

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 29TH OCTOBER 2004

PRESENT

Mr. Mackin presided over Mesdames Harrison, Warwick, Collins, Reddick and Holmes, Messrs. Gray, Steeples, Fisher, Coward, Wren and Leith. County Councillor Mr. Younger, District Councillors Messrs. Brown, Chapman and Birt, PC N. Battams.

1. APOLOGIES

Ms. Rooker and Mr. Dear.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24th September were confirmed and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM

Councillor Brown informed the members' that he had e:mailed two representatives of the County Council regarding his concerns over the increased traffic speeds, weights and volumes which will inevitably occur after completion of the current work on the Churchill Way crossing. He further suggested that this will impact on pedestrian safety and suggested that consideration be given to having a pedestrian crossing located between the river bridge and Kingfisher Road also bearing in mind 'the safer routes to school' issue. However, it should be noted that the latter scheme is a school responsibility. It is hoped the County Council will respond to these concerns in due course.

Councillor Brown also informed members' that he had contacted Aragon Housing Association, as previously promised, with regard to the two benches they had removed in Willow Way. A representative from Aragon replied informing Councillor Brown that the possibility of having a new bench would be considered along with other budget priorities. However, consideration will be given to tidying up the area but they are unable to give a time when they would be in a position to provide a new bench.

With regard to the Robert Bloomfield Middle School Multi-Use Hall, County Councillor Mr. Younger stated that it is hoped that the original proposals will be fully implemented although not all funding is finally in place.

5. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Mackin drew members' attention to the forthcoming Service of Remembrance on Sunday 14th November. The assembly time is 10.15 a.m.

Mr. Mackin produced photographs of a wooden bench on the Millenium Green that had been vandalised by having nails and screws driven into it. Mr. Mackin urged those present to be vigilant and report any such incidents of vandalism to PC Battams. It was thought that a comment on this wanton vandalism should also be made to the Biggleswade Chronicle for publication in their next issue.

The last full Council meeting for this calendar year is 17th December, at the end of which there will be some light refreshments.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

6.1 Confirmation of the proposed road closure on 14th November for the Remembrance Service and 26th November for the switching on of the Christmas lights has been received from the Licensing and Enforcement Officer of Mid Beds District Council.

6.2 The High Sheriff of Bedfordshire has expressed a wish to launch a Citizenship Awards Ceremony during his year of office. The County is to be divided between North, South, East and West Bedfordshire and an award will be given to one deserving person in each area as well as a Special Award to the most outstanding person of the four areas. Criteria for the nomination is somebody who gives of their time without financial payment or gain in the community either in an organising or caring capacity.

6.3 Mid Beds District Council Forward Plan – 1st November 2004 to 28th February 2005.

6.4 A letter from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister regarding the New Ethical Framework Regulations which will come into force on 4th November 2004. The regulations provide for local authority monitoring to carry out investigations into alleged breaches by members of their code of conduct which have been referred to them by an ethical standards officer prior to his or her having carried out or concluded an investigation.

6.5 A letter from the doctors at the Shefford Health Centre informing members that due to the fact that new premises cannot be found to accommodate their increasing patient list, regrettably they are now only able to accept new registrations from patients who live in Shefford.

6.6 A response has been received from the highways department of the County Council in answer to a request for a safety barrier to be erected at the Kingfisher Way Play Area. The letter informed members that Jacobs Babbie has already commissioned a road safety report. It transpired during the meeting that the report has in fact been issued and was thought to give a somewhat negative view of the prospect of installing such a barrier.

6.7 An invitation from the Bedfordshire Playing Fields Association inviting any members or groups to a short information event on how to manage a play area. The date is yet to be arranged.

6.8 Various publications:- Network (news & Information from the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity), Clerks & Councils Direct, The Playing Field, Countryside Voice from C P R E, Local Councils Update, Funding Times, Bedfordshire Police Authority-Visible Policing/Local Policing Plan incorporating the Best Value Performance Plan 2004/2005.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning and Environment of 6th and 20th October 2004.

Services and Maintenance of 13th October 2004.

Finance and Policy of 20th October 2004.

8. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

This was given by Mr. R. Younger.

9. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

This was given by Mr. Brown, Mr. Chapman and Mr. Birt.

10. ACCOUNTS

Accounts as listed in the Minute book were approved for payment.

11. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A report of two trees in the area between Southbridge Street and the swingbridge which could have an adverse effect on river flow at this point particularly with regard to the recent heavy rainfall.

A request to urge the Environment Agency to take swift action in respect of the removal of two trees in the river that had previously been reported to them. The Agency had promised to take remedial action but so far nothing has been done.

It was intimated that there is to be a cut in funding, particularly with regard to the Citizens Advice Bureaux. The Council is to discuss this later this month.

It was suggested that a letter be sent to Mr. T. Malynn, Strategic Director, (Environment) at Bedfordshire County Council in support of the NIRAH Project in Bedfordshire. This is also to be discussed later this month.

It was suggested that there should be a celebration to commemorate the fact that next year is the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II. This was thought to be a good idea and August was named as the possible month for such an event.

It was reported that two lights were not functioning in Old Bridge Way and the light outside the Bridge public house is not working efficiently but continues to flicker.

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.