

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 14TH APRIL 2004**

PRESENT

Mr Fletcher presided over Mesdames Harrison, Reddick and Warwick, Messrs. Wren and Coward.

1. APOLOGIES

Mr. Mackin and Mr. Dear.

Before the meeting commenced, Mr. Fletcher introduced Mrs. Sue Norman from the Beds R C C at Cardington. Mrs. Norman gave a 30 minute talk on play areas and the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). The talk was very informative and drew the Council's attention to the matters that need to be addressed regarding these topics in the reasonably near future. Mrs. Norman was thanked for giving up her time to attend the meeting and then left as a further meeting was scheduled for 8.00 p.m.

A summary of the meeting is available and can be distributed to members if required.

Following this meeting, Mr Fletcher introduced Mr. Tim Malynn, the new Strategic Director (Environment) at Bedfordshire County Council. County Councillor Mr. Robin Younger was also present. The main topic of discussion was the Churchill Way Bridge and the apparent 'stalemate' that appears to exist. Mr Malynn was pressed as to what he thought the County Council could do to remedy this long on-going saga. He stated that in fact very little more could be done by the County Council and suggested that maybe a petition could be raised and further suggested that the Developer may take action if they were put in an embarrassing position over wider coverage. Mr. Malynn promised to do whatever he could to advance the situation and would be attending the Annual Town Meeting on 23rd April to discuss the matter further and to answer resident's questions. Other topics discussed were the Kingsmede area, sponsored roundabouts and the planting area adjacent to Duck Lane car park.

Mr. Malynn was also thanked for giving up his time to attend at the meeting and then both he and Mr. Younger left in order that the Services and Maintenance meeting could commence.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

3. ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS

Confirmation has been received from RoSPA that an annual inspection will be carried out on the three play areas in the town for which the Council has a responsibility. The clerk was asked to contact RoSPA to arrange for a Risk Assessment to be carried out for the sites in question.

4. SPEED INFORMATION DEVICE

As the Bedfordshire Police Force has decided not to progress with the 'Speedwatch' scheme, enquiries have been made into hiring a Speed Indicator Device (SID). Such a device can be hired from Beds C C and information regarding the salient points of its operation has been received. In short, the device is currently set at 30 m.p.h. and if a vehicle is travelling at less than that speed a 'smiley face' appears. However, if a vehicle exceeds that speed, a 'smiley face' does not appear but it informs the driver of his speed. Training in the use of the equipment will be required as will information regarding its siting. The police will also have to be informed and the equipment (when available) can be hired from Monday to Friday. The Town Council will be responsible for repairing and/or replacing it.

5. RURAL GRASS CUTTING

A letter has been received from Raynesway Construction Southern Regarding the above. The letter sets out the anticipated dates and areas that will be cut, namely, a full width cut of the inside of bends and visibility splays in April and May. This means that straight lengths of verges in between bends and visibility splays will not be cut as part of this cycle. These will commence in June. A second cut will be carried out in September. At the present time these dates are provisional and may change according to the amount of growth that occurs in the next few weeks. More positive information will be received in due course.

6. ANGLIAN WATER – AREA ADJACENT TO CLIFTON ROAD AND IVEL ROAD

A reply has been received from Anglian Water regarding a letter written to them asking for reasons as to why there were odours emanating from the above area. It would appear from their reply that the odours come from a sewerage pumping station in the area next to the fire station. The letter further stated that the pumping station is cleaned on a regular basis to minimise the escape of such odours into the atmosphere, but it is deemed impossible to prevent this occurrence for 100% of the time. The letter stated that there are no projected plans for the area but if the odours continue then Anglian Water should be contacted again.

7. WINDOW DAMAGE – BELLCOTE MEADOW CHANGING ROOMS

It has been reported that the windows of the changing rooms at Bellcote Meadow have been broken. Although a member of the Saints Football Club has subsequently made them safe by boarding them in, they will have to be repaired in due course. The document appertaining to the leasing of the pitch to the Saints will have to be perused in order to see who has the responsibility for the repair although it is noted that the building on the Town Council's insurance cover.

8. PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Bedfordshire County Council (Highways Department) has replied to a letter requesting them to impose a time restriction on the parking bays in North Bridge Street. The letter stated that although the request is reasonable, parking restrictions are usually only introduced where on-street parking creates a road safety hazard rather than an annoyance to local people. The Highways Department is aware that there are some missing yellow lines in Clifton Road, notably near to the Ivel Road, Iveldale Drive and Victoria Road junctions and this will be rectified in due course. Finally, the letter stated that although there is a budget for making traffic orders, at the present time the demand far outweighs the available resources but there was an assurance that the Town Council's requests will be added to the list of outstanding traffic orders.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Note of a large pothole on the pavement in Churchill Way. Mrs. Warwick asked if the Council could write a letter to the Developer to urge them to repair it immediately as there has already been an accident necessitating a pedestrian to attend the Casualty Department of the hospital. The members were perfectly happy to accede to this request.

A willow tree in the Riverside/Waterside area of the town requires attention due to a partially severed branch. It was thought that this could cause a hazard in due course. Notification was received of two fairly large lengths of wood in the same area that need removing.

The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.
