

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 11TH APRIL 2007**

PRESENT

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

1. APOLOGIES

Mr. Mackin.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. HIGHWAYS REPORT

The March report for highway repairs has been received from the County Council and those items appertaining to Shefford were noted accordingly. Concerns were raised about the pathetic content of the reports and the poor quality of the few repairs that have been carried out both in the town and on the approach roads.

4. PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS

The March Play Area Inspection Reports have been received from the contractor. These were read out to the committee and any remedial works were noted.

5. AGENDA TOPICS FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Mr. Wren asked if any members had any topics they would like placed on the agenda for the Annual Town Meeting on Friday 20th April. No further topics were suggested. The agenda has now been finalized and can be viewed both in the Town Meeting Room window and Shefford library.

6. CLOSER TO COMMUNITIES – MBDC

It is believed that Bedfordshire will get Unitary Government but as yet it is unknown whether it will be 1 or 2 Unitary Councils and the Government has set a period until 22nd June for consultation. All the local authorities agree that the status quo is not a viable option for the future in view of changing circumstances and reduced funding available from Government. In order that the Minister making the financial decision in July is aware of local feelings the District Council is asking all shareholders to inform them of their preferred options as soon as possible.

7. BEDS & LUTON MINERALS DEVELOPMENT PLAN – BEDS C C

A letter has been received from the Principal Minerals and Waste Planning Officer at the County Council informing members that they have published two supplementary issues and options papers for the Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals Development Framework. There is one paper for 'core strategy' issues and the other relates to potential new sites for mineral working. Since the initial round of consultation the County Council has received 3 additional site nominations and has identified 4 further Core Strategy issues that need to be addressed. The additional Site nominations are located at Willington/ Pavenham/ Milton Earnest and Harrold/ Carlton. It was agreed that the identified sites are unlikely to impact on Shefford.

8. KOMPAN – QUOTE FOR BELLCOTE MEADOW PLAY EQUIPMENT

A quotation and a layout plan has been received from Kompan in respect of refurbishing the Bellcote Meadow Play Area. It was agreed that the documentation was not only impressive but also very competitively priced and ideal for the site. However, an application for a grant would be needed as well as a contribution from Town Council Play Area Reserve although at the present it was felt that the Reserve held insufficient funds.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A petition has been received from the residents of Kingfisher Way regarding the persistent anti-social behaviour they are experiencing. The petitioners are to be informed that the Town Council shares their concerns and is currently drafting a letter to the Chief Constable of Bedfordshire Police enquiring as to what action the police intend to take or are taking with regard to the constant crime and bad behaviour in the town.

It was suggested that that 'grassmat' could be laid on an area in The Meads approximately the size of a 5 a-side football pitch which would hopefully draw youths away from the dangers and nuisance of playing football on the town's car park. Permission would first have to be sought from the Beds and River Ivel Drainage Board.

The contractor is to be asked to re-instate the posts surrounding the shrubs at Duck Lane Car Park.

It was reported that the door closer on the gents public toilet was not operating correctly and should be reported to the contractor.

The Highways Department of the County Council is to be requested to reduce the size of the shrubs at the Lucas Way/ Stanford Road as the pathway has become too narrow.

The contractor is to be asked to remove the home-made swing at Waterside which has been recently erected by youths as it is extremely dangerous.

The landowner is to be requested to remove the low branch on a conifer tree in Old Bridge Way.

The committee listed all the trees in the town for which they had a responsibility in order that an Arboricultural Officer could carry out a survey to establish if any of them require attention.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.