

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.00PM

Committee Members present:

S Buck - Chairman, L Anderson, T Bhasin, Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, D Matthews, B Saunders, J Smith, N. Venneear.

Also present:

Ms Caroline Jenkins – Acting Clerk, Mrs K Woodfine, Central Beds Council Ward Member, 2 members of the public.

138/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Hyde, J Talbot, and H Wightwick.

139/23 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillor J Smith for item 11. He would abstain from any voting on this item. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

140/23 MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CIVIC ATTENDANCE

These were noted by members.

141/23 PUBLIC SECTION

None present.

142/23 CLERKS REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

The Acting Clerk drew councillors attention to the news that the Squirrel Taverners men's football team recently got promoted to the top division and also won the best pub team in England. All members sent their congratulations to the team.

143/23 COUNCIL MINUTES

Members were asked to note and sign as a correct record, the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th July 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th July 2023 be taken as read and confirmed and signed as a correct record.

144/23 APPOINTMENT OF TOWN CLERK AND RFO

RESOLVED To appoint Emma Payne as the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (S151 Local Government Act 1972) for Stotfold Town Council.

145/23 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

The members of the Council were addressed by Janice Bendell, to state why she should be co-opted as a councillor to Stotfold Town Council.

RESOLVED that Councillor Janice Bendell be co-opted to Stotfold Town Council.

146/23 NEW MEMBERS ATTENDANCES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: that Councillors John Talbot and Nigel Venneear would be Town Council representatives for Stotfold Scouts. Councillor Venneear would also be a member of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands and Lighting committee.

147/23 LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE – CHARGEMASTER LTD / CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Members were informed that the office had received a letter and request from Chargemaster Ltd/Central Bedfordshire Council to sign, as lessee of the land, a letter of acceptance to install the electricity supply to the EV charge points at the Arlesey Road site.

Members discussed this and concluded that they were reluctant to agree the go ahead with this installation when the problems with the electric installation at the memorial hall had not yet been rectified.

RESOLVED: that the request to sign the letter of acceptance would be abstained by the Town Council until the installation of the electric supply at the Memorial Hall can be completed.

148/23 IT INFRASTRUCTURE

Councillor Jon Smith provided an IT presentation regarding the future options for the Town Council IT Infrastructure.

Members were asked to decide on the IT supplier for the migration from our physical onsite server to Microsoft 365. To be completed once the Rialtis migration has finished. This will include a decision on our future IT support provider.

Quotations for the Migration and IT Support were received from Assign IT, SMG, Cloudy IT, Hertscom and IT Edge.

RESOLVED: that the quotation from SMG be accepted to complete the migration from our physical onsite server to Microsoft 365, and to provide IT support.

149/23 FOOTBALL PITCH RENOVATION QUOTES

Members were asked to discuss the quotation received from AA Sheriff and sons for maintenance works for Town Council owned football pitches at Riverside Playing Fields, Hitchin Road Recreation ground, The Green, and Arlesey Road Playing Fields.

RESOLVED: that the quotation from AA Sheriff and sons for £16,036.21 be accepted. This is to provide Overseeding, Fertilising, Slitting, Selective Spraying and Decompaction by Verti-drain for all 9 pitches to achieve the FA standard for football.

150/23 REPORTS

a) Final Central Beds Council Ward Member Report

Councillor Kathryn Woodfine:

- **Planning apps – land south of Arlesey road**
CB/23/01673/SECM – referred to council legal team.
CB/23/01561/OUT – Hitchin Road – has been withdrawn.

CB/23/02269/FULL – change of use, Greenacre centre to the Library – consultation now closed, Decision will not be made until after 9th September

Some objections from the public as to the loss of the community facility
Ongoing discussions as to whether the application should be considered at Development Management committee.

Schools for the future – program was paused on 30th June 2023. Stotfold and Shefford area was due to be completed in one large cluster. Middle section of Henlow, Langford and Lower Stondon have already been changed to 3 tiers. This area is to follow, although hoping not to be held up by the far western area.

RAAC concrete – no schools are affected in Central Bedfordshire.

SEND – Central Bedfordshire Council has been selected to lead a new East of England partnership focussed on providing better outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Planning Design Guide – new guide has been published in August 2023. For new developers who wish to build in Central Bedfordshire.

Public Service Protection Orders – consultation out at present, no proposed sites, areas are marked on document to recommend for abstaining from drinking.

Ward Councillor Grants – Ward Councillors are given a small amount of funds to distribute in their area to organisations.

151/23 ACCOUNTS

- a) Members considered the Expenditure Report for approval for August 2023 payment run, and the income received during July and August 2023 in the Income Report.

RESOLVED that all payments on the Expenditure Report are approved and are to be paid, and the Income Report be noted.

- b) Members considered the monthly committee budget report, budget variances report and bank balances as at end August 2023.

RESOLVED that the monthly committee budget reports, budget variances report and bank balances for month end August 2023 are noted.

152/23 PLANNING COMMITTEE – 12TH JULY AND 2ND AUGUST 2023

Members of the Planning Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meetings held on 12th July and 2nd August 2023 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

153/23 RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS AND LIGHTING COMMITTEE, 12th JULY 2023

Members of the recreation Grounds, Public Lands and Lighting Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 12th July 2023 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

154/23 ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE, 12th JULY AND 26TH JULY 2023

Members of the Establishment Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meetings held on 12th July and 26th July 2023 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

155/23 CEMETERY COMMITTEE, 19th JULY 2023

Members of the Cemetery Management Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 19th July 2023 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

156/23 BUILDINGS COMMITTEE, 19th JULY 2023

Members of the Buildings Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meetings held on 19th July 2023 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

157/23 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS ON ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

There were none.

158/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

Library – update received following a recent meeting with the project manager and engineer. 8 objections from the public. The soonest DMC meeting may now be October/November.

Christmas Lights Switch on

Discussion was had about the road closures needed on the High Street for the event. 12 weeks' notice is needed to apply for a road closure. In the past the event has been held on the Greenacre estate, feeling was the community outside Greenacres were not included. Moving this events location will hopefully ensure the whole community supports this event. The focal point will be the High Street. Christmas organising is usually planned in February each year. This year there was not enough voluntary help received at the right time.

Members were concerned about the timings of the event. It was noted that these could be altered nearer the event date, depending on the appetite for the event. An advanced road closure would be displayed 2 weeks before the event. Consultation has been carried out with businesses and traffic management. Businesses in the town had no benefit from the event in the past years. With the event moving to the High Street it was hoped this would change. The Towns Christmas Tree is to be sited at The Haven.

Road diversions would be made via Church Road and Regent Street. Brook Street and Melbourne Close would remain accessible.



Members pointed out that when the Greenacre Centre was being built, it was asked that the building be nearer the High Street to enable it to be part of the Stotfold wider community. Central Bedfordshire Council refused this request.

It was felt that if the residents of Stotfold want Community events to take place, and to embrace the businesses in the town, they will support them. If not, the Town Council can at least say they tried to provide them. In the case the road closure is refused, the event will be moved back to the outside of the Greenacre Centre and the event will be reviewed next year.

Members also discussed about the Mill Steam event on 7 and 8 October 2023. The Town Council usually has a stand there to meet with residents and to provide information and advice. There was no presence from the Town Council in May 2023, due to the Elections, and this was noted by residents. Members confirmed there will be a stand at the Mill Event in October 2023.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.05pm.

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: