Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on Friday 29th April 2022 at 16.00hrs in the Council Chamber at Shefford House, 15 High Street, Shefford, SG17 5DD or viewed using www.zoom.us

Present: Cllrs Ken Pollard, Rene Madsen, Den Fensome, Fred Wilson, Roger Fowler, Paul Mackin, and Steve Nash.

One member of the public.

Town Clerk: F Fitch and C Quinlan (Admin Assistant)

On Zoom: Cllrs Tony Dawson, Lisa Hayes, Jez Perkins and June Wischhusen.

Ward Cllrs Mark Liddiard and Anthony Brown.

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllr Elsa Tattersfield and Nicola King.

2. **Declarations of interest:** none declared

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 25th March 2022 were approved and signed by the Chair. The Zoom recording of the meeting was agreed to be deleted.

4. **Matters arising**
   No matters arising.

5. **Public Question Time**
   No questions received.

6. **Central Bedfordshire Council**
   AB reported that the "Schools for the Future" programme for Shefford has been delayed until 2025 to ensure all schools can move to a two-tier system at the same time. Robert Bloomfield Academy and Samuel Whitbread Academy will both be converted to secondary schools, Shefford Lower School, along with the Hitchin Road school when it opens, will become primary schools and Campton Lower School will close. Ninety three percent of children received their first choice in terms of their placement at lower school and middle school from applications made in October and January.
   The planning application regarding the footpath access for the proposed Ivel Road industrial site development is returning for a second appeal.
   The remaining section of the Bury Road footpath will be resurfaced up to the junction with Clifton Road by the summer holidays this year.
   A survey of the High Street carriageway adjacent to the War Memorial has been carried out to determine what needs to be done to eliminate the puddling. An order has been placed for a three-month delivery for this work.
   The junction between the High Street and Northbridge Street will be resurfaced in the next three months.

The western side of the footpath in Southfields leading down to the Health Centre will be resurfaced in the current financial year. This is to provide a safe route to school in both directions. A survey of the eastern side of the footpath will be carried out by the Highways Team in the next two years.

It is proposed to improve the Ampthill Road traffic cushions by raising their height to the maximum allowance and extending their length across the road, adding a third cushion in the centre of the road where the road widens by the garage.

The pollution problem regarding the Dalchini Spice restaurant has been addressed; AB has asked for Central Bedfordshire Council's Pollution Team to revisit this issue in two months' time.

Central Bedfordshire Council has been awarded £4.9m from the Government's Shared Prosperity Funding to help local communities grow and thrive. Officers are working on how the money can be spent across Central Bedfordshire to fund improvements to places where people live, and support individuals and businesses. Further updates will be sent out once more proposals and consultations are completed.

The new round of the Ward Councillor Grant Scheme is available, together with the Community Grant Scheme. In addition, there is also the Inspiring Volunteers Grant Scheme, where local volunteers can apply for funding of up to £1k to support residents in Central Bedfordshire; the scheme runs from 20th April to 20th May. ML will email FF details of this scheme.

A year ago, Central Bedfordshire Council set up two arms-length companies: "Care is Central" and "New Vista Homes". Geraint Williams has just been appointed as managing director of Care is Central, which can bid for independent living schemes contracts to ensure service continuity alongside commercial bidders. To meet housing needs, New Vista Homes has set a target to deliver five hundred homes over the next five/six years built on Council-owned land, or land the Council has the opportunity of owning. The drive is to develop homes that are more affordable and below the private market rental in terms of letting them to local people.

ML and AB have received the health and fitness survey report commissioned by Shefford Sports Club from a sports consultancy company. The survey was conducted around the demand for health and fitness facilities in the town. These facilities are severely needed in the town, due to the town's growth in recent years. This has also been identified in the Council's Built Leisure Facility Strategy for the town. The report has come back very positive and reaffirmed in greater detail what was identified in the strategy, in terms of people wanting to keep themselves fit while not travelling outside of the town to access those kinds of facilities/leisure centres. The feasibility survey is being reviewed by the Council and Shefford Sports Club, which will then progress to a public consultation to gauge the support and demand for the facility.

PM reported that the Town Council had a very positive meeting with Highways Officers on the High Street improvement works. They also surveyed Ivel Road: the overgrown hedge that Council will contact the owner about cutting back, and the poor resurfacing of the road and bad workmanship on the verge reinstatement. The Council will contact the companies to return and make good their work, which may be left until the ground softens up in late winter next year, to topsoil and seed it.

The panels covered in graffiti on the bus shelter at the corner of Southfield will be replaced.
AB reported that it is proposed to install a raised table pedestrian crossing outside Samuel Whitbread Academy as part of planning application CB/20/04642/OUT.

7. Crime

There were twenty recorded offences in the first twenty-eight days of April 2022. A summary of offences include: ten instances of making off without payment; two instances of assault; three instances of malicious communications or harassment; four instances of theft or burglary; and one instance of a sexual nature. There were no reported instances of criminal damage or drug-related instances. RF reminded councillors that, most probably, there will be no identified offender due to the nature of the crimes reported. ML enquired about the nature of the two residential burglaries; RF clarified that the burglaries were residential homes as opposed to outbuildings. RF recommended ML contact the Community Policing Team at Bedfordshire Constabulary for more detailed information; ML confirmed he would do this and inform members of the findings via email.
KP suggested that the lower rate of crime might coincide with the two high profile Community Engagement/Action Days held in April including representatives from Bedfordshire Police and the Community Safety Team from Central Bedfordshire Council.

8. Town Mayor's Announcements

The report was distributed to Councillors and included: the launch of the Shefford Mayor Facebook page; a reminder to all councillors about posting appropriately on their personal social media; the proposed nominations for the Shefford Community Awards and the Mayor's attendance at events (excluding normal council meetings) in April 2022.

9. Shefford Youth Involvement

SN reported the Youth Involvement Team delivered a two weeklong "Spring 4ward into Easter" activity programme for children and young people. The sessions, many delivered at the Hub, included open access, the Hive junior club, sports mentoring, fitness, games, and bath bomb workshops. Although quieter than usual, sessions were still well-attended with fifty children/young people, together with parents.
The Youth Team continue to offer support for the young people in schools, communities or at home with one-to-one or group mentoring.
The multi-agency TREE (Tackling, Reducing and Ending Exploitation) project took place over three sessions in Shefford, using Youth Hub as a base. The project was thought to be productive and will be left open for further development/sessions.
The Team's summer programme is currently under development and has yet to be anointed a name.
SN attended on behalf of the Team at the Community Action Day on Friday 22nd April, and although there weren't many questions posed by the public, the event provided an excellent networking opportunity with Bedfordshire Police, Central Bedfordshire Council's Community Safety Team, the NHS and in particular, the

Bedfordshire and Luton Recovery College. The College is part of the Bedfordshire Mental Health Academy, which is a formal partnership with the East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) and the University of Bedfordshire. The college is open to any adults who live or work in Bedfordshire and Luton. Their courses and workshops focus on mental health wellbeing and recovery and are all free of charge. It is possible they will be involved in the Shefford Summer Programme.

10. Planning and Highways

A report on the committee meeting held on 6th April 2022 was approved for publication on the website. It was reported that, regarding the application CB/22/01008/FULL, a free standing Automated Teller Machine is to be installed inside the store.

11. Services and Environment

A report on the committee meeting held on 13th April 2022 was approved for publication on the website, and the recommendations were approved as follows:

Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to raise an order to Ben Marshall Electrical Ltd to carry out all the works recommended in the ECIR carried out in March to ensure the electrical wiring in Shefford House is compliant with current legislation.

Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to raise an order to Ben Marshall Electrical Ltd to carry out all the required electrical work including upgrading the lights, repairs to the flush system, and installing an independent connection from the toilet block to power the Christmas Lights.

12. Finance and Strategy

A report on the committee meeting held on 20th April 2022 was approved for publication on the website, and the recommendation was approved as follows:

Recommendation to be made by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to set up a new Standing Committee, Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green Trust Committee, at this year's Annual Meeting of the Town Council. The Committee will comprise of a minimum of four Councillors, together with two members of the Shefford Greenspace Conservation Group.

13. Town Clerk's report

The report was distributed to Councillors and included: works carried out in Shefford House; the new planting in the Town Centre shrub beds, together with the watering of the roses in the raised bricked planter Pamoli Square, and the newly planted trees at Waterside, Campton and Shefford Cemetery and Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green; the Shefford Greenspace Conservation Group working party on Saturday 9th April 2022 to tidy up the untended graves in Campton & Shefford Cemetery and the subsequent cemetery working party on Friday 20th May; the popularity of the newly refurbished play areas at St Michael's and Bellcote Meadow; the summer edition of

Newsline, with the many articles submitted by students from the Robert Bloomfield Academy; the Community Action Day in Pamoli Square on 22nd April 2022; the Green Flag judging of Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green; and the upcoming events, including the Annual Town Meeting on 19th May 2022, and the Annual General Meetings of the Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green Trust and the Shefford Greenspace Conservation Group.

14. Accounts

The list of payments for April 2022 was circulated to Councillors and approved.

Meeting closed 17:20hrs

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee held on 4th May 2022 at 16.00hrs using www.zoom.us

Present: Cllrs Fred Wilson (Chair), Roger Fowler, Ken Pollard, Rene Madsen, Paul Mackin, June Wischhusen and Lisa Hayes.

Town Clerk: F Fitch and C Quinlan (Admin Assistant)

1. **Apologies:** none received.

2. **Declarations of interest:** none declared.

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 6th April 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed digitally by the Chair. The Zoom recording was agreed to be deleted.

4. **Public Question Time:** no questions received.

5. **A00208 – Goods Vehicle Loading Bay**
   It was reported that it was resolved by Delegated Powers to support the proposal to introduce a Goods Vehicle Loading Only Bay from Monday to Saturday between 09:00 to 18:00hrs on the High Street, south side, from a point approximately 5 metres north-west of the junction with Old Bridge Way (where the layby begins) and extending in a westerly direction for approximately 24 metres (up to where the layby ends).

6. **Plans for Consideration**

   CB/22/01141/FULL
   19 George Street, Shefford, SG17 5BS
   Proposal: Conversion of existing garage into habitable place.

   It was resolved by Delegated Powers to support this application with the comment that the drawings submitted were very poor, with no mention of any groundworks/services for the connection to the foul sewer.

   CB/22/01344/FULL
   9 Viking Meadow, Shefford, SG17 5GR
   Proposal: Demolition of existing porch, and erection of enclosed porch on larger footprint.

   It was resolved by Delegated Powers to support this application.

   CB/22/01104/FULL
   14 Old Bridge Way, Shefford, SG17 5HQ.
   Proposal: Erection of storage building with covered link to existing building.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to support this application.

7. **CB/21/01286/VOC**
   A notice of appeal for planning application Ref no: CB/21/01286/VOC (unit 3,5 & 7 Ivel Road, Shefford, SG17 5JU – variation of condition numbers 2 and 12 of planning permission CB/19/04226/FULL; appeal reference APP/P0240/W/20/3260426) was reviewed by the Committee.

   It was resolved by Delegated Powers that the Council's objections to this application are still pertinent, and the representation should not be modified or withdrawn.

8. **Statement of Community Involvement**
   The information that a six-week consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement commenced on 19th April 2022, with the deadline for comments being 10:00hrs 1st June 2022, was received by the Committee and noted.

Meeting closed 16:40hrs

Minutes of the meeting of the Services and Environment Committee held on 11th May 2022 at 16.00hrs using www.zoom.us

Present: Cllrs June Wischhusen (Chair), Ken Pollard, Rene Madsen, Paul Mackin, Tony Dawson, Den Fensome and Elsa Tattersfield.

Town Clerk: F Fitch and C Quinlan (Admin Assistant)

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllr Jez Perkins.

2. **Declarations of interest:** none declared.

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the committee on 13th April 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed digitally by the Chair. The Zoom recording of the meeting was agreed to be deleted.

4. **Public Question Time:** no questions received.

5. **Communications**
   It was reported that the summer edition of the Newsline is currently being distributed to residents. The feedback received from Mrs Burt by the Journalist Group from Robert Bloomfield Academy who 'took over' the edition was "I cannot tell you how thrilled the pupils have been with the Newsline articles, they were so proud!".
   The following on the Council's Instagram page has increased to two hundred and seventy three.
   It was reported that the set of seven 'Jubilee Postcards' will be launched and go on sale at the Jubilee Summer Fun Day at a promotional price, with all profits going to fund more play area improvements in the town.

6. **Parks and Open Spaces**
   The report on the parks and open spaces, including play areas, their inspections, and any repairs necessary was reviewed by the committee including: a quotation to install additional grass mats at St Michael's Close play area; match funding of an application to the Inspiring Volunteers Grant scheme for the Shefford Greenspace Conservation Group; approval to order a metal pull-up bar from an alternative manufacturer for installation in Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green; a quotation for the re-pollarding of two crack willows in Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green; a quotation for the removal of fallen branches and dead wood on the banks at Waterside; and a quotation for the trees works at Waterside as recommended in the Tree Safety Reinspection Survey carried out in March 2022.

   It was resolved by Delegated Powers to raise an order to CPM Playgrounds to install additional grass mats to cover the worn areas on the mound at St Michael's Close play area to stop soil erosion.

   Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to the Finance and Strategy Committee to match fund an application by the Shefford Greenspace

Conservation Group to the Inspiring Volunteers Grant Scheme to purchase a battery powered long-handled hedge trimmer.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers that if the quotation received is on budget, an order is raised to Clydebuilt Fitness for the manufacturer and supply of a metal pull-up bar for installation in Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green. This order will replace one made to Incite Fitness in July 2021 (they have not fulfilled the order). The pull-up bar will be installed by CPM Playgrounds Ltd.

Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to raise an order to Branching Out Tree and Garden Services to re-pollard the two crack willows near the car park entrance to the flower meadow in Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to raise an order to GD Maintenance and Cleaning Services to remove fallen branches and dead wood on the riverbank at Waterside to allow the safe cutting of the grass along the banks.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to raise an order to Branching Out Tree and Garden Services to remove major deadwood (over 50mm diameter) from the centre of the Lombardy Poplar in Waterside, nearest to the Northbridge Street entrance to the site. This work was recommended in the Tree Safety Reinspection Survey carried out in March 2022.

7. Shefford House

The report on Shefford House was distributed to committee members including the review of quotations for the painting of the external front windows and the purchase of a carpet/upholstery cleaner.

Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to raise an order to W Firkins and Partners Ltd to paint the external front windows (ground floor only).

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to purchase a carpet/upholstery cleaner similar to that previously hired to make the cleaning process more cost and resource efficient with the anticipated increase in tenants. The equipment will also be used to clean the carpets/upholstery at the Hub.

8. Solar Together Bedfordshire

The invitation to apply to register for Solar Together Bedfordshire to install renewable technology on the Council's buildings was reviewed by the Committee.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to register for the Solar Together Bedfordshire scheme to install renewable technology (solar panels) on Shefford House, the Chapel at Campton and Shefford Cemetery, the Youth Hub

at Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green and the Public Toilets. The application is free and without obligation.

Meeting closed 17:12hrs

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Strategy Committee held on 18th May 2022 at 16.00hrs using www.zoom.us

Present: Cllrs Tony Dawson (Chair), Ken Pollard, Rene Madsen, Paul Mackin, Fred Wilson, June Wischhusen and Roger Fowler.

Town Clerk: F Fitch and C Quinlan (Admin Assistant)

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllr Jez Perkins.

2. **Declarations of interest:** none declared.

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 20th April 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed digitally by the Chair. The Zoom recording of the meeting was agreed to be deleted.

4. **Public Question Time:** no questions received.

5. **Bank Reconciliations**
   The bank reconciliations for April 2022 were reviewed by TD prior to the meeting and approved. The petty cash was also counted by TD prior to the meeting and approved. It was reported that the gross rate of interest on the Council's instant access savings account increased by another 0.05% to 0.35% on 6th May 2022. A transfer of £25k has been made from the instant access savings account to the current account to cover the payments due to be made in May 2022.

6. **Community Action Day**
   The feedback received during the Community Action Day held on 22nd April 2022 was distributed to the Committee and reviewed.

7. **Community Safety Action Plan and Summary**
   The final draft of the Shefford Town Council Community Safety Action Plan and Summary was distributed to the Committee and reviewed.

   Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council for the adoption of the Shefford Town Council Community Safety Action Plan and Summary.

8. ***Inspiring Volunteers Grant Scheme***
   The recommendation from the Services and Environment Committee to match fund an application by the Shefford Greenspace Conservation Group to the Inspiring Volunteers Grant Scheme to purchase a battery powered long-handled hedge trimmer was reviewed by the Committee.

   It was resolved by Delegated Powers to match fund the Shefford Greenspace Conservation Group's application to the Inspiring Volunteers Grant Scheme to

purchase a Stihl HLA66 long-reach cordless hedge trimmer from Tudor Environmental Ltd, with two batteries and a charger. It was acknowledged that the use of a battery powered hedge trimmer will give the volunteers greater flexibility in carrying out the cutting of the hedges in Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green and other work around the town's green spaces.

9. Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2022

The report on the income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2022, together with an explanation of variances for actual against budget was distributed to the Committee and reviewed. It was reported that the possible overspend for Administration costs, as stated at the nine months to 31 December 2021, has not materialised as the costs for the registration of land title BD 335995 will be incurred in the financial year 2022/23, wherein a budget has been set to cover this expenditure.

10. Interim Internal Audit

It was reported that the queries raised in the interim internal audit for the 2021/2022 financial year mainly relate to the non-compliance of the Transparency Code, which will be remedied when the new website is launched. To speed up the process leading up to the launch, and to ensure that the legislative data of the new website is live and available for review as part of the external audit process, it is proposed to engage additional support to Council staff in order to upload the necessary documents and populate the web pages.

11. VAT

It was reported that the Special 126 VAT return for the year ended 31st March 2022 is ready for submission to the HMRC.

12. Financial Statements and Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2022

The Financial Statements and Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2022, together with an analysis of the Earmarked Reserve Funds were distributed to the Committee and reviewed. The Clerk gave an explanation of the differences between the 2020/21 and 2021/22 figures on the income and expenditure report and the balance sheet. It was reported that after transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves totalling £35.5k, there was a net underspend at the end of the year of £5.5k, which will be absorbed into the General Reserves Fund. TD noted that the Earmarked Reserve Funds and the accompanying analysis gave clarity on how the Council's Reserves were allocated to committed projects, replacement equipment/furniture, and future/unplanned works. KP noted that the General Reserves Fund is now operating at fifty percent of the running costs of the Council.

Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to approve the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

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Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Meeting closed 17:26hrs