

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2006

PRESENT

Mr. Mackin presided over Mesdames Harrison and Holmes, Messrs. Rance, Gray, Coward, Leith and Fisher. County Councillor Younger, District Councillors Chapman and Birt. Police Inspector Whittred and PC Busby.

1. APOLOGIES

Mesdames Reddick and Clark. Messrs. Wren and Dear. District Councillor Brown.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of 27th October were confirmed and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM

None.

5. POLICE REPORT

This was given by PC Busby who detailed both the Crime Incidents and Anti-Social Behaviour Reports appertaining to Shefford for the month of October. Further information was also given by Inspector Whittred

PC Busby enquired as to whether or not the members had any objections to the Town Meeting Room being used as a drop-in venue for the dispensing information and literature regarding drug abuse etc. No objections were raised as it would be supervised by a representative of Beds Police.

6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed Inspector Whittred who arrived to answer any questions the members might have on the funding of a designated Police Community Support Officer for Shefford. Several questions were raised and as they were answered in full by Inspector Whittred it was agreed to proceed with signing the contract between Bedfordshire Police Authority and Shefford Town Council. It is anticipated that a PCSO will be available for patrol in Shefford some time in January.

The Mayor informed members that Mr. Ken Lynch of Sandy will be offering energy saving lamps to senior members of the community along with hints on how to stay warm this winter. Mr. Lynch will be standing outside the town's library from 9.30 a.m. till 12 noon.

Volunteers are still required to assist with the Annual Gala next June. Anybody who thinks they can help in any way should contact either Mr. Wren on 0162 816586 or the clerk on 01462 816321.

Mr. Mackin said that regrettably he had so far been unable to deliver the reflective safety armbands to the Lower School but hoped to do so in the very near future.

Several members commented on how much better the town centre looked thanks to the excellent weed removal work that had been carried out by the Town Council's contractor.

Mrs. Harrison informed those present about a new Government funded project to improve children's services. It is anticipated that all those groups involved i.e. play groups, schools etc. will liaise through a coordinator but at present there is still a vacancy for this position although the Headteacher of the Shefford Lower School has stated that she can accommodate such a person at the school. The Town Council agreed to support this initiative.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Recorded Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Reports for the month of October.

7.2 Mid beds District Council Forward Plan 1st December 2006 to 31st March 2007.

7.3 An invitation to attend a Strategic Health Authority Presentation on The Future of Bedford Hospital on 5th December to be held in the Council Chamber at Chicksands commencing at 6.30 p.m. for a 6.45 p.m. start.

7.4 Various publications : Local Council Review, Horizon, Bedfordshire, Clerks and Councils Direct, The Local Column, Local Councils Update, Parent Partnership News, Countryside Voice from CPRE, The Playing Field, Hurricane Youth Magazine, Bedfordshire County Council – The Greensand Trust, Beds-Spread – Community & Voluntary Service, EEAPTC News – the Regional Report for Parish and Town Councils.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following were adopted :

Planning and Environment of 1st and 15th November 2006.

Services and Maintenance of 8th November 2006.

Finance and Policy of 15th November 2006.

1436 : 11/2006

9. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Mr. Younger informed those present that both he and the Assistant Director of Transport and Highways at the County Council would be carrying out a study

regarding the possibility of a pedestrian crossing at the A507 Chicksands roundabout.

Mr. Younger also thought that consideration should be given to the possibility of implementing a speed limit lower than the national average between the 300 metres or so between the two roundabouts on the A507.

The County Matter Application Ref. No. BC/CM/2006/26 to renew the temporary consent for the storage of domestic recyclable glass and paper has been refused. The company has 14 days to appeal against this decision but if no appeal is received within the 14 days then the County Council's Enforcement Team will be involved.

Mr. Younger stated that the Executive had recently attended a meeting with the main utility providers, namely Anglian Water and suppliers of gas and electricity, however, no developers were present.

Discussions are to take place regarding the recent Government White Paper entitled *Strong & Prosperous Communities*. The central theme of the Paper is the Devolution of Services from Town Halls to communities and includes significant proposals to extend the scope and powers of town and parish councils.

The Town Council and residents are well aware that the 7.5 tonne weight limit restriction in the town is frequently breached because the restriction has not been enforced. It is well known that a blanket enforcement system will not work and Mr. Younger informed the members that enforcement of this restriction should be carried out by the police force.

10. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr. Birt informed the members that the District Council had ring-fenced £50,000 for safety measures on the A507 at Chicksands. He felt that if an appropriate speed limit should be implemented at that point then there could be a real possibility that a crossing could be installed.

As with the County Council, the District Council is currently having discussions about their status with regard to Government's White Paper on the Devolution of Services which was published on 26th October this year.

It is understood that the District Council will soon be running the parking facility which is currently operated by South Beds District Council.

The District Council is also discussing the future spending on housing capital i.e. shared ownership etc.

1437 : 11/2006

11. ACCOUNTS

The Accounts as listed in the Minute Book were approved for payment.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that the District Council's Dog Warden didn't patrol the Millenium Green.

PC Busby agreed to allow his mobile telephone number to be published in the Shefford Newline magazine.

A resident of the town informed the members that on more than one occasion he had been forced into the roadway by pupils walking en masse to and from the Samuel Whitbread Community College in Clifton Road and had also heard several similar stories particularly from members of the older generation. The Headteacher of the college is to be made aware of the situation and asked if he would kindly mention it at a morning assembly and request that the pupils be more courteous to other members of the public.

The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.
