

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 10TH OCTOBER 2007**

PRESENT

Mr. Wren presided over Mrs. Harrison. Messrs. Mackin, Dear, Coward and Pollard.

1. APOLOGIES

Ms. King.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

At this point Mr. Wren welcomed Mrs. Vivien Kinch-Jameson, Practice Manager at the Health Centre and Sonia Jordan, Chief Executive from the Ivel Valley Health Partnership (Practice Based Commissioning Group) who arrived to inform the members about progress on the new Health Centre in Hitchin Road.

Both representatives stressed that they would welcome the support of the Town Council and this was gladly given. Mrs. Kinch-Jameson explained that the current Health Centre site occupied .6 acres but the site would be approximately 2 acres including the car park. The current Health Centre was built to serve some 8,500 people but now caters for some 15,700. It is anticipated that mobile units will attend the new Health Centre which will mean that not so many people will need to attend a hospital which will be of particular benefit to the elderly of the area. Members were also given an explanation of some of the revolutionary techniques. It is also hoped that some form of Community Transport will be in operation to supplement the somewhat poor local bus service and the funding for that may well come from Tesco Stores. Mr Wren thanked both representatives for giving up their time to attend the meeting after which they left.

3. SHEFFORD PARISH LIAISON VISIT – BEDS C C

On 28th September Mrs. Harrison informed members that both she and an Amey's Highways Engineer had carried out an inspection of various areas in the town that require remedial action. Following that inspection, the Highways Area Steward has issued a brief resumé of the likely actions to be taken by the Highways Department. These were discussed at length along with some questions that the members intend to ask the Area Manager when she attends the next meeting of this committee on 14th November.

It was agreed to spend the town's annual highway allowance on having 'rumble strips' laid on the various approach roads to the town – (left-hand side only). It is to be requested that these should be of substantial quality bearing in mind the speed at which vehicles enter the town.

4. PLAYGROUND REPORTS

The September play area reports have been received from the contractor and all issues requiring attention were noted. It was agreed to reinstate the grassmat at the Basketball Court/Football Goal and replace the fixings on the Elephant Springer at the Bellcote Meadow play area. The contractor is also to be requested to suggest an alternative method of repairing the broken bottom fence rail at the Meads.

5. HIGHWAYS REPORT

The September report for highways has been received from the County Council's Highway department and those items appertaining to Shefford were noted accordingly. The report also enclosed information on the Highway Department's method of priority grading along with the various categories and abbreviations they use in order to organize their workload. Mrs. Harrison said she would study the report in order to inform the members of her comments accordingly.

6. NO COLD CALLING ZONES

County Councillor Younger has forwarded an e:mail he has received from a Trading Standards Officer at the County Council regarding the above. The 'non-permanent' signs are to be replaced in towns and villages throughout the county and a request that Shefford should be prioritized has been made. The 'Hotline' number was previously operational out of hours and at weekends but this was discontinued as demand was extremely low. 'No Cold Calling Zones' do not have any legal status but were implemented at the request of a community to convey a collective attitude to cold callers and empower more vulnerable residents to deal with them. It is estimated that No Cold Calling Zones have helped to contribute to a drop of 21% in distraction burglary countywide.

7. CASH FOR YOUTH PROJECTS

County Councillor Younger has forwarded an e:mail to the members informing them that youths aged between 13-19 in the Samuel Whitbread catchment could receive cash for projects. A youth group called 'It's Up 2 U' – (supported by Beds Police, Aragon Housing Association and the County Council) want to hear of ideas for events that would benefit young people in the community and will reward the best ideas with cash up to £750.

8. OFFERS OF VOLUNTEER HELP

An e:mail has been received from a resident in Riverside offering his services to carry out preventative measures to deter travellers from entering Waterside. The resident is to be thanked for his help and informed that all areas that are at risk from unwanted settlers are to be surveyed and subjected to a Risk Assessment.

9. INVITATION TO TRAINING SESSION – DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

An invitation to attend a free Basic Drug and Alcohol Awareness Training has been received from the County Council. It is to be held at the Mid Beds District Council Offices at Chicksands on Friday 2nd November and runs from 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. The seminar is aimed people who feel they need a basic level of knowledge or need to know more about substance misuse.

10. QUESTIONNAIRE RE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

A questionnaire has been received from the County Council which should be considered along with the Bedfordshire Highways 5 year programme 2008-13. The questionnaire was discussed in full and is to be completed by the clerk.

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11. ROAD NAMES FOR ALCOHOL FREE ZONES

It was agreed to implement various alcohol free zones in the town. The committee highlighted the main areas of concern on a street map which is to be discussed in conjunction with Beds Police prior to a formal submission to the District Council.

12. SITING OF A TOWN NOTICE BOARD

Over recent months several suggestions have been made as to what would be considered a suitable site for a notice board. The current suggestion is in Church Walk, ideally on the library/chemist's wall as this is deemed to be a very busy thoroughfare and as such would be an obvious place to inform residents of events and local issues. The clerk is to contact the landlord and/or agent in order to seek permission.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The committee received notification of several street lights in the town either not working efficiently or not working at all. Clerk to pass on the various lamp post numbers to the County Council.

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.
