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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 28TH DECEMBER 2007

PRESENT

Mr. Mackin presided over Mesdames Harrison, Clark, King, Reddick and Holmes. Messrs. Fisher and Steeples. County Councillor Younger, District Councillors Messrs. Chapman and Birt.

1. APOLOGIES

Messrs. Gray, Wren, Dear, Pollard and Barham.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of 30th November 2007 were confirmed and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM

Concerns were raised about the incidents of car crime.

Cllr. Chapman to investigate matters appertaining to the Local Development Framework site allocations.

5. POLICE REPORT

This could not be given as PC Busby was unable to attend the meeting.

6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor began by thanking the Councillors for their good work during 2007 and stated that 2008 will undoubtedly be a challenging year particularly as the 'Unitary' preparations continue. However, whatever the outcome of the 'Unitary' the Mayor informed those present that the Town Council will continue to put the needs of the community first and foremost.

It is anticipated that the proposed precept will allow the Council to move forward with several important projects.

The Mayor highlighted the 'perceived' inadequacies of the 'upper levels' of local authority and promised to campaign vigorously to ensure that improvements are made to road and footpath maintenance, the sewerage system, parking arrangements for 'town centre' developments, an understanding of the communities needs by Planning Officers as well as improvements to play spaces and hopefully a skate-park facility to name but a few.

Finally the Mayor wished everybody a safe and happy New Year.

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7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 From Beds C C – proposed temporary road closure – St. Francis Way from Monday 14/01/2008 for 3 weeks – 24 hrs.

7.2 Various publications : Wootton's What Where and When of Waste – Christmas and New Year, Fieldwork – CPRE, Local Council Review, Watch Wide News, Countryside Voice – CPRE, Local Councils Update, Beds-Spread – December 2007, The Bulletin – Standards Board for England – Issue 36, 'Keeping you in the Picture – Beds & Luton Casualty Reduction Partnership, Partnership Bulletin – Issue 4 – Sustainable Community Strategy & Local Area Agreement Update – December 2007.

7.3 Mid Beds Forward Plan – 1 January 2008 to 30 April 2008.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following were adopted :

Planning and Environment of 5th and 19th December 2007.

Services and Maintenance of 12th December 2007.

N.B. An Officer from the County Council's Highway Department is to meet with representatives of Beds Police with a view to ascertaining the feasibility of implementing a one-way traffic system in New Street, Bloomfield Drive and George Street.

Cllr. Younger stated that he will investigate as to whether or not the partial survey has been carried out regarding the signage in Amphill Road.

Finance and Policy of 19th December 2007.

N.B. The Town Council is to implement a system for monitoring S.106 money. The District Council is to be requested to provide information under the Freedom of Information Act as to the current status of all Shefford S.106 Agreements, the monies involved and the length of time the Agreement still has to run.

9. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Councillor Younger informed those present that the Aragon Housing Association, the District Council and the County Council are working on way to improve the parking situation in Gresham Way.

With regard to the A507, Cllr. Younger stated that Amey's are to publish speed limits prior to a crossing eventually.

It was thought that the Shefford Christmas lights display was probably the best in the county.

10. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

At the last meeting of the District Council's Executive it was agreed to roll out the food waste collection initiative to the whole area by October.

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At the present time, Town and Parish Councils are not consulted on licensing matters. It is hoped that discussions with the Licensing Officer at the District Council will take place in the new year.

The District Council has acquired 'play' funding to value of nearly £250k from the lottery and it is hoped that this money will be used to set up three mobile play areas.

11. ACCOUNTS

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

12. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None.