Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held at Shefford House, SG17 5DD on Friday 31st January 2020

Present: Cllrs Ken Pollard (Chair), Richard Orman, Tony Dawson, Lisa Hayes, Rene Madsen, Roger Fowler, Elsa Tattersfield, Den Fensome, Fred Wilson, Steve Nash and Nicola King.

Ward Councillors Mark Liddiard and Anthony Brown, and five members of the public.

Town Clerk: F Fitch

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllrs Paul Mackin and Nicola King.

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

3. **Co-option of New Councillor**
   Following a short presentation from the applicant, it was resolved unanimously that Jez Perkins be co-opted to fill a vacancy on Shefford Town Council.

4. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 20th December 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. **Matters arising**
   No matters arising.

6. **Public question time**
   Audrey White requested an update on the state of the churned-up grass verges in Great Hill and their reinstatement (back to grass or to change to hardstanding). ML answered that the matter had been flagged to Highways and they are investigating the issue, however there is only a finite pot of money allocated to Highways repairs, and this will be prioritised and allocated to carry out health and safety works in high use pedestrian areas such as the High Street; the High Street repairs are a solvable issue whereas parking on grass verges is unenforceable (enforcement can only be carried out on grass verges where the roads have parking restrictions imposed). It was also noted that the houses in the area are a mixed tenure therefore the housing association cannot impose parking restrictions as many of the houses are privately owned.

7. **Crime**
   RF reported that the crime statistics covered the period 1st to 30th January 2020. They showed twenty seven offences which is lower than has been, and included two instances of assault, six of burglary/theft, four of criminal damage and nine of making off without payment (all from the Tesco service station). The Town Clerk reported that last Friday night the front of the donation box inside St Michael's Church had been ripped off and the donations stolen.

It was reported that KP and RF attended the January Police Priority Meeting and set the town's priorities as speeding, drugs and anti-social behaviour. RF reported that Bedfordshire Police retain anti-social behaviour statistics however they are not included in the crime statistics as they don't involve an arrest.

8. Town Mayor's announcements

The Deputy Mayor read out the Mayor's announcements including apologies from the Mayor; the progress on VE75 plans, the raising of the Union Jack following consultation with members on how to mark leaving the European Union, a report from Shefford Health Centre dated 28th January appointment availability at the surgery: they have eighteen thousand and thirty six patients, fourteen doctors, four nurse practitioners, four health care assistants, three practice nurses, two clinical pharmacists, and are currently interviewing three more prospective doctors which will bring the quota to seventeen doctors. The Mayor also reported that he was keeping abreast of health updates on the coronavirus outbreak.

9. Shefford Youth Involvement

It was reported that The Hive youth club sessions have changed their time from 5pm to 7pm fortnightly, with the next session to be held on Tuesday 4th February 2020.
The delivery of the Youth Crime group work by NK and Esme Handley at Samuel Whitbread Academy has started and so far, the feedback is positive. All students in year nine, ten and eleven took part in Knife Crime Assemblies, part of the youth crime project aimed are raising awareness of exploitation.
Two business individuals are looking to open a commercial shop alongside an indoor skatepark type venue in one of the units on the industrial area in Shefford. NK has raised questions about safeguarding, behaviour management and other issues. Both individuals have been invited to attend the Council Lines Awareness workshop next week and NK has offered her guidance as the plans progress.
Shefford Youth Hub will be opened by the Police Crime Commissioner on Wednesday 19th February at 11am. It is planned that school exclusion work will be one of the group work initiatives delivered from the Hub once the Wi-Fi connection is installed.

10. Planning and Highways

The report on the committee meeting held on 15th January 2020 was approved for publication on the website. The committee meeting on the 1st January was cancelled with any business being dealt with at the meeting held on the 15th January.

11. Services and Environment

The report on the committee meeting held on 8th January 2020 was approved for publication on the website, including the approval of one recommendation.

12. Finance and Strategy

The report on the committee meeting held on 15th January 2020 was approved for publication on the website, including the approval of two recommendations.

13. Central Bedfordshire Council

Planning matters reported included: Planning application CB/19/04226/FULL has been called in to the Development Management Committee as both Ward Councillors have concerns of the loss of industrial units when there is a need for more jobs in Shefford for residents; the Hitchin Road application to replace the roundabout with a T-junction to the proposed development has been withdrawn by the applicant; the Hitchin Road development reserved matters application has been called in to the Development Management Committee, with both Ward Councillors having concerns on the overbearing layout, and the layout impact on the Sports and Social Club operations; Ward Councillors have concerns over the Ivel Road development layout including the location of the play area; Central Bedfordshire's Countryside Team are keen to lease (120 years) the woodland on the Ivel Road development, with a view to develop it in a similar way to Campton Plantation including the installation of parking spaces.

It was reported that encouraging letters from the Inspectors on the Local Plan have been received by Officers; additional consultation is expected to be carried out in the summer, with a target for final approval before the end of 2020.

Highways matters reported included: Footpath 4 is to be resurfaced to the swing bridge; a meeting has been arranged with Highways Officer, Aziza Jeppe, to finalise the outstanding Market Town Regeneration works including the bollards in Duck Lane, finger post, paving around the tree in the carpark and paving slabs to replace tarmac infill/broken slabs; a meeting this week highlighted the outstanding defects in the High Street, with a promise to complete the list before the end of this financial year; the jet washing carried out in the High Street last year removed sand from around the paving slabs; the double yellow lines parking restrictions are in place in Old Bridge Way; the Ampthill Road traffic calming scheme is proposed to be delivered by Bovis Homes over the school holiday period; Ward Councillors are being lobbied by residents for the provision of a pedestrian crossing in Ivel Road; the worn away middle section of the A507 has been identified as a contractor default; footpaths in Elm Road, Kingsmede and Victoria Road will be completely resurfaced; the resurfacing of the footpath from The Hollies to Old Station Way has been highlighted as a priority one; FW highlighted the failure of the temporary repair around the drain at the High Street T-junction opposite The White Hart and it was confirmed by ML that this repair was on the list of High Street defects to rectify.

Parking matters reported included: funding is available in the 2020/2021 budget for automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) vehicles and additional Enforcement Officers (a seven day a week service with reduced hours over weekends) to help patrol the major areas of concern i.e. outside schools including the Robert Bloomfield Academy; the current grace and favour period of ten minutes will be reduced to two minutes to allow Enforcement Officers to issue tickets without moving away from the area; it is planned to reline the parking restrictions on School Lane, including the hatching.

Trees works have started in the Campton Plantation under license from the Forestry Commission. The woods will remain open to the public at all times.

Central Bedfordshire Council will be submitting an overall scheme for the Ward Boundary Changes for 2023, based on each Councillors being responsible for 3.6k voters; there are currently 5,364 voters in Shefford.
It was reported that super fibre broadband is now available in Shefford and if requested, British Telecoms will upgrade copper wiring to households anywhere in the town.
It was reported that the trees have been cut back on Council land at Riverview, and that the report of rats at the rear of Duck Lane is being investigated by Environmental Health Officers; all eateries have been visited by Officers.
There is a consultation on installing CCTV in taxis in Central Bedfordshire for safety purposes; CCTV is being trialled in some taxis, and if successful this may be introduced as a policy.

14. Town Clerk's report

The report was circulated to Councillors and included an update of VE75 event arrangements, the refurbishment of Bellcote Meadow Pavilion to create a Youth Involvement Hub, the successful submission of the Green Flag Community Award submission for Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green, the creation of Shefford Pub Watch, a reminder for attendance at the Criminal Exploitation: County Lines and Gangs workshop in Shefford House on the 6th February, the recent visit to The Birches transition housing complex, and the increase in visitors to Shefford House.

15. Accounts

The list of payments from 21st December 2019 to 31st January 2020 was circulated to Councillors and approved.

Meeting closed 21:30

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee held at Shefford House, SG17 5DD on Wednesday 5th February 2020

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

Town Clerk: F Fitch

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

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

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the committee on 15th January 2020 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Plans for consideration**

   CB/19/04040/FULL
   98 Ampthill Road, Shefford, SG17 5BB
   Proposal: Proposed demolition of existing out buildings and erection of detached annex (use ancillary to host building).

   It was resolved to support the application on the proviso that the proposed annex is built on the footprint of the existing outbuildings, and that Central Bedfordshire Council Officers will monitor the culvert to ensure its integrity is not compromised.

5. **Ivel Road development road names**
   A request from Central Bedfordshire Council to propose five to ten street names for the development at Ivel Road (ninety new dwellings) was reviewed by the Committee.

   It was resolved to propose the surnames of past deceased Chairmen of Shefford Parish/Town Council as the road names for the development, and for Central Bedfordshire Council Officers to add the appropriate suffixes.

Meeting closed 19:25hrs

Minutes of the meeting of the Services and Environment Committee held at Shefford House, SG17 5DD on Wednesday 12th February 2020

Present: Cllrs Tony Dawson (chair), Rene Madsen, Ken Pollard, Paul Mackin, Richard Orman, Elsa Tattersfield, Den Fensome and Jez Perkins

Town Clerk: F Fitch

1. **Apologies:** none received.

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

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the committee on 8th January 2020 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Communications**
   It was reported that the 100th edition of Newsline, printed in full colour, is currently being delivered to residents. TD distributed a summary report on the current and proposed costs of printing and distribution to members for review; this detailed the current and future advertising income including the commission Character Press will deduct for collecting the fees. The publication will be printed in full colour, and there will be an increase in copies printed (to 3,500 copies).
   It was reported that RO & FF had attended an Audit and Transparency training course hosted by the Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils which highlighted the urgency to construct a new website. This will enable the council to comply with the Transparency Act 2014 in publishing data, as well as including a 'Parks' page and information about the Campton and Shefford Cemetery. RM has reviewed the requirements definition document for the new website.
   It was reported that there was an increase in the followers/reposting to the Council's social media channels.

   It was resolved to review the new procedures for the Newsline income and expenditure in February 2021.

5. **Play Area Inspections**
   It was reported that all the repairs have been carried out at St Michaels Play Area and Midland Place Play Area (equipment and railings removed, and area reinstated to tarmac) had been removed. The quotation to remove the redundant swing frame at the STMA was reviewed by the Committee.

   It was resolved for the Town Clerk to instruct the PGM Playgrounds Ltd to remove the redundant swing frame

6. **Parks and Open Spaces**
   The report on the parks and open spaces was distributed to all committee members and reviewed, including a quotation for the reduction of the hedge at the Riverview entrance to Drovers Spinney.

   It was resolved for the Town Clerk to raise an order to GD Maintenance to reduce the hedge at the Riverview entrance to Drovers Spinney to allow better visibility as you walk down the sloped path to the kissing gate.

7. **Shefford House**
   The report on Shefford House was distributed to all committee members and reviewed, including quotations for external repairs and internal decoration.

   Recommendation to be made to Full Council for the Town Clerk to raise an order to GD Maintenance to redecorate the Clerk's first floor office.

   It was resolved for the Town Clerk to raise an order to L.E.F Landscaping to carry out repairs to the hard surfacing to the rear of the Shefford House including the supply and replacement of a manhole lid, and to carry out repairs to the low wall to the front of the building.

8. **VE75**
   An update on the progress of the VE75 street party arrangements was reported, including a meeting of organisers to be held on Thursday 27th February.

Meeting closed 21:00hrs

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee held at Shefford House, SG17 5DD on Wednesday 19th February 2020

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

Town Clerk: F Fitch

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllrs Lisa Hayes and Rene Madsen

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

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the committee on 5th February 2020 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair

4. **Plans for consideration**

   CB/20/00214/FULL
   The Old Laundry, 33 High Street, Shefford, SG17 5HQ
   Proposal: Proposed lighting for residential development currently under construction.

   It was resolved to support the application with the comment that the light fittings should be tuned to ensure that there is no light overspill to adjacent properties, in particular lamp column LC5.

   CB/20/00301/FULL
   Westlands, 37 Queen Elizabeth Close, Shefford, SG17 5LE
   Proposal: Proposed two storey rear extension

   It was resolved to support the application.

5. **Empty Properties**
   It was reported that the Enforcement Officer at Central Bedfordshire Council will check on the progress of the remedial works to 4 Southbridge Street.

6. **Ivel Road Development**
   It was reported that Officers from Central Bedfordshire Council are aware of the tree works recently carried out at the front of the Ivel Road development, and have confirmed that the work does not amount to development and the developer is entitled to carry out the work without the need for any permission from the Council. The developer has carried out the work now to avoid the bird nesting season and the trees are not covered by preservation or within a conservation area so do not benefit from any statutory protection.

Meeting closed 19:40hrs

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Strategy Committee held at Shefford House, SG17 5DD on Wednesday 19th February 2020

Present: Councillors Richard Orman (Chair), Paul Mackin, Ken Pollard, Tony Dawson and Roger Fowler.

Town Clerk: F Fitch

1. **Apologies:** received from Councillors Rene Madsen and Fred Wilson

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

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the committee on 15th January 2020 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Bank reconciliations**
   The bank reconciliations for 31 January 2020 were reviewed against statements by RO (chair) and approved. The petty cash was counted by TD and approved.

5. **Joint Burial Board Committee**
   The recommendations from the Joint Burial Board Committee at the meeting held on the 3rd February 2020 were reviewed by the Committee.

   It was resolved that there was enough evidence in the Joint Burial Board Committee minute book from 24th January 1986 to show that there was no trace of consecration taking place in the cemetery, and that the Clerks do not have to investigate this matter further.

   It was resolved for the Town Clerk to instruct GM Maintenance to remove the pine needles at the entrance to the cemetery, this being a cheaper option than the hire of a skip.

   Recommendation to be made to Full Council to close the National Savings Certificate account and transfer the funds to the Unity Trust Cemetery bank account.

   Recommendation to be made to Full Council for both Clerks to work two days a month in March and April 2020 on joint working, including training the Business Admin Apprentice to input the cemetery records.

   It was resolved that a Campton and Shefford Cemetery page be created on the Council's websites (a page on one website with a link on the other to direct to the page) to display contact details and the rules and regulations for the cemetery.

It was resolved for the Clerks to investigate possible sources of funding for refurbishing the Chapel.

Recommendation to be made to Full Council for the Clerks to apply for a Ward Councillors Grant to part fund the cost of a free-standing noticeboard, with match funding provided from the Joint Burial Board account.

Recommendation to be made to Full Council for the Clerks to apply for a Ward Councillor Grant to part fund the cost of a new metal bin to be installed adjacent to the main entrance gates. The match funding is to be provided from the Joint Burial Board account.

It was resolved for the Town Clerk to instruct GM Maintenance to renovate three memorial benches (in situ in the cemetery grounds) when funding is available from the Joint Burial Board account.

It was resolved for the Town Clerk to instruct LEF Paving and Landscaping to carry out the repairs of the front perimeter wall to ensure the wall can be included in the Council's insurance policy cover.

Recommendation to be made to Full Council for the Town Clerk to instruct GM Maintenance to paint the front entrance gates, and the railings and kissing gate at the Ampthill Road pedestrian entrance, when funding is available from the Joint Burial Board account.

Recommendation to be made to Full Council for the Town Clerk to instruct 2 Elms of Shefford to carry out winter works; the clearance of vegetation at both entrance and around the substation.

Recommendation to be made to Full Council for the Town Clerk to instruct 2 Elms of Shefford to carry out hedge reduction works (top and roadside) to the front perimeter hedge (adjacent to Campton Road) once bird breeding season is over (July 2020 onwards).

Recommendation to be made to Full Council to approve the quotations for the grass cutting (fixed for two years) and hedge cutting (for this year) activities in the cemetery. Approval to award the grass cutting contract for two years has already been given by the Full Council in November 2019.

It was resolved for the Town Clerk to purchase soil and seed for the topping up of graves in the cemetery in spring 2020.

It was resolved to fill a collapsed grave (edged in kerbs in the old section of the cemetery) with chippings due to health and safety concerns.

It was resolved to report the timings and results for the cemetery data (held on the Rialtas cemetery software) from the Council's IT disaster recovery test on the 6th February 2020 at the next meeting of the Committee.
It was resolved for the Chair of the Joint Burial Board to respond to a grave owner's letter of complaint following advice taken from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management, which confirmed that the Joint Burial Board have complied with the Local Authorities Cemetery Order 1977 in this particular instance.

6. Youth Involvement Hub

It was reported that the additional costs for the installation of Wi-Fi at Bellcote Meadow pavilion for the Youth Involvement Hub are not expected to exceed £2,500 as agreed at the meeting of the committee on the 15th January 2020.

7. London Bridge

The draft policy on London Bridge was distributed to all members and reviewed.

It was resolved for PM to distribute the final draft to all members once amendments have been made, for adoption at the next meeting of the Committee.

8. Staff Matters

A request from a school-age student for a week's work experience in the Town Clerk's office, and the payment of a proportion of the accrued additional hours worked by the Town Clerk, was reviewed by the Committee.

It was resolved to offer the student a week's work experience commencing 13th July, with part of the time spent working alongside the Business Admin Apprentice, and part of the time spent working alongside the Town Clerk.

Recommendation to be made to Full Council to pay eleven days from the accrued additional hours worked by the Town Clerk.

9. IT Disaster Recovery Test

It was reported that the IT disaster recovery test carried out on the 6th February 2020 was successful, and the written test report from Rialtas was distributed to all members. It is estimated that in the event of an actual IT disaster, the recovery time period to include the procurement of the necessary IT equipment, configuration of the equipment and the restoration of data from backup (including the Rialtas Accounting Software and Cemetery software and data) was expected to be forty eight hours. It was noted that Rialtas has given a recommendation to backup up the Council's data to the Cloud. RF recommended that an IT disaster recovery test is carried out at least once a year.

10. Electricity Contracts

It was reported that the electricity contracts for The Hub, the public toilets and the car park lighting need renewing.

It was resolved for the Town Clerk to obtain the best priced contracts for all three accounts.

11. Langford Neighbourhood Plan

A letter of consultation from the Langford Neighbourhood Plan Steering group was reviewed and noted.

12. Dementia Friendly Town

The purchase of a memory box (including contents) as the first step for Shefford becoming a Dementia Friendly Town was reviewed by the committee.

It was resolved to purchase a memory box, including contents, from www.dementia.livebetterwith.com to display at Shefford Library.

13. Shefford Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Association Funding

A request for match funding (50% funding from Shefford Town Council: 50% possible funding from the Ward Councillors Grant Scheme) from the Shefford Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Association for the purchase of a strimmer and personal safety equipment was reviewed by the committee.

It was resolved to match fund to the sum of £177.50 (total cost £355.00) for the purchase of the strimmer and personal safety equipment provided funding is made available from the Ward Councillors Grant Scheme.

14. Shefford Greenspace Conservation Group Funding

A request for match funding (£275 funding from the Ward Councillors Grant Scheme: the remainder from Shefford Town Council) from the Shefford Greenspace Conservation Group for the purchase of a professional mulching mower was reviewed by the committee.

It was resolved to match fund to the sum of £300.00 (total cost £575.00) the purchase of a professional mulching mower.

15. Link a Ride Community Transport

A request for support from Mid Beds Link a Ride Community Transport was reviewed by the committee.

It was resolved to include an article on the service in the next edition of the Shefford Newsline, and to promote the service through the council's social media channels.

16. CCTV Cameras in Taxis

The notice of consultation on the introduction of CCTV cameras in hackney carriage and private hire vehicles (taxis) from Central Bedfordshire Council was reviewed and noted.

Meeting closed 21:15hrs