

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 25TH JULY 2008

PRESENT

Mr. Mackin presided over Mesdames Harrison, Clark and King. Messrs. Fisher, Pollard, Leith, Coward, Steeples and Wren. District Councillor Brown. PC Busby.

1. APOLOGIES

Mrs. Reddick. Messrs. Dear and Barham. County Councillor Younger, District Councillor Birt.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of 27th June 2008 were confirmed and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM

None.

5. POLICE REPORT

PC Busby reported on the incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour that had occurred between the 1st and 25th July.

Youths still gathering in the George Street area although no complaints had been received from residents.

Skip lorries are still travelling through the town.

The Pub Watch scheme has been re-instated.

Young people have been seen playing in the river and have been advised of the dangers.

Letters are to be sent to all schools asking if they would like to host a talk on *Smart Water*. Regrettably there has been very little take-up. Neighbourhood Watch members can obtain *Smart Water* at reduced cost.

Beds police are aware of the piles of rubbish on the old Shefford Business Park site and the developers have been contacted regarding security and other issues.

It was noted that the Town Council's main priorities for policing are Criminal Damage, Under-age Drinking and Speeding.

6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that that the Farmers Market had been very successful with no negative reports received. Mr. Pollard was thanked for his excellent work. Further details will be given by Mr. Pollard later in the meeting.

Planning for the Summer Gala 2009 will start very soon. Again, the Mayor reiterated his request for more volunteers.

Mr. Wren will give a more detailed report later.

Change of Use permission for a unit on the industrial estate to be used for youth projects has been granted by the D C but so far no response has been received from Tesco re rental/lease charges.

Details of the two new sites are now on the D C's website. The Mayor has drafted a response on the sites which will be discussed at the next meeting of the Planning committee. All Council members were requested to respond on a personal level.

Earlier this month a meeting was held to discuss the unwelcome anti-social behaviour that takes place around school property and other areas of the town. It would appear that the police response to incidents is jeopardized by lack of manpower. Town/Parish Council meeting minutes from across the country all make the same comment – not enough officers to do the job. This is an issue that should be referred to all Chief Constables and higher authorities.

Although the Town Council has not been formally contacted, it would seem that they no longer need to contribute to the part-funding of a PCSO.

The next full Council meeting will be held on Friday 29th August 2008.

7. FARMERS MARKET REPORT

Mr. Pollard informed those present that the stallholders had been very pleased with the turnout and it is hoped to expand the market in August. Banners and flyers have been printed with the forthcoming dates. Consideration needs to be given to what can be done at a Christmas market. It was felt that other Council members need to be involved. Thanks were given to both the Gala Queen and Princess for opening Shefford's first Farmers Market. The Farmers Market is now on the Tastes of Bedfordshire website.

8. GALA REPORT

Mr. Wren informed those present that the accounts cannot be completed as all invoices had not been received despite reminders being sent.

The first Gala committee meeting will be held in the Council Chamber on 1st September at 7.30pm and subsequent meetings are scheduled for the first Monday of the month after that.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Shefford and Clifton Anti-social behaviour incidents and Recorded Crime from 01.04.2008 to 30.06.2008.

7.2 Various publications : Safer Neighbourhood Team Newsletter – July 2008, Volunteer Centre newsletter – June 2008, local Councils Update July 2008, Hurricane, The Bulletin- Standards Board for England – June 2008, Clerks & Councils Direct July 2008.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following were adopted :

Planning and Environment of 2nd and 16th July 2008

Services and Maintenance of 9th July 2008.

Finance and Policy of 16th July 2008.

Residents of Queen Elizabeth Close expressed their concerns regarding the newly proposed Ivel Road site (*Talk to Mid Beds*) and the likely adverse impact on traffic flow should the site be selected. It was pointed out that Ivel Road already suffered traffic congestion problems.

Further concerns were also raised about the proposed development at the old football ground in Ivel Road as new signs have already been erected although no replacement football pitch is known to have been found. Cllr. Brown stated that a football facility will be found within the Shefford boundary and that he would make enquiries and get back to the Council within the next month.

There was also a further call to make Ivel Road a one-way traffic system.

11. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

In the absence of Cllr. Younger, Mr. Mackin reported his concerns over local village Post Office closures and the proposed closure of dispensaries in doctor's surgeries.

12. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr. Brown reported that the Kingfisher Way Play Area was still owned by the developer. The D C has sent documentation to the Land Registry regarding a change of ownership and although the plans have now been accepted by them the developer still has the responsibility for maintenance etc.

The Unitary is still progressing but it is a difficult road ahead.

Cllr. Brown reported that he had dealt with various highway issues and said that he would like to be 'copied in' on complaints made by the Town Council so they are not duplicated.

13. ACCOUNTS

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

14. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A question was raised by a resident about the poor state of the bus shelters. This is something the Town Council has been dealing with for some time and has been let down by various schemes. It has now set aside funding within the precept and is waiting for responses for additional funding from both the District and County Councils and the Beds Rural Communities Charity before deciding how many can be replaced in the current financial year.

End of Meeting
