Minutes of the meeting of the Services and Environment Committee held on 10th January 2024 at 18.00hrs using www.zoom.us

Present: Cllrs Mark Greenwood (Chair), Tony Dawson, Paul Mackin, Elsa Tattersfield, Julie Ford and Den Fensome.

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

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllrs Jez Perkins, Ken Pollard and Fred Wilson.

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

3. **Minutes**
   The minutes of the meeting of the committee on 13th December 2023 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. **Communications**
   It was reported that the articles for the spring edition of the Newsline have been passed to Character Press this week for editing. There were less articles submitted for this publication compared to the previous few editions. In the spring, TD will be working with Character Press on a campaign to generate interest in local businesses advertising in the Newsline.
   Lesley Whiteman will be assisting in the production of content for the new website, and a meeting has been arranged to move forward with the new website design/layout incorporating all the new content. It was suggested that a photographic competition could be held for images in the Town, which will be included in the 'Home page' of the new website. TD noted that guidelines should be given to ensure the quality/resolution of the photographs.

6. **Park and Open Spaces**
   The report on the parks and open spaces, including play areas, their inspections, and any repairs necessary, was distributed to Councillors and reviewed, including: a quotation for the summer hanging basket flower displays for the 2024 season; giving notice to the Wellness Hub and the Shefford Christmas Lights Committee to vacate the yard; a quotation for the installation of Safety Matta safer surfacing at St Michael's Close play area; and a quotation to carry out additional surfacing works in Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green.

   Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council for an order to be raised to Plantscape for the summer hanging basket flower displays for 2024, with a red/white/blue theme for the D Day 80th Anniversary. This includes two additional half baskets outside 33/35 Northbridge Street.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to give three months' notice in writing to the Wellness Hub of the Council's intention to vacate the yard. The Clerk will arrange a site visit with the owner of the business to agree what condition the yard must be left in when the site is vacated. It was also resolved by Delegated Powers to give notice in writing to the Shefford Christmas Lights Committee to either vacate the yard by 1st April 2024 (including removal of al their lights/equipment/shed) or to confirm in writing that they have reached a formal agreement with the Wellness Hub of their intention of taking on the lease of the yard at the end of the Council's notice period.

Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to raise an order to Matta Products UK for the installation of Natural Green Safety Matta safer surfacing under the swing set and around the Shefford Express train at St Michael's Close play area, replacing the existing failed grass mats safer surfacing.

Recommendation by Delegated Powers to be made to Full Council to raise an order to Maydencroft Ltd to carry out additional surfacing works in Bellcote Meadow Millennium Green (planned and budgeted for in 2024/2025), including: relaying and levelling the pathway from Tippetts Drive (to match and meet with the newly surfaced set-aside path) and works at various other locations (such as the entrances/steps to the flower meadow/Michael's Wade Walk and the installation of grip strips on all steps and across the foot bridge leading from the set-aside area). This work will complete the current path improvement programme by spring 2024.

7. Shefford House

The report on Shefford House was distributed to Members and reviewed.

8. Public Toilets

It was reported that the ladies block of the public toilets was vandalised before Christmas. Lights/light sensors were pulled out of the ceiling, the toilet roll holders damaged/pulled off the wall, the PVC wall joint strips pulled off, the PVC window ledge damaged, and mess and debris strewn everywhere. Due to safety concerns over the electrics, all the toilet blocks (ladies/gents/disabled) have been kept closed since the vandalism occurred. The Committee reviewed the necessary repairs, including the replacement of the locking mechanism on each toilet entrance door to allow them to be locked with a key, thus adding an additional level of security. It was also reported that the urinals are in need of a service to establish if the increase in water consumption is related to over flushing of the facilities. A deep clean is also due for all the toilet blocks.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers for the Town Clerk to arrange for the necessary repairs to be carried out to the ladies' toilet block, together with maintenance of the urinals in the gents' toilet block. Also, to install new anti-

vandal metal toilet roll holders (ladies and gents only) and carry out a deep clean of all toilet blocks prior to reopening them to the public.

9. Events

An update was given on recently delivered and upcoming events, including: a total of £678.49 raised from the two Keech Bobsleigh events in December 2023, and proposals to build a Council owned sleigh for Christmas 2024; the proposals for the 80th anniversary of D Day on 6th June 2024; feedback and proposed improvements for the 2024 Remembrance and Armistice Day Services; and a quotation from PPL PRS to obtain the necessary music licence for the Council's events in 2024.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to explore options for building a small Santa Sleigh (built on a small trailer), which would allow the Council more control over times/dates for future Santa Sleigh events, and give charitable/community groups in the town the opportunity to raise money for their charity/group using the sleigh, with their volunteers staffing the event.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to proceed with the proposed arrangements for the 80th Anniversary of D Day and resulting expenditure, including: refreshments for those Chicksands Servicepersons who may be helping at the lighting of the Beacon event; a donation of £250 to fund a fish and chip lunch for Shefford Good Neighbour Group clients (organised by the Group's volunteers); a donation of £500 for the Shefford Town Memorial Association Committee to hold an event; the purchase of six lamp lights of peace for children/young people from the local schools to distribute to the four churches in the town, and to Oak Manor Care Home and the Home Farm Trust.

It was resolved by Delegated Powers to pay for the necessary PPL PRS music licence for the Council's events in 2024, including the Summer Fun Day, the Town Carol Service and Remembrance Day Service.

Meeting closed 19:04hrs