as she lets rip, in dulcet tones of course, at concerts in Stotfold and the surrounding area.

She volunteered to work in Randall's Tea Rooms at the Mill when it first opened to the public and later became leader of the team of volunteer helpers who work on Sunday afternoons and throughout major event weekends. She manages the tea rooms, orders supplies and prepares items for sale while also taking bookings for private parties and visiting groups always ensuring that they continue to gain the Food Standards Agency 5-star hygiene rating. Her weekend begins early on Saturday mornings taking in deliveries to the Tea Room and setting up for the next day.

There can be no doubt that this lady, supported by and supporter of her husband Ray, has made and continues to make fantastic contributions to our community. With her ever ready smile, friendly nature and ability to put people at their ease she has ample qualities to be worthy of a Citizens Award.

#### **Mr Chris Murray**

The 25 nominations accepted over the last eight years have been involved with a wide range of interests covering both indoor and outside activities for people of all ages and abilities. One of the main reasons they have been nominated may well be that their example and enthusiasm shines out to others and inspires them to want to take part?

Some are relative 'loners' while others are much more 'team players' but what they all have in common is that their efforts effect and enhance our community and contribute to the feeling of belonging within the town.

Our next nominee is very much within the 'team player' category and has dedicated thousands of hours of his own free time, often putting great strain on family life, to providing our younger people with a sense of team spirit and responsibility through the game of football.

As a young father and an enthusiast for the game he, also involving his own family, joined others in coaching for the Stotfold Juniors back in 2006 and has seen many of his 'boy's' team progress all the way through to adult matches since then. With ever growing success he started a girls' team for under 6's and is still coaching them now as under 11's.

He was Vice Chairman for the Juniors for 6 years and then moved on to Chairman and through this time was very much instrumental in the development and growth of the club. He has earned the respect and admiration of both the team managers and players and, as said earlier, is one who manages to inspire them all to want to take part and improve their skills.

His passion and commitment to the Junior Football Club and team building skills with the individual team managers has doubled the number of teams to around 45 and players to around 650-60-70 or thereabouts with their numbers seemingly increasing at a faster rate than the population of China.

Finding enough space for the complex permutations of pitch sizes, team ages and genders to be able to play locally and in all weathers remains a difficulty but that is what he and the other managers have been juggling with always so we hope their joint enthusiasm will continue to make the Club ever more successful.

#### **747. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR**

##### **John Talbot (Councillor), Brook Street**

Asked whether there had been any progress following his comments at last years meeting on the roundabout at the junction of Brook Street and Hitchin Road. Councillor B Saunders said Central Beds Council was aware of the dangers presented by this junction, they have visited the site, but no plans had yet been produced. He will follow up this enquiry.

##### **Liz Anderson, Common Road**

Asked if, when producing plans for the new proposed Pix Road Academy, was consideration given to safe routes to school? Will pupils at the Academy be able to use the pitches on Arlesey Road

(recreation ground)? She was advised by Councillor Collier that the Pix Brook Academy website is up and running, and has a document outlining recent developments and a timeline for development work. The temporary site on the Etonbury Academy site is already being built. An application for a permanent site will be submitted at the end of April 2019, determination will be during July 2019, and if approved, construction will start in September 2019. The website does refer to potential transport problems, and there will be a designed road through to the school, however no detailed plans are available yet. At that point, the Town Council can raise their concerns regarding pupil safety. With regard to use of the public recreation area on Arlesey Road, although they do have a large playing field within their site, they could ask the Town Council for permission to use this space.

Central Beds Councillor S Dixon advised that local authorities cannot build new schools, this is a BEST project (Bedfordshire Schools Trust). He felt that even a small number of cars accessing the school site may cause congestion, as exemplified by Etonbury Academy which was not designed to accommodate cars. As the new academy will share the access with the Football Club and public recreation ground site, the entrance from Arlesey Road will need to ensure that traffic is slowed down at this point.

Andy Bainbridge, Common Road

Referred to the December 2018 minutes of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee, which stated that there would be an increase to use of football pitches at £100 per team. He advised that the frequency of matches/training for young teams is less than older teams. He referred to their charges to each player at £60 per year.

He stated that the Council cuts the grass on recreation areas, but the Junior Football Club mark out the pitches. He felt that he had already paid for the grass to be cut through his Council Tax, and the Club shouldn't be paying the proposed fees to cover this.

He queried whether a 3G pitch was being put in at Arlesey Road, and was advised that it was not, and that the nearest 3G pitch was at Etonbury Academy.

He was reminded that the Junior Football Club has not been charged for use of pitches at the Arlesey Road site since its construction, and this would remain the same until the construction of the new Football Club stadium facility is complete. The current charging basis to the Juniors is very difficult to administer as the Town Council is not kept up to date on total pitch use. At Arlesey Road, there is an area which is a drained pitch, and this requires significantly more maintenance than typical recreation grass areas, therefore is more expensive to maintain. He was reminded that the minutes he referred to state a suggested charge of 'say £100 per team ...' – this is not set and requires discussion with the Club.

Mr Bill Cutler, Hyde Avenue

Reported footways in Hyde Avenue being restricted due to overgrowth. This has recently been cleared, however the damaged path was never resurfaced and now has cars parked on it. He reported a lorry which repeatedly parks on the footway and grass verge, which prevents access along the footway. Brook Street also has a poor surface footway, which needs resurfacing outside the Bowls Club. Councillor S Dixon advised that he would look into the two matters of poor surfacing in Hyde Avenue and Brook Street. With regard to parking issues, this is a Police matter, particularly where a vehicle is causing an obstruction or danger to pedestrians.

Mr Cutler then proposed a vote of thanks to the Council and speakers at this evening's meeting.

There being no further questions the Mayor thanked all present for attending the meeting and closed the meeting at 9.42pm

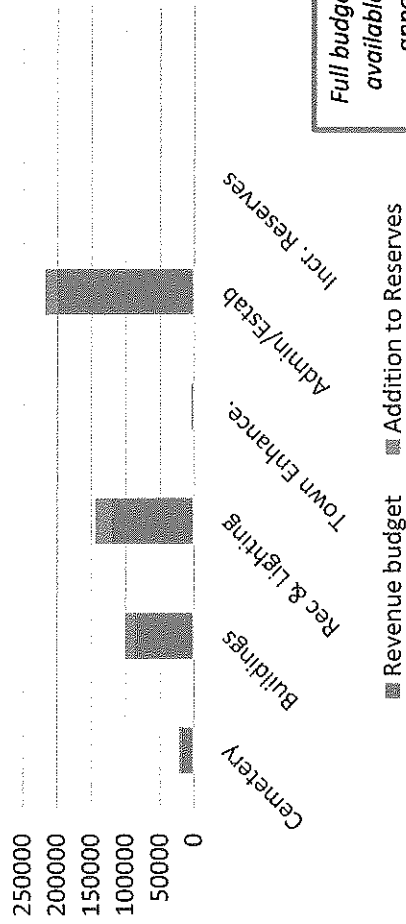
CHAIRMAN

DATED

# FINANCIAL REPORT – ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – MARCH 2019

The Precept is set each year by Parish/Town Councils as part of their annual budgeting process and is collected on behalf of those Councils by Central Bedfordshire Council through your Council Tax bill. The level of Precept depends on the nature and scope of the Council's activities – funds determined through budgeting process.

Committee budgets 2019/2020  
Revenue & Reserves



Full budget figures are available to view by appointment

## Notes:

Cemetery – reduction in overall costs due to a review of estimated income from burials, rights of burial purchases, memorials, etc

Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting – additional funds to include ongoing drained pitch maintenance at Arlesey Road, reserves to extend car park at Riverside Playing Field

Administration/Establishment – additional funds include a sum towards Youth Provider to enhance youth provision, Clerk of Works to monitor Arlesey Road project, Stotfold Christmas Lights

An annual budget review is carried out, taking into account running costs of new assets to be transferred to the Town Council, the addition of new Town Council assets, continuation of services on behalf of other authorities, together with taking on new services and responsibilities usually covered by other authorities.

## Precept Comparison

2019/2020	£486,171
2018/2019	£470,434
2017/2018	£461,040

## Band D charge comparison

£149.68 per year (41p per day)
£146.42 per year (40p per day)
£143.27 per year (39p per day)

2019/2020 = 1p per day  
increase on last year (Band D)

## GRANTS

We invite applications from organisations in the town, for financial support for projects/purchases which will benefit the community of Stotfold. In 2018/2019 we awarded the following grants:

Grant awarded

• Autism Bedfordshire	fun sessions and summer schemes	£200
• Revitalise Respite Holidays	3 breaks for disabled and carers	£1,000
• Whitbread Wanderbus Ltd	towards new 16 seater low floor bus	£4,000
• Roecroft Centre Charitable Trust	repair and replacement of two security doors	£768
• Friends of Roecroft Lower School	purchase of stage curtains for school	£1,500
• Magpas Air Ambulance	purchase of fuel for Air Ambulance helicopter	£1,000
• Stotfold Scout Group	purchase of two CADAC gas barbecues	£450
• Keech Hospice Care	towards costs to provide 24hr children's advice line	£500
• Royal British Legion	Poppy Appeal – poppy wreaths for Remembrance Sunday	£175
• Royal British Legion	donation for Silent Silhouette for end of WW1 centenary	£250
	<b>TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED</b>	<b>£9,843</b>

## ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Teasel (environmental volunteer group) – work carried out on behalf of Town Council at Centenary Wood  
 Youth Participation Team (Grand Union Housing) – to enhance youth provision for Stotfold  
 Etonbury Green Wheel – contribution as project stakeholder

£1,500	budgeted 2018/2019
£10,000	budgeted 2018/2019
£1,500	budgeted 2018/2019

## FREE OR DISCOUNTED HIRE SESSIONS

Throughout the year we also receive requests for free or discounted hire sessions of our facilities. Free or discounted sessions will only be granted for non-commercial, educational, cultural or charitable purposes, must have no compulsory charge and must be a commensurate benefit to Stotfold residents. During 2018/2019 we granted the following free or discounted hire sessions:

• Stotfold Good Neighbour Group – chair-based exercises, Fridays in the rear hall of the Memorial Hall for the financial year period	<u>cost to Council</u>
• Salvation Army Band – Christmas Concert in aid of the The Need Project, December 2018, Oak Hall and Maple Room at Greenacre Centre	£1,638 (free let)
• Christmas Fayre Committee – Community Christmas Fayre in aid of Stotfold Scout Group, November 2018, Memorial Hall and rear hall	£185 (free let)
• NHS Blood & Transport – blood donation sessions, Oak Hall at Greenacre Centre, 10 sessions	£180 (free let)
• Disney experience for seriously ill young resident – Oak Hall at Greenacre Centre	£1,600 (discounted)
	£192 (discounted)
	<b>£3,795</b>

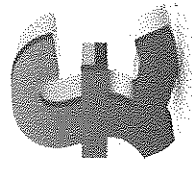
**TOTAL COST TO COUNCIL FOR FREE/DISCOUNTED HIRE SESSIONS TO BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY**

## COUNCILLOR MILEAGE

During 2018/2019, Council agreed to pay mileage to Councillors (when claimed) for attendance at meetings or training sessions outside the Parish, where so authorised to attend by the Council.

Mileage claimed 2018/2019:	
Councillor John Talbot	£68.40
Councillor Satinderjit Dhaliwal	£47.70

# Financial activities during 2018/2019

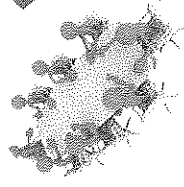


## Investments

Council currently holds around £500,000 in its reserves. Most of which is held for specific purposes 'Earmarked Reserves'. An additional £300,000 was given to the Town Council by developers as Section 106 (planning gain) contributions for ongoing maintenance and other specific purposes related to the new Pix Brook Play Area and the Greenacre Centre.

The Town Council is therefore looking to ensure that it makes best use of the funds it holds, and is seeking to invest some of that money held. To do that, Council is currently undergoing a process to establish its attitude to risk, before seeking advice from an independent financial advisor and sourcing the most suitable investment opportunities available.

As part of this process, Council has also adopted a Financial Reserves Strategy, which identifies the types of reserves held by the Council, how they will be determined and how the levels are reviewed.



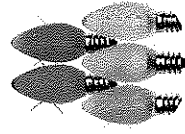
## General Power of Competence

In early 2018/2019 financial year, the Council resolved that it was eligible to adopt the General Power of Competence (GPC). The conditions for eligibility are set out in a statutory instrument, but in summary, require Council to meet a relevant electoral mandate and confirm that it has an appropriately qualified Clerk.

Councils with GPC no longer need to ask whether they have a specific power to act. The GPC gives local authorities "*the power to do anything that individuals may generally do*" as long as they don't break other laws.

This means that when Stotfold Town Council considers expenditure against a project, purchase or service, as long as it meets the rules of GPC, it may act. Similarly, when Council considers awarding grants to local organisations in its twice yearly grant application process, it no longer has to rely on a specific power set down in statute. This gives more scope to benefit the community.

# Financial activities during 2018/2019

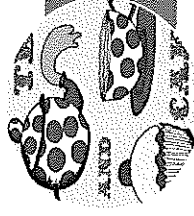


## Stotfold Christmas Lights

In December 2018, we held the town's 4<sup>th</sup> Christmas Lights Switch On event. The Christmas Lights Committee continued to work hard throughout the year to encourage new businesses to join the town's display, buying additional sets of lights where required.

We are very lucky to have the support of Baldock Rotary, who have donated many of our lighting panels and have provided their knowledge and expertise from setting up displays in Baldock.

Each year we continue to look to expand the displays, however provision of lights, erection and dismantling of them, and the switch on event itself all comes at a cost. During the 2018/2019 financial year, we have added to the Christmas Lights funds by holding a very popular quiz night, donation tins at various businesses around the town and donations from those businesses. Our newest attempt to raise funds asks people to make a donation in return for a second hand book – see our office foyer! The Town Council has also agreed to put £3,000 into the funds this year, which greatly helps with the ongoing costs.



## Use of Simpson Centre (Café)

During the 2017/2018 financial year, the Town Council left their Simpson Centre base and relocated to the Greenacre Centre.

This left vacant rooms, which we still had to heat and keep secure to prevent deterioration, whilst the Council determined the future use of this section of the building.

During 2018/2019, the Town Council agreed to lease some of the vacant rooms to a local café/cake making business.

This made best use of the vacant space, securing an income where there would only have been cost and empty rooms, whilst helping a local business expand from a home business to lovely new premises enjoyed by the community.

# **ELEEMOSYNARY CHARITY OF WILLIAM FIELD (Charity No. 254219)**

## **INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

**FOR THE YEAR 1st JANUARY 2018 TO 31ST DECEMBER 2018.**

	£		£
<b>INCOME</b>			
Investment Income Account	b/f	Grants	14273.48
Current Account	b/f	Insurance	177.06
		<b>Allotment Expenses:</b>	
Investment Acc. Interest	19010.16	Management Charge & Photocopying	1199.25
Investment Dividends (a)	28.00	Water	419.61
Rents (b)	285.00	Purchases and works carried out	11378.64
Allotment Rents	267.00		12997.50
Frank Hyde Bequest	£20,068.59	Clerks' Expenses	43.70
		<b>Investment Income Account</b>	
		B/Fwd	17,887.69
		Interest	19,010.06
		Transfers to Current Account	-22000.00
		Balance c/fwd	14897.85
		Current Account c/fwd	23875.13
			<b>66264.72</b>

## **Notes:-**

- a Black Rock dividends (4 x £7)
- b Rent bequeathed land nr. Buntingford

## **Fixed Assets:-**

Deposit account. This money invested in a CCLA Income Fund ( 38045.9 units £545,053.17 bid market value) PERMANENT ENDOWMENT  
 £10000 from interest invested in a CCLA Accumulate fund (118.77 units £18,329.42 bid market value)  
 Poots Land 5 acres  
 Poots Allotment 3 Acres  
 350,060 shares BlackRock Common Investment  
 Part share in land managed by Biggleswade Charities.

## **Trustees:-**

## **Auditor:-**

Mrs. J. Hyde, Rev. W. Britt, Mr. M. Charsley, Mr. S. Hayes, & Mr. H. Pickering.

Mr. B. Every

I have examined the above books and found them to be correct.

Signed..... Dated.....

7.2.19