

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on
Tuesday 7th January 2020, 7.15pm at the Community Centre, Brook End.

Present: Councillors Mr J. Day, Mr D. Ellison, Mr A. Gibb, Mr R. Harris, Mr L. Ivall, Ms L. Kitchener, Mr J. Lean, Mrs C. Leggatt, Mr A. Macdonald (Chairman), Mr B. Massey, Mr J. Price Williams, Mr C. Temple and Mr A. Zerny.

Absent: Cllr Mr J. Hobbs.

Also Present: CBC Cllr Ms T. Wye, James Griffiths Head of Planning Keir Living, Liz Smith Chairman of Trustees Potton Hall for All, Phill Banks Trustee Potton Hall for All, Craig Gant Trustee Potton Hall for All, Kim Gutteridge Trustee Potton Hall for All, approx. 40 Members of the Public, the Town Clerk, Clerical Assistant and Admin Assistant.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mr J. Hobbs.

2 Declaration of Interest

Councillors were reminded that they should declare an interest in any matter of personal or prejudicial interest to be discussed at this meeting. Information about this requirement had been on the table.

3 Public Participation Session

Members of the public spoke about The Ridgeway planning application.

Concerned about Doctor's with wait times, because of the extra housing now need a medical centre.

Need to object to objection at a higher level.

Affordable housing isn't affordable housing.

Green Space in the Green Infrastructure Plan.

Removal of several established trees.

The amount of additional housing coming to Potton.

Kier Homes is being sold.

The Chairman spoke about housing capacity.

Central Bedfordshire Council Cllr Zerny spoke about the development.

James Griffiths spoke about Section 106 agreement for Health.

The Chairman spoke about Section 106 agreement for Health all going to Gamlingay and unless you have a car, very difficult to attend appointments in Gamlingay.

James Griffiths spoke about Kier being looked at by two investment companies.

Investment companies want to make money.

Central Bedfordshire Council has 5.8 years of housing supply.

James Griffiths development guided by Local Plan. Some sites are approved by appeal. Site suitable for residential in 2011. Highways disapproved of all other accesses to the site. Less than one extra car per minute.

How can the development be stopped.

Central Bedfordshire Council Cllr Wye spoke about the development.

A member spoke about the more objections the better, need to be material considerations.

James Griffiths the development is mainly 1bed, 2bed and 3bed with 30% affordable.

4 Development in Potton (Agenda item 9)

4.1 Property Count

The Chairman summarised the Town Clerk's report.

- As of the 31st March 2015, Potton's Property Count was 2,250 dwellings.
- During the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016 the number of dwellings increased by 27.
- During the period 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 the number of dwellings increased by 20.
- During the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 the number of dwellings increased by 67.
- As of 31st March 2018, Potton's Property Count was 2,364 dwellings.
- Planning permission has been approved for 501 additional properties. (Land to the South of 'The Paddocks' = 90, Land at Biggleswade Road 120 and Land at Biggleswade Road Phase 1 = 31, Land to the South of Sandy Road = 90, Land opposite the Playing Field, Mill Lane = 62, Land at 64 Biggleswade Road, Potton = 85 and Land to the west of Everton Road = 30) less Housing Trajectory completions at 31st March 2018 = -70. Total 2,795.

4.2 Planning applications considered by the Planning Committee on 17th December 2019 for recommendation at the next Town Council meeting.

Application No: CB/TCA/19/00539

Location: St Marys House, 1 Hatley Road, Potton, Sandy SG19 2RP

Proposal: Works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 Ash – reduce and reshape by up to 25% by removing a maximum of 3 meters. Tree leaning a lot due to large horse chestnut adjacent, needs some weight removing, to balance crown; T2 Norway Maple, remove to ground level; T3 Ash – in very poor condition, large limbs fallen off in past, pollard the three remaining leaders to make safe over grave yard.

The Planning Committee **resolved** no objection subject to approval of Tree & Landscape Officer.

It was **resolved** no further comment.

Application No: CB/19/04009/FULL

Location: Land to South of The Ridgeway, Potton SG19 2PS

Proposal: Full planning application for 100 dwellings together with associated access and infrastructure as well as 0.5 Ha of allotment land.

As a result of analysis of this proposed development using the Neighbourhood Plan checklist, the Planning Committee resolved to object to the development for the following reasons:

1. The Potton Neighbourhood Plan (NP) supports Medium Scale development (from 50 to 500 dwellings) over the lifetime of the plan (2016-2035). Approval of this application would result in a total increase in dwellings of 555 therefore exceeding the NP supported growth.
2. Although this site was awarded PPA in the CBC Local Plan, this was before planning consent was awarded to 85 dwellings in Biggleswade Road West (the adjacent area) and so we believe that there is no justification for a further 100 dwellings.
3. The Neighbourhood Plan Vision B states: 'There will be controlled, proportionate and uniform growth over the period of the Plan with sustainable developments that meet the needs of the Town and its residents'. Following the substantial growth over the past 3 years, in order to comply with this vision statement, even if the PPA is retained, any development should not be considered until at least 2030 in the last five years of the Plan.
4. Access from The Ridgeway is considered inadequate. We believe that the Transport Assessment is out of date. For instance it states that there is open land to the south. This land is currently under development of 85 houses.
5. We also question some of the assumptions made regarding the Parking Assessment. It is not valid to assume that existing residents of The Ridgeway will now park their cars in garages or on driveways thus relieving congestion on the road. The Transport Assessment also fails to identify the fact that many vehicles of non-residents are parked in The Ridgeway. These are residents from nearby streets who do not have the benefit of dedicated parking spaces or on-street parking opportunities directly adjacent to their properties. This is an issue which has been exacerbated as a result of a loss of on-street parking due to the Tall Trees development.
6. No consideration has been taken into the increased vehicular activity at the junction of The Ridgeway and Biggleswade Road. Biggleswade Road is already very busy and an additional potential 200 cars using this junction is considered excessive and potentially dangerous. This junction is also close to the junction of Biggleswade Road and Station Road which incorporates a pedestrian crossing. It is not uncommon for traffic to be queueing past The Ridgeway junction at busy times.
7. The transport Assessment makes judgements on the Central Bedfordshire 2011 Census, which are not applicable to a small (growing) market town. There is limited local employment and buses beyond

Biggleswade or Sandy are extremely limited (weekly in some cases).

8. It is not possible to use buses for commuter connections at the railway stations of Biggleswade and Sandy. Therefore commuters, and those working in surrounding towns, will need to travel by car. This is underplayed considerably in the Transport Assessment.

9. It is already a fact that the Healthcare provision in Potton is severely overstretched. Recently, a wait of up to 6 weeks has been experienced to achieve a doctor's appointment. The population increase resulting from this development would exacerbate this problem.

10. The Green Travel Plan contains several mistakes and should therefore be ignored. For instance:-

a. Paragraph 1.2 states 96 dwellings whereas the proposal is for 100 dwellings

b. Paragraph 5,26 states that 6% is less than the national average of 5.7%

c. Paragraph 5,34 refers to 'the presence of Houghton Regis High Street'. This implies that the report is a simple cut and paste of an existing report rather than a fully researched new report.

d. The bus service considered is inappropriate for train commuters. The first bus is 09.45 and the last bus 17.45.

e. Paragraph 1.1 states that the report has been prepared 'in support of a planning application' which suggests that the result of the report is a foregone conclusion.

It was **resolved** no further comment.

The Chairman thanked the Planning Committee and Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

4.3 Planning applications considered by the Planning Committee on 7th January 2020 for recommendation at the next Town Council meeting.

Application No: CB/19/04256/FULL

Location: 27 Market Square, Potton, Sandy SG19 2NP

Proposal: Proposed change of use of First Floor Flat (C3) to mixed use Restaurant and Hot Food Takeaway (A3/A5) and Internal Alterations.

Application No: CB/19/04257/LB

Location: 27 Market Square, Potton, Sandy SG19 2NP

Proposal: Listed Building: Alterations associated with Proposed change of use of First Floor Flat (Cc) to mixed use Restaurant and Hot Food Takeaway (Ad/A5) and Internal Alterations.

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow members of the public to comment.

Concerns were raised for the neighbouring residents and businesses to the property regarding i) the amount rubbish and food waste that accumulates behind the property which attracts vermin, ii) the noise already generated by the business and how this will increase with the proposed change of use for the first floor flat and iii) the amount of litter/rubbish discarded in the

Market Square.

The Planning Committee **resolved** to object to the applications. The Town Council request that satisfactory proposals for environmental waste management, noise level management, control of vermin and litter/rubbish is put in place before the application is approved.

It was **resolved** no further comment.

5 Minutes (Agenda item 4)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 10th December 2019, which had been previously circulated, were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

6 Town Council Committees (Agenda item 5)

Town Council accepted and adopted the following minutes and all recommendations contained from the Town Council Committee:

Planning Committee – 3.12.19 and 17.12.19.

Social Media Committee – 17.12.19

Playing Fields, Allotments and Burials Committee – 17.12.19

Christmas Lights – 5.1.20

7 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (Agenda item 6)

Cllr Wye advised meeting with highways officer about Willow Road and other roads in the town. Ward Cllrs grant scheme not spent in this financial year will be rolled over to the next financial year.

8 Councillors Surgery Dates (Agenda item 7)

Members discussed about the monthly Councillor Surgery which usually take place once a month on a Saturday 10am – 12 noon in the Library.

The Chairman asked for volunteers.

The Cllrs volunteered as follows.

Month	Cllr	Cllr
March*	Gibb	Kitchener
April	Harris	Ivall
May	Ellison	Massey

*Seasonal Market Day

It was **resolved** that the councilor surgeries are carried out as above subject to the Library being available.

9 Councillors Surgery (Agenda item 8)

Councillors Surgery took place on the 14th December 2019. Councillors Day and Macdonald were in attendance.

Councillors Day and Macdonald gave a verbal report, and this included advising that the surgery starting outside, though had to move inside because of heavy rain.

The town council noted the report.

10 Confidential – Commercial Matter (Agenda item 14)

Councillor Angus Macdonald (Chairman) passed the following motion:
That, in pursuance of the confidential matters concerning a commercial issue, members of the public were asked to withdraw from the meeting.

11 Potton Cemetery (Agenda item 10)

Members noted the report with regards to Potton Cemetery.

It was suggested that that the report with regards to Potton Cemetery is sent to Tony Keaveney at Central Bedfordshire Council.

It was suggested that it is a formal requirement to contact the Police about all incidents.

It was **resolved** that the report with regards to Potton Cemetery is sent to Tony Keaveney at Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members considered the request to replace 59 helium filled balloons at a cost of £383.41. Members commented that a number of the balloons are in the fields around Potton, the balloons shouldn't be tied to the tree and the town council has the right to remove and dispose of the balloons.

It was **resolved** to not pay for the replacement of 59 helium filled balloons.

12 Finance (Agenda item 11)

i. To approve the list of payments.

Members asked the Town Clerk questions about the payments.

It was **resolved** that the payments up to the 7th January 2020 be approved.

ii. Verify Bank Reconciliations against statement 1st November – 30th November 2019.

Members proceeded to go through the bank reconciliation.

It was **resolved** that the bank reconciliation for 1st November – 30th November 2019 be approved.

iii. To receive an income and expenditure by budget heading report showing progress against the budget 2019/20 at the end of November 2019.

Members proceeded to go through the detailed statement of income and expenditure against budget.

It was **resolved** to approve the detailed statement of income and expenditure against budget for the period to 30th November 2019.

13 Christmas Lights (Agenda item 12)

Recommendations from the Christmas Lights Committee with regards to budget requirements for 2020-21 were noted.

14 Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils – Buckingham Palace Garden Party (Agenda item 13)

Members noted the correspondence from the Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils (BATPC) with regards to Buckingham Palace Garden Party.

Members considered whether to nominate Cllr Macdonald.

It was **resolved** to nominate Cllr Macdonald.

15 To consider financial requirements (annual expenditure, capital and revenue projects) for 2020-21.

Members noted the detailed balance sheet as of the 31st November 2019 (End of Month 8).

As per the resolution at the last town council meeting the RFO (Responsible Financial Officer) has prepared a draft budget.

It was **resolved** to set a budget with £350,634 income, £350,634 expenditure and to meet this to increase the Band D council tax by 10% to £138.77 with a total precept of £ 293,637.

It was **resolved (i)** to move £125,000 (see breakdown below) into a new Ear Marked Reserve for a Community Hall, the money will only be released when all other funding for the community hall is in place. **(ii)** before the town council will consider putting any additional funding for the community hall (including borrowing money), the town council wants to see the full business plan. **(iii)** if the town council is happy with the full business plan, the town council would then like the Hall for All Charity and the town council, to consult the residents of Pottton about the town council taking out a loan towards part funding some of the shortfall in the funds needed and this will include an article in newsletter.

Breakdown of where the £125,000 for the Ear Marked Reserve is as follows:

Transfer

General Reserve £67,317

Neighbourhood Plan £13,898

Green Wheel £3,500

Sub-total £84,715

Transfer (need to increase saving over future years to replace)

Community Centre £12,155

Cemetery Extension ££9,090

Skatepark Replacement £8,040

Sub-total £29,285

Rolling-total £114,000

Underspends from the current financial year

Green Wheel £3,500

Sub-total £3,500

Rolling-total £117,500

Underspends from the current financial year (need to increase saving over future years to replace)

Skatepark Capital £3,500

Skatepark Replacement Saving £4,000

Sub-total £7,500

Rolling-total £125,000

16 To Arrange Date of the Next Meeting

Tuesday 4th February 2020.

The meeting closed at 10.05pm.

Signed.....ChairmanDate

Mission Statement

The aim of Potton Town Council is to serve the people of this town to the best of its ability.