

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 13TH APRIL 2005**

PRESENT

Mr. Wren Presided over Mesdames Harrison and Warwick, Messrs Coward and Dear.

1. APOLOGIES

Mrs. Reddick and Mr. Mackin.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. VANDALISM – THE MEADS

As a result of the vandalism at The Meads over the Easter weekend, it was decided to arrange a working party on Saturday 16th April to collect the fence posts before an accident or further damage occurs. It has also been noted that some of the fence posts have been removed without authorisation from the Council.

4. RURAL GRASS CUTTING

A letter has been received from the Services Manager of the County Council informing members of the proposed plan in respect of rural grass-cutting on the roadside verges outside the 30 mph speed restricted area. The Committee felt that the number of cuts the County Council anticipated carrying out was somewhat inadequate and a letter expressing their concerns is to be sent to the Services Manager accordingly.

5. FENCING – BELLCOTE MEADOW

One quote for the erection of the recycled plastic fence at the Bellcote Meadow has been received and a second quote is immanent. A further fencing contractor is to be contacted in the near future in order that the requisite third quote can be achieved.

6. LIGHTING – CHICKSANDS JUNCTION

Information received from the Traffic Management Division of Bedfordshire Police indicated that the lighting at the point of entry to the Chicksands base from the A507 is perfectly adequate. However, this is not the belief of committee members. It was felt that as the road sign indicating the site at that point has been obliterated it could very easily be missed. This could potentially result in vehicles braking sharply due to the fact that the surrounding lighting at night is too poor to illuminate the entrance. The Highways Department of the County Council is to be contacted informing them of the Committee's view on both the lighting and signage situations as it was felt that before long a serious accident could occur.

7. GULLY EMPTYING

A letter has been received from the Works Manager of the County Council informing members that during April the annual clean of the gullies will be carried out. The letter also requested the help of the Council by encouraging residents not to park over road drains during this period. The Officer is to be informed of the drain at the junction of New Street and George Street which appears not to have been cleaned for several years.

8. GRAFFITI

The Committee has been informed by way of a letter from the Contract Services Manager of Mid Beds District Council that the issue of graffiti was discussed by the Executive Committee on March 23 2005. This committee resolved that a survey should be carried out of all Town and Parish Councils to ascertain the severity of the problem. The letter stated that should there be a need for a graffiti cleaning operation to be carried out, then the Town and Parish Councils will be invited to discuss the matter. It was also pointed out that the District Council is not seeking to be the provider of such a service but merely the facilitator in creating a system of access by all parties to appropriate contractors. The survey enclosed with the letter was completed and returned to the Officer.

9. SIGNAGE TO INDUSTRIAL SITE

The Committee felt that the signage directing drivers of H G V's to the industrial site was inadequate. It has generally been believed that the County Council was unable to erect appropriate signage due to the fact that the road had not been fully adopted by them. However, as the Churchill Way crossing is now open it was decided to approach the Highways Department to ascertain if they are now able to erect such signage. Should they reply in the negative, then enquiries are to be made as to what steps need to be taken in order to have proper signage erected.

10. PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS

The Play Area Inspection Reports for the four play areas for which the Council has a responsibility have been received from Clements Play Management. The reports contain information up to the most recent inspection date of 7th April. It was noted that one two repairs are required but these were already known and as such are receiving remedial action.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Highways Department of the County Council is to be contacted to ascertain when the next weed-spraying operation will be carried out.

A complaint about the appalling state of the bus shelter in Ivel Road adjacent to the phone box. It is hoped that grants may be made available for a replacement through the Town Plan initiative.

A report has been received about rubbish accumulating under the bridge near the White Swan public house. It was further reported that there had been an attempt to set fire to a tree in the same area.

A complaint that residents are receiving their white refuse sacks by having them thrown into their front gardens from the pavement.

A further letter is to be sent to the Kebab Shop in the High Street requesting that they supply a bin in order that customers have a receptacle for their litter.

It was reported that cars are partially parking on the pavement in certain areas of the town. It was felt that this could be potentially hazardous to pedestrians when orange refuse sacks were also placed on the pavement hence narrowing the pathway and occasionally resulting pedestrians having to walk on the road.

The registration number of a car that has been observed speeding on several occasions in built-up areas is to be passed to Bedfordshire police.

The litter bin in Bloomfield Drive was set on fire necessitating the attendance of a fire engine.

It has been noticed that the level of nuisance youth incidents has increased at the STMA. Bedfordshire police are to be contacted accordingly.

The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.
