

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 8TH FEBRUARY 2006**

PRESENT

Mr. Wren presided over Mesdames Harrison, Warwick, Rooker and Clark, Messrs. Mackin and Coward.

1. APOLOGIES

Mrs Reddick and Mr. Dear.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs. Harrison expressed an interest in Item 12 of the Agenda – One-way traffic system in New Street and Ivel Way.

3. BRCC – INVITATION TO ‘ACTION PLAN NETWORK MEETING’

An invitation to attend a meeting entitled as above has been received from the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity. The aim of the meeting is deemed to be a chance for groups who have finished or nearly finished their Parish Plan to get together and discuss any common problems or solutions. The meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st February at 7.30 p.m. in the Community Room at the BRCC’s Cardington Office. No attendees could be found from this committee.

4. BEDS CC / MBDC – INVITATION TO JOINT RECEPTION

An invitation has been received from the respective Chairman of both the County Council and the District Council to attend a joint reception on 21st March at 7.00 p.m. in the Members’ Suite at County Hall. The invitation is extended to three members of the Town Council. Mr. Mackin thought he may be able to attend.

5. BEDS C C – BUS SERVICES

Information regarding changes to local bus services and school transport in east Bedfordshire has been received from the Senior Public Transport Information Co-ordinator at the County Council. Timetable information was received in ‘Excel’ format but the County Council’s intention is to distribute fully printed timetables to Post Offices and Libraries in due course. The changes will take effect on March 6th this year. Mrs. Harrison volunteered to study the information and report back on it’s relevance to Shefford.

6. ROUNDABOUT A507

A copy of an e;mail sent to the Director of Environment at the County Council has been received from County Councillor Mr. Younger concerning the lack of response from County and a negative reply from the District Council regarding the situation on the A507 at Chicksands. The committee supported Councillor Younger’s frustration as it had frequently experienced a similar attitude from the County Council on other issues and thought that this was not an unusual situation. The committee offered to help and support Mr. Younger in any way it can.

7. FOOTPATH – RIVERBANK ADJACENT TO SHEFFORD BUSINESS PARK

The committee has received a reply from the Senior Rights of Way Officer at the County Council regarding their suggestion of allaying the erosion of the river bank by planting live willow to driven stakes as had been successfully carried out on the River Ivel at Blunham Mill. However, the County Council in partnership with the Environment Agency have decided to remedy the situation by a stake and board arrangement with backfill to restore to ground level.

8. TWO OR THREE TIER EDUCATION SYSTEM

The committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of two or three tier education system. Overall they were all in favour of continuing the current three tier system for Shefford as both the Lower School and Middle School were experiencing excellent education results and hence no reason to change. The item is to be placed on the Agenda for the next Finance and Policy Committee meeting in order to send a formal reply to the Education Department of the County Council.

9. LATEST PLAYGROUND INSPECTION REPORTS

A further month's play area inspection reports have been received from the contractor. These were read out and any remedial works required were noted accordingly.

10. REPORTS FROM HIGHWAYS DEPT – BEDS COUNTY COUNCIL

The first set of reports regarding highway faults has been received from the County Council. Although the committee has heard good reports about the new contractor, not all aspects of the feedback have been satisfactory. The situation will continue to be monitored.

11. INVITATION FROM MBDC – FUEL POVERTY WORKSHOP

An invitation to attend a strategy development workshop to discuss methods of alleviating fuel poverty problems has been received from the Housing Research and Policy Officer of the District Council. The workshop will take place from 9.45 a.m. to 12 noon on 17th February at the Council Offices in Biggleswade. As the invitation is to be held during the working day, regrettably no members from this committee were able to attend.

12. ONE WAY SYSTEMS – NEW STREET AND IVEL ROAD

The committee discussed the feasibility of operating a one way traffic system in both New Street and Ivel Road. Various possibilities were discussed and it was agreed to place the item on the agenda for the next meeting of both the Community Safety Group and the Annual Town Meeting on 21st April.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Concerns raised about the poor visibility splay that motorists were experiencing when entering Clifton Road from Ivel Road. It was also thought to be a hazardous junction for pedestrians. Similar concerns over safety were also raised regarding the by-pass turn to Campton.

A request was made for railings to be placed outside the Post Office in Southbridge Street. It was thought that the kerb was dangerous as it has been shown that pedestrians have tripped on the lower part as they pass each other. The installation of railings would alleviate the possibility of someone falling on to the road.

Information has been received that the boards securing the back of the proposed Tesco site have been broken down. Incidents of fly-tipping are also occurring.

A request for a speed and volume check in Churchill Way.

Concern about the poor condition of the Ivel Road bus shelter.

Report that a street light on the Scout Hut in Duck Lane isn't working.

Beds C C Highways Department to be contacted yet again to request that the illuminated bollards in Ampthill Road be cleaned and if possible to replace the current bulbs with more powerful ones.

Information that a new building will soon have to found to house the artefacts from the Old Forge as the building which currently houses them will not be available for much longer.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.
