

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 11TH OCTOBER 2006**

PRESENT

Mr. Coward presided over Mesdames Harrison, Clark Reddick and Mr. Mackin.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS

The County Council's Highways Department has confirmed through their contractors (Amey's) that the Vehicle Activated Sign in Hitchin Road will be installed by Christmas this year. The agreed site is adjacent to The Birches and opposite Peartree Close. It was felt that this site will not cause irritation to residents living nearby.

4. HIGHWAYS REPORT

The September report for highway repairs has been received from the County Council.

Those items appertaining to Shefford were noted accordingly.

5. PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS

A further month's Play Area Inspection Reports has been received from the contractor. Two quotations are to be sought in respect of the St. Michael's Play Area – one for the repair of the decks of the Rainbow Unit multi-Play which are delaminating and rotting and the other for the removal of the Talking Tubes.

6. RESULTS - PUBLIC CONSULTATION RE STEPPINGLEY HOSPITAL

Last June the Director of Commissioning at the Bedfordshire Primary Care Trust invited this Council among others to comment on the intermediate care beds at Steppingley Hospital. In all 197 responses were received and three petitions signed by 2,154 people to 'Save Steppingley'. The Board's decision which will be taken forward by the newly established Bedfordshire PCT was :

1. To pursue a long term future for health and social care at the Steppingley Hospital site by developing a robust and cost-effective proposal in conjunction with local health and social care partners and with the public, and bidding for capital money to build a new generation of community hospital.

2. In the short term, to support option 2 to procure 14 beds across mid and south Bedfordshire from local nursing homes and to establish two additional beds at Biggleswade Hospital.

The full consultation can be viewed on the website : www.bedsheartlandspct.nhs.uk

7. REPLY FROM ANGLIAN WATER

The committee has received a reply from Anglian Water in answer to their queries regarding the totally inadequate and archaic sewerage system that exists in the town. Their reply stated that not only do a number of sewers in Shefford undergo annual cleaning but there aren't any capacity issues in the town. In exceptional circumstances, rainfall can and does result in sewers overflowing, causing flooding of the surrounding areas. Apparently it's this rainfall that UK sewerage undertakers, including Anglian Water, can't guard against nor control.

It should also be noted that several residents in Stanford Road wrote to the Community Safety Group itemizing their concerns regarding flooding/sewerage overflow in that area.

A copy of Anglian Water's reply to the Council is to be sent to those residents. The committee felt that Anglian Water's reply was not only unacceptable and confusing but they also questioned as to why the solution is still some years away.

A representative of the company is to be invited to give a presentation to the committee particularly bearing in mind the forthcoming 'rainy season'.

8. NOTICE BOARDS

A quotation for a Man-Made Timber Noticeboard has been received from Greenbarnes Ltd. It had been intended to place the Noticeboard outside the Scout Hut in the High Street. However, after due consideration it was decided that the allotted area was too small and hence would not be large enough to accommodate all the necessary notices as the Scouts were to have the use of one third of the space. Bearing this in mind, Councillor Rance informed the members that he would seek a quotation from a fabricating company in the town with a view to placing the notice board on the outside wall of the Public Conveniences.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were informed that loud bangs had been heard from fireworks being 'let-off' at 2.30 a.m. It was felt that although this is unacceptable so far in advance of 5th November the committee is unable to take any action.

The County Council's Highways Department is to be contacted to enquire as to why they haven't carried out their promise to clear the shrubs away from the footpath that leads from Bedford Road to Cornish Close. The shrubs have become very large and are now restricting the width of the path. The Highways Department is to be informed that a barrier is also required along the path.

Members of this committee were asked if they had any ideas whereby the Church's Environmental Group could be of assistance to the Council.

The Town Council's contractor is to be asked to clear the weeds from pavements/buildings etc. in and around the Town Centre area.

The County Council's Highway is to be contacted to enquire when New Street is to be re-surfaced. Mrs. Harrison declared an interest in this item.

1415 : 10/2006

The owners of the Shefford Business Park are to be requested to clear the weeds and grass from the front of their property in Clifton Road.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.
