



MINUTES OF THE F&GP MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 15th SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7PM
VIA ZOOM WEBINAR AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE

PRESENT:

Cllr D Albone
Cllr G Fage
Cllr F Foster
Cllr H Ramsay (Chairman)
Cllr M Foster
Cllr M Knight
Cllr M North
Cllr R Pullinger (Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Russell
Cllr D Strachan

Mr P. Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Biggleswade Town Council
Mr P. Truppin – Assistant Town Clerk, Biggleswade Town Council
Mrs S. van der Merwe – Meeting Administrator, Biggleswade Town Council

Members of Public – None

Meeting Formalities:

Following a reminder to meeting attendees, both panel and public, that this is a formal meeting, the Chairman advised that Members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak during public open session but not at other times. The meeting is being filmed and by being present attendees are deemed to have agreed be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Chairman advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Chairman asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGIES

None.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

a. **Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:**

None.

b. **Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:**

Cllr R Pullinger – Item 5d. – Orchard Community Centre.

3. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

The Chairman advised Members of the public wishing to speak to use the “raise hand” function on screen.

None.

4. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

Members received and **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Finance & General Purpose (F&GP) Meeting held on **Tuesday 3rd March 2020**.

5. **MATTERS ARISING**

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting of **03rd March 2020**.

None.

6. **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Asset register**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive advised Members there are currently two asset registers, one held by BTC Accountants and another within the Town Council. These will be merged into a comprehensive document in the coming weeks.

b. **IT Tablets**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive is working towards modernising the Town Council, ensuring effective communications and easy access to Council documentation - furthermore, that the Town Council meets data regulation regulations. Previously issued IT equipment has been returned to the Town Council office and consideration will be given to purchasing new equipment.

c. **Leasing a Workshop Facility**

The Town Clerk informed Members a written report to the Council regarding leasing a workshop facility is still in progress. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive and the Works Manager have been working together to compile a comprehensive specification list which includes the long term needs to support planned projects for the Public Realm team.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive will present the report to Council.

d. **Orchard Community Centre**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive advised Members that the Orchard Centre will re-open on 21st September 2020. There will be communications issued to mainstream media and the public. The current regulations capping the numbers of people per class will be monitored and controlled appropriately.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive confirmed that significant work had been put into ensuring compliance with government regulations and ensuring relevant safety equipment was installed. There will be an extensive cleaning regime after every booked event.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive recommended reviewing payment methods and sales tactics for the services at this Centre over the next financial year.

Members noted that rental costs for the remainder of the current financial year would remain as they are. The annual review of charges will be held later this year to set costs of hire for 2021/22.

e. **Drove Road Chapel**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive advised that a written report on inclusive costs will be delivered to the Committee for the Chapel Wall and front wall.

During a recent visit to the cemetery the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and Works Manager were approached by residents with concerns around particular areas in the cemetery being used for antisocial purposes. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive suggested in the short term locking the cemetery at both entry points into the Chapel and installation of cameras.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive was advised by Members that there is a guide in the Town Council Offices which regulates cemetery maintenance and conditions of use of the grounds.

f. **Financial regulations**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive advised Members that a report will be issued shortly.

7. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

None.

8. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

The IT Administrator advised Members of the public wishing to speak to use the “raise hand” function on screen.

None.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolved** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

9.

EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution was moved that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

a. Rose Lane Car Park:

Members were advised there had been no response from the landlord and notice has been served on the Landlord.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive will submit a report to the Town Council at a forthcoming meeting.

b. Contracts database:

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive advised Members a major review of all contracts is necessary to establish value to the Council, comprehensive terms and conditions as well as effective and transparent procurement.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive confirmed that a programme of works is being compiled by Officers and Senior Management to establish priorities for business functions. This will put the Town Council in a better position to make recommendations of priorities, data capture and intelligence reports that will give Members a sense of delivery.

c. Payroll:

The Assistant Town Clerk updated Members on the payroll transfer to George Hay. There had been some setbacks with the bank's authorisations but the bank has assured this has been resolved.

d. Financial Reports:

Members noted financial reports were last added to Sharepoint in April 2020. The Assistant Town Clerk confirmed this will be reviewed with the Accountant.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive informed Members the projected outturn report has been received and he is liaising with the Accountant with queries. He will be conducting granular budget reviews and will update Committee Chairs and the Mayor at the 13 October 2020 Council Meeting.