Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on Friday 26th March 2021 using www.zoom.us

Present: Cllrs Paul Mackin (Chair), Den Fensome, Jez Perkins, June Wischhusen, Rene Madsen, Richard Orman, Roger Fowler, Fred Wilson and Tony Dawson.

Ward Cllrs Anthony Brown and Mark Liddiard, and one member of the public.

Town Clerk: F Fitch and C Quinlan (Business Admin Apprentice)

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllrs Steve Nash, Lisa Hayes, Ken Pollard, Elsa Tattersfield and Nicola King.

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

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 26th February 2021 were approved and signed digitally by the Chair. The Zoom recording of the meeting was agreed to be deleted.

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

5. **Public Question Time**
   PM reported that he had received an email and then spoken at length on the phone to a resident about issues with the new commercial tenant operating from the premises in 139 Clifton Road, the site that had a planning application submitted (withdrawn by the applicant) for change of use from oil storage to a coach depot. The concerns are around the road haulage equipment using the premises, collection and batching of waste, noise and odour pollution from the operations (including foul language from staff/contractors), and the traffic congestion and parking in Clifton Road and surrounding residential roads.
   ML reported that the site already has planning permission for commercial storage and storage activities, and KN Circet, a company that provides telephone poling and ducting systems for British Telecoms, has taken out a commercial lease on the site. Apart from the laying of hard standing over a grassed open space area at the back of the site, the company have not broken any planning rules with their activities; they also adhered to the order issued by the Planning Enforcement Team to remove the hard standing and temporary storage from the grassed open area. The key issues that residents have been raising with ML are around noise (diggers, lorry removals, particularly reversing buzzers), highways (parking around the entrance to the site) and smells emanating from the site (creosoting/coating of telegraph poles).
   The Pollution Team at Central Bedfordshire Council have issued a noise abatement order with regards to the hours of work they can operate from the site. The noise monitoring equipment, installed around the site for the last two weeks, has just been removed, and the data will be reviewed by Officers; this will determine the next steps to be taken.

ML has also spoken with the Police Community Team about the inappropriate parking of vehicles outside the site and with Samuel Whitbread Academy, as concerns have been raised about the safety of children from vehicles delivering to the site.

6. Central Bedfordshire Council

ML reported on the six monthly review with the Highways Team: Bury Road and Ashdown Road will be included in next year's schedule for resurfacing; the delivery for the resurfacing of Oakwood Road is being looked into, as the surface is beyond repair by patching; the use of the 'Fix My Street' system is proving very effective; the drain outside the Fish and Chip shop has been cleared, and it is hoped CBC will carry out a complete sweep of all the drains in the High Street; the new signpost has been installed at the junction with Old Station Way; and the Ward Councillors are fighting hard for Highways Improvements to be delivered in the town.

ML has been working with residents in Clifton Road and Purcell Way, whose gardens were flooded earlier this year due to a burst drain. Drainage Engineers have investigated the drainage system flowing from the allotments, through Hitchin Road into Clifton Road and the Composers Estate and then into the drainage ditch in Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green, to prevent flooding happening again: they have carried out repairs to a broken culvert.

A plan has been drawn up by Lydnsey Bignell, one of the Countryside Officers at Central Bedfordshire Council, for proposed improvements funded by Section 106 monies to Walkers Green and the adjacent land linking the site to the Camptons Fields Estate. The first stage of these proposals will be to improve the footpaths.

Discussions have taken place with the Leisure Team on the proposed Community Forest allocated for Shefford which will be funded by the Section 106 agreement with Redrow Plc and located at the top of Lime Field. FW asked for a footpath to be created to link the Community Forest to the Airman Pub and then to connect to the footpath back down to Shefford.

ML reported that the Council has revised the Local Restriction Grant ARG3 available for small businesses.

The Local Plan is out for consultation again, as the Inspector has asked for minor modifications to be made, such as policy wording.

The Community Safety Team are drawing up costings for a proposed additional CCTV camera to be located by The Bridge/Co-op end of the High Street.

The SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) schools' consultation will be relaunched due to some minor errors in the original consultation document.

Following an enquiry from a Town Councillors, ML gave a brief overview of his role as Deputy Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration, including the importance of 'Place Planning' and working with communities, and the range and support for 'Business and Skills' especially resulting from the changes in employment due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

AB reported that a 15k litre rainwater tank has been installed at the Highways depot at Thorn End, and the collected water has been used for pre-wetting the brine solution for the gritting trucks as well as for washing the vehicles; this has resulted in substantial savings on mains water. Building on this success, a 1k litre tank is due to be installed at the Highways depot in Sandy.

The government has cancelled the Oxford to Milton Keynes highway link, part of the Cambridge to Oxford Express Highway. There is a meeting on the 29th of the month when AB will hear if the proposals for the improvements to the A428 section, Bedford to Caxton Gibbet, are still to go ahead. This includes the revamping of the Black Cat roundabout and creation of a flyover on the A428 to cross the A1M.
The lit poles for the zebra crossing in Ampthill Road are scheduled to be installed by 30th March. Once installed, an audit will be carried out of this traffic calming scheme.
The replacement fingers for the High Street directional sign will be available for installation next week.
The area behind the shops at the end of Duck Lane has been cleared of rubbish. Thanks go to Central Bedfordshire Council Officers, Ed Gummery and Joe Pitt, for persevering with this issue to its completion.

7. Crime

RF reported that the data for the first 25 days of March, so not a complete month, showed a total of eighteen crimes reported. This compared with a total of twenty-seven offences for January 2021 and twenty-eight offences for February 2021. As expected with the road closure at the top of Ivel Road adjacent to the Tesco fuel station, there has been a reduction in making off without payment crimes, with only one offence being reported. The rest of the data includes: four instances of assault; four instances of theft, robbery and burglary; three offences of harassment, malicious communications, or fear of provocation of violence; two instances of drugs; and one incidence each of criminal damage, possession of other weapons, sexual offences, and stalking offences.

8. Town Mayor's Announcements

The report was distributed to Councillors and included: the Town Awards, those made last year but not distributed, and nominations for this year; an update on the VERU (Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit) funding project; and a request made for the extension of virtual, and possible hybrid meetings, past 7th May 2021.

9. Shefford Youth Involvement

It was reported that two donations have been received for The Hub: the first being a donation of a 'Google Nest' from a resident so that the Team have a speaker to use for their youth activities; the second, a donation of £300 from Bradders Ltd towards the cost of the anti-graffiti paint, a clear coat of paint that will protect the building from any unauthorised graffiti.
A letter of thanks has been received from the Assistant Principle of the Samuel Whitbread Academy for the Town Council's funding of the provision of two days a week for Esme Handley to support their students during this difficult time. This support will make children's lives better, enabling them to become more successful and self-confident as they make their way through life.
The upcoming events activities over the Easter break include Arts and Craft sessions, the Graffiti Project at The Hub, and Calisthenics Fitness sessions.
It was reported that the "Use Ya Feet, Get off the Street" project, postponed due to the COVID-19 restrictions, is due to start on 19th April.

10. Planning and Highways

A report on the committee meeting held on 3rd March 2021 was approved for publication on the website.

11. Services and Environment

A report on the committee meeting held on 10th March 2021 was approved for publication on the website.

12. Finance and Strategy

A report on the committee meeting held on 17th March 2021 was approved for publication on the website, and the recommendation was approved.

13. Town Clerk's report

The report was distributed to Councillors and included: a summary of this season's grounds maintenance that has commenced; the installation of the new metal kissing gate, field gate and railings at the car park entrance to Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green; the bagging up and distribution of giant sunflower seeds, bee-friendly seed mix and summer express seed mix to those residents requesting the seeds; the attendance at the virtual training session held by Central Bedfordshire Council's Community Safety Team on cuckooing; the planned topping up of graves in the 'R' section of Campton and Shefford Cemetery; CQ's approaching end point assessment for her Business Admin Apprenticeship; and the taking of annual leave in the week leading up to the Easter weekend.

14. Accounts

The list of payments for March 2021 was circulated to Councillors and approved.

Meeting closed 17:35hrs

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee held on 7th April 2021 using www.zoom.us

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

Town Clerk: F Fitch and C Quinlan (Business Admin Apprentice)

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllr Lisa Hayes

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

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 3rd March 2021 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. **Delegated Authority**
   The resolutions made by the delegated authority since the last meeting of the Committee were reported as follows: -

   CB/21/00750/FULL
   5 Powells Road, Shefford SG17 5DP
   Proposal: First floor side extension over garage and rear single storey extension

   It was resolved by delegated authority to support this application with the comment that the garage should be upgraded/constructed to have the required fire safety cladding for integral garages.

   CB/21/00726/FULL
   39 Hitchin Road, Shefford, SG17 5JA
   Proposal: Front two storey extension

   It was resolved by delegated authority to support this application.

   CB/21/00347/FULL
   1 Victoria Road, Shefford, SG17 5AL
   Proposal: Garage conversion including new pitched roof).

   It was resolved by delegated authority to support this application with the comment that Central Bedfordshire Council Traffic Management Officers should be consulted for their opinions on the potential loss of two parking spaces on a street already known for its parking issues.

6. Plans for Consideration

CB/21/01116/FULL
5 Tillers Close, Shefford, SG17 5UN
Proposal: Proposed single storey rear extension.

It was resolved to support this application.

CB/21/01132/FULL
5 Bloomfield Drive, Shefford, SG17 5BU
Proposal: Two storey rear extension and single storey front extension with bay window and open porch.

It was resolved to support this application; however, it is noted that the rear extension will cause a loss of light to the neighbouring property.

CB/21/01286/VOC
Unit 3,5 & 7 Ivel Road, Shefford, SG17 5JU
Proposal: Variation of condition numbers 2 and 12 of planning permission (appeal reference APP/P0240/W/20/3260426) CB/19/04226/FULL (demolition of 2 no. existing industrial units and construction of 9 no. dwellings with 26 parking bays. Retention and alternations to existing unit 7). Variation of the wording of Condition 12 regarding a revised location of the footpath from the north to the south of the access. Updating wording of Condition 2 in relation to the approved drawings.

It was resolved to object to this application as the Town Council's comments and objections still stand to application CB/19/04226/FULL. It was felt that Central Bedfordshire Council must determine the decision or refer the application to the Planning Inspectorate, who granted permission for this development.

Meeting closed 16:20hrs

Minutes of the meeting of the Services and Environment Committee held on 14th April 2021 using www.zoom.us

Present: Cllrs Tony Dawson (Chair), Paul Mackin, Ken Pollard, Richard Orman, Elsa Tattersfield, June Wischhusen, Roger Fowler and Fred Wilson.

Town Clerk: F Fitch and C Quinlan (Business Admin Apprentice)

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllrs Jez Perkins, Rene Madsen and Den Fensome.

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

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the committee on 10th March 2021 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 articles for the summer edition of Newsline have been passed to the printers for editing; the printing of the publication is expected to be on schedule.
   It was reported that followers to the Council's Facebook page have increased to six hundred and seventy-two, and over the last twenty-eight days, post engagements are up by fifty percent.
   The final draft of the drop-down menus has been produced for the new website.
   Quotations are being obtained from Eyelid Productions for two options, the Bedfordshire Parish Councils' template and one at the company's normal commercial rates; it was noted that both options are within the budget set for the project.

   It was resolved that the Council move forward with Eyelid Productions for whichever option is best suited to the project.

6. **Parks and Open Spaces**
   The report on the parks and open spaces, including play areas, their inspections, and any repairs necessary, was distributed to members and reviewed, including: the removal of the redundant electric vehicle charging post in the Town Centre car park; the approval to apply for the release of Section 106 funds for the installation of a Yalp Toro at Bellcote Meadow Play Area; the review of a quotation to install a replacement kissing gate at the Ashdown Road entrance to Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green.

   It was resolved to instruct an electrician to remove the redundant electric charging post in the Town Centre car park. The removed post is to be stored, awaiting collection by Chargemaster.

Recommendation to be made to Full Council to approve an application to Central Bedfordshire Council for the release of Section 106 monies to install a Yalp Toro, an interactive item of play equipment, at Bellcote Meadow Play Area, together with associated landscaping, seating and electricity supply for the facility.

Recommendation to be made to Full Council for an order to be raised to LEF Paving and Landscaping for the installation of a 'Woodstock' metal large mobility kissing gate (supplied by the Council), the supply and installation of new timber post and rail either side of the kissing gate, and to level the ground underneath the kissing gate (including the spreading and compacting of MOT type 1 stone).

7. **Shefford House**
   The report on Shefford House was distributed to all committee members and reviewed.

8. **War Memorial**
   It was reported that we have received notification from the Memorials Trust that, as the lettering on the War Memorial is not obscured by deposits, we are ineligible to apply for a grant from them to fund its restoration. Three quotations for the specialist cleaning of the War Memorial, one from a national company and a further two from local Memorial Masons, were reviewed by the Committee. It is proposed to employ a local artist to re-enamel the letters on the Memorial following the cleaning.
   PM reported that he has written to Shefford Lower School, the Robert Bloomfield Academy, and Samuel Whitbread Academy, offering to personally invite any children/young people within the community that are descendent of the people named on the War Memorial, to the rededication service proposed for this year's Armistice Day to celebrate the centenary of the unveiling of the Memorial.

   Recommendation to be made to Full Council for an order to be raised to the IR Monumental Masons Ltd to clean the War Memorial, and to re-paint the metal iron tray and stone memorial base.

9. **Greensand Country Landscape Partnership**
   TD gave an update on the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership Forward Plan, including showing a selection of slides from their recent presentation that he attended.

Meeting closed 17:30hrs

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Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Strategy Committee held on 21st April 2021 using www.zoom.us

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

Town Clerk: F Fitch and C Quinlan (Business Admin Apprentice)

1. **Apologies:** none received.

2. **Declarations of interest:** FW declared an interest in agenda item 11, being a Trustee on the Robert Lucas Trust; landlords for the Scout Hut building.

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 17th March 2021 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 March 2021 were reviewed by TD prior to the meeting and approved. The petty cash was also counted by TD prior to the meeting and approved.

6. **Hybrid Meetings**
   Following the Government's decision not to extend remote meeting powers past 7th May 2021, the option of holding hybrid meetings was reviewed; the meetings will be held using Zoom at 16:00hrs, with four Members meeting face to face in the Council Chamber, plus CQ as meeting moderator and FF as Clerk, thus ensuring the meetings are legal. All other Members, Ward Councillors and the public would attend the meeting virtually.

   It was resolved to purchase an Elgato Standard Stream Deck and a Logitech BCC950 webcam to enable these hybrid meetings to take place.

7. **Joint Burial Board**
   The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Burial Board Committee held on 22nd March 2021 were distributed to members and reviewed.

   It was resolved to apply to be British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) registered (free of charge); the benefits of membership include receiving up to date information on such matters as legislation, innovations, and available training.

   It was resolved to fund the cost of burial certificates if required to complete the burial records/documentation.

It was resolved for an order to be raised to 2 Elms of Shefford to reduce the height of the section of perimeter hedging running along the footpath leading from Ampthill Road to Campton Road, including around the substation.

8. Community Policing Priorities

A request from Inspector Louise Bates, the Community Policing Inspector for North Central Bedfordshire, on the Community Policing Priorities for the next quarter for the Collective of Shefford/Stotfold/Clifton/Arlesey areas was reviewed by the Committee.

It was resolved to submit the priorities for Shefford as drug dealing/use, anti-social behaviour, knife crime/weapon carrying, speeding and use of electric scooters.

9. East West Rail link

A notice on the launch of the consultation for the East West Rail link proposals for the new railway between Bletchley and Cambridge, via Bedford, was reviewed by Members and noted.

10. Citizens Advice, Mid Bedfordshire

A request from Citizens Advice, Mid Bedfordshire to make a grant towards this year's running costs of the Outreach project was reviewed by the Committee.

It was resolved to donate £200 to the running costs of the Outreach project.

11. 1st Shefford Scout Group

A request from the 1st Shefford Scout Group for support in their endeavours in repairing and renovation works to the Scout Hut was reviewed by the Committee.

It was resolved for the Town Clerk to reply to the Scout Group, advising that they should first contact their landlord, the Robert Lucas Trust, to discuss the specification for repairs that are required, particularly in view of the building being within a Conservation Area.

12. Electric Vehicle Charge Points

A notice on the launch of Central Bedfordshire Council's campaign for the public to suggest potential on-street EV charge point locations was distributed to Members and noted.

13. Welcome Back Fund

It was reported that Central Bedfordshire Council has been allocated funding from the Government's 'Welcome Back Fund', and Shefford Town Council will be allocated a proportion of this funding, which is intended for the specific activities towards the safe opening of High Streets and Town Centres, as approved by the Government. An initial proposal for increasing the off street area for the markets and events, together with 'Welcome' lamppost banners, was reviewed.

It was resolved to set up a working party, including PM, KP, JW, TD, FF and RF, to move the project forward.

Meeting closed 17:20hrs