

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 14TH MARCH 2007**

PRESENT

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

1. APOLOGIES

Mrs. Clark and Mr. Mackin.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. FIXED PENALTY NOTICES – MID BEDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 has provided Local Authorities, Town and Parish Councils and the Environment Agency with more effective powers to tackle poor environmental quality and anti-social behaviour. In particular, the Act included sections on nuisance and abandoned vehicles, litter, graffiti, waste, noise and dogs.

The Police Reform Act 2002 provided Chief Police Officers with the ability to confer on Police Community Support Officers (PCSO'S) a range of powers including the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) for environmental offences of littering, Dog Control Orders, graffiti and flyposting, contained within the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. In order to maximize both the enforcement and deterrent potential use of FPN's, the District Council's Community Safety Team and Environmental and Planning Services Directorate have worked with Beds Police to develop the use of FPN's for these offences. The Chief Constable of Beds Police has extended PCSO's with the full suite of powers available and the Force Executive agreed that PCSO's can administer Local Authority FPN's for 'enviro-crime' offences that fall within their powers.

The District Council is currently considering the future extension of the use of FPN's for Dog Control Orders which replaced the previous system of byelaws for the control of dogs which has now been repealed. It is intended that the pilot will run for three months from April 2007 and will focus on the Sandy area of Mid Beds.

4. SHRUB PRUNING – KINGSMEDDE/DUCK LANE CAR PARK

The Town Council's contractor is to be requested to reduce the size of the shrubs in the above two areas.

5. TREE MAINTENANCE

The committee is to seek qualified contractors to carry out a survey of all the trees for which the Council has a responsibility in order to establish which trees will require attention in the near future.

6. ROADS SURVEY

The committee studied the full report of all the concerns raised by members regarding the state of the town's roads and pavements, several of which have already been passed to the assistant Director of Highways and Transport at the County Council. The committee has also received an e:mail from PC Busby regarding his concerns about parking in the town which will similarly be forwarded to the County Council.

7. PORTABLE TRAFFIC SIGNALS – SOUTHBRIDGE STREET/HIGH STREET

Information from the Bedfordshire Highways informing the committee that portable traffic signals will be sited as above from 19th to 30th March in order to carry out highway works outside the Indian Chef and Ladbrokes.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed that the War Memorial is in need of cleaning. It is anticipated that the work will be carried out before the Annual Summer Gala on 3rd June.

The District Council is to be requested to supply and install a dog litter bin in Bedford Road adjacent to the pathway leading to the farm.

It was noted that there are considerably more incidents of vehicles parking on the pavement in various areas of the town and further incidents of inappropriate vehicle parking e.g. Old Bridge Way and Ampthill Road. PC Busby is to be asked if he would kindly monitor the situation perhaps with the assistance of the town's new PCSO.

The County Council is to be requested to carry out work on the conifer trees alongside the pathway from Cornish Close to Lucas Way as they are now so wide that they are restricting the width of the path.

It was reported that the Bloomfield Drive sign has been damaged by vandals and is now leaning at a 45 degree angle. The District Council is to be requested to reinstate it accordingly.

The Town Council's contractor is to be requested to reinstate the vertical posts securing the flowerbeds in Duck Lane which have been a constant source of vandalism for many years. The members are aware of the possibility that vandals will continue to remove the posts after the reinstatement.

It was reported that the road markings in several areas of the town need to be reinstated as they have been worn away by regular vehicular traffic. e.g. Old Bridge Way, St Francis Way and the approaches to the traffic lights. A report is to be forwarded to the Assistant Director of Highways and Transport at the County Council.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.
