

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 8th MARCH 2006**

PRESENT

Mr. Wren presided over Mesdames Harrison, Reddick, Clark and Mr. Dear.

1. APOLOGIES

Messrs. Mackin and Coward.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

Three Tenders have been received in respect of the grass cutting contract. These were discussed by the members accordingly. One Tender was three times the current cost and as such was deemed unsuitable. The two remaining contracts were for a similar financial value but as one was for a sole trader and not a limited company, doubts were raised as to what would happen in the event of sickness etc. Bearing all this in mind it is **RECOMMENDED** to full Council that the existing contractor continues with the contract.

4. DOOR CLOSING SYSTEM – PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

A quotation has been received for the supply and installation of a door opening and closing mechanism which could be fitted to the doors of the town's male and female public conveniences prior to their adoption from the District Council on 1st April. This operation had been previously carried out manually by the District Council's cleaner and as such will no longer be available. Two more quotations are to be sought prior to recommendation to the Finance and Policy committee.

5. LATEST HIGHWAYS REPORT

A document showing reported highway faults in the town and the subsequent remedial work carried out between 6th and 26th February has been received from the County Council. The report was read out to members and it is hoped that the remaining outstanding repairs would be remedied prior to receipt of the end of March report.

6. ROAD AND SEWER ADOPTIONS

The committee has received a letter from the Overview and Scrutiny Manager of the District Council informing them that Members of the Task Force wish to gauge how widespread a problem unadopted roads and sewers is across the district. The letter requested information as to whether or not any residents of recent new developments had contacted the Town Council registering problems as a result of residing on an unadopted road or on a road with unadopted sewers. The committee is to reply that they have not received any recent complaints.

7. VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS

Information has been received from the Senior Engineer Bedfordshire Highways regarding the above. The posts for both Ampthill Road and Clifton Road have been installed but the post for Bedford Road should be installed towards the end of the month. Shortly after that the network team will lay the low voltage supply and the actual signs and the commissioning which should be finalised around the end of April. The signs will display a 30 mph speed limit and will be 450 mm roundels with flashing lights and a Slow Down message underneath. The sign will remain in stealth until a vehicle is detected travelling above the preset threshold which in the case of these particular signs will be 33 mph.

8. CCTV MONITORS

A proposal has been received from a contractor regarding a Shefford Town Centre CCTV scheme. The proposal included a lot of information and it was decided that further discussion should take place. It is understood that the contractor will be making a presentation to the Shefford Community Safety Group at their meeting on 9th March which was thought to be a more appropriate platform on which to make a decision.

9. ROADS SURVEY

A further Roads Survey is to be carried out based on the County Council's Highway's criteria whereby 0 = Very Urgent – health and safety, 1 = Urgent, 2 = Routine, 2a = Routine – street lighting only, 3 = Future Programming, 4 = Work not required, 5 = Policy query. A list of road names was distributed to members and it is anticipated that the survey will be completed by Easter.

10. SIGNS – THE MEADS

A contractor is to be contacted regarding the installation of new signs in The Meads. The existing posts will be painted green and will have new aluminium green panels with white lettering erected on them.

11. TREES MILLENIUM GREEN FOOTPATH

The County Council's Arboricultural Officer is to be contacted again to ascertain if he has been able to survey the Willow trees along the Tippett Drive footpath approach to the Millenium Green as per an earlier request. Although these trees belong to either the developer or the actual house owner, the committee still felt that a professional opinion should be sought.

12. REVIEW SCHOOL STRUCTURES

A list of seven meeting dates and times across the County has been received from the County Council. The meetings have been arranged to discuss the Review of School Structures i.e. two or three tier education system. The nearest meeting for Shefford residents will take place at the Samuel Whitbread Community College at 7.00 p.m. on 9th April. However, there are other dates up to 23rd March.

13. LATEST PLAYGROUND REPORTS

A further month's play area inspection reports have been received from the contractor. These were read out and any remedial works were noted. The committee was informed that in the contractor's opinion a grass mat should be laid at the pedestrian gate entrance to the St Michael's Play Area. A quotation is to be sought accordingly.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The town's market operator is to be contacted again to see if they have reached a decision regarding the sale of the Market Charter to the Town Council.

Comment regarding the poor state of the roundabouts on the approaches to the town.

It was thought that the framework supporting the swings at the Churchill Way (Barrett) Play Area should have two swings attached to it but at present it only has the one. The District Council's Play and Open Space Officer is to be contacted to check her records.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.
