

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on
Tuesday 4th February 2020, 7.10pm at the Community Centre, Brook End

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

Absent: Cllrs Mr J. Day, Mr A. Macdonald, Mr B. Massey and Mr C. Temple.

Also Present: CBC Cllr Ms T. Wye, Liz Smith Chairman of Trustees Potton Hall for All, Kim Gutteridge Trustee Potton Hall for All, Marion Runchman Treasurer for 1st Potton Rainbows, 2 Members of the Public, the Clerical Assistant and Administration Assistant.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mr J. Day, Mr A. Macdonald, Mr B. Massey and Mr C. Temple.

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 Sparko

The presentation from Sparko was cancelled and will be rescheduled for future Town Council meeting.

4 Public Participation Session

A member of the public asked if there had been any update on the traffic calming on Wrestlingworth Road, Potton.

Cllr Wye reported that there has been no update from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Highways due to the officer being off sick.

Cllr Wye asked for an update from Cllr Zerny with reference to any match funding from CBC for road improvements. Cllr Zerny advised that there has been a site visit, but no updates since and would chase up.

5 Finance (Agenda item 11 iv.)

The Chairman brought forward Finance agenda item 11 iv. so that Mrs Marion Runchman, Treasurer for 1st Potton Rainbows could address the Town Council on behalf of the group.

The Town Council had received correspondence from 1st Potton Rainbows with regards to hall hire and how they are struggling to pay hire fees. Mrs Runchman explained that the group has received a small start up grant from the Girl Guide Association and had a fundraising event in their first term, but don't want to keep asking families to pay when they are already in arrears whilst waiting for subscriptions. It was also explained that they have found a cheaper venue in Everton, but would rather stay in Potton as it is easier for parents.

1st Potton Rainbows currently hire the main hall of the Community Centre from 5pm to 7pm on a Monday evening during term time. The hire charge is £10.50 per hour and the total is £21.00.

The hire charge for Everton is £8.00 per hour and the total would be £16.00.

The Town Clerk suggested that if the Town Council wishes to reduce the cost to 1st Potton Rainbows either on a temporary or permanent basis, they could consider spending from the General Power of Competence (Section 137) 2019-20 to partly subsidise 1st Potton Rainbows.

For example, a 25% subsidy would result in 1st Potton Rainbows paying £15.75 and the Town Council paying £5.25 from the General Power of Competence (Section 137).

Members considered the request from 1st Potton Rainbows and discussed the possibility of a donation of £200 or a discounted hire fee, or both.

Cllr Wye suggested the group could apply to the Ward Councillor Grant Match Fund. Applications are via Cllr Wye.

Members asked that the group should write to the Town Council to request both a reduction in the hire fee and for grant funding for 1st Potton Rainbows.

It was **resolved** that 1st Potton Rainbows should write to the Town Council to request both a reduction in the hire fee and for grant funding, for consideration at the next Town Council meeting.

6 Minutes (Agenda item 5)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 7th January 2020, which had been previously circulated, were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

7 Town Council Committees (Agenda item 6)

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

Planning Committee – 7.1.20 and 21.1.20.

Commemorations Committee – 21.1.20

Young Peoples Council – 27.1.20

Christmas Lights – 27.1.20

Playing Fields Allotments and Burials

Members considered the correspondence with regards to awarding the grass cutting contract and the Playing Fields Allotments and Burials Committee minutes of 17.12.19.

Members discussed the suggested grass cutting frequency in relation to Potton Town Council's grass cutting strategy.

It was **resolved** to contact the contractor to clarify that they will undertake the grass cutting as per the Town Council's grass cutting strategy instead of the suggested frequency.

The Town Council then accepted and adopted the minutes and recommendations from the Playing Fields Allotments and Burials Committee.

8 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (Agenda item 7)

Cllr Wye advised that blocked drains on Gamlingay Road have recently been jet-blasted and that CBC Highways will look at the pavements on Bury Hill as they are affected by "mud slides".

Cllr Wye also mentioned that an 800 signature petition had been handed to CBC for the Ridgeway development which has been accepted. Members asked would the petition be viewed at 1 or 800 objections. Cllr Zerny advised that CBC would probably list the responses received as (for example) 200 objections and a petition of 800 signatures.

Cllr Zerny advised he had nothing more to report following his recent newsletter, except to advise that a planning application had just been sent out by CBC on 4th February for a new allotment area on Biggleswade Road, but that it wasn't clear for which development.

9 Councillors Surgery (Agenda item 8)

The Councillors Surgery took place on the 11th January 2020. Councillors Ellison and Lean were in attendance.

Councillors Ellison and Lean gave a written report.

All actions on the report have been dealt with.

The Town Council noted the written report.

A member commented on point 5. of the report (a member of the public visited the Mulberry Homes site to complain about the mud and sand on Biggleswade Road caused by lorries exiting the site.) and advised that the site does not have a wheel washing facility. The site is using road sweepers. The Town Clerk has raised the issue with CBC; an officer visited and advised that the condition of the road was not an issue. A comment was made that the officer had probably visited just after the road had been swept.

A member mentioned the condition of the roads (Potton Road The Heath, Everton Road and Myers Road) caused by lorries leaving Breedon Quarry.

Members suggested that the Town Clerk should contact Breedon Quarry and Mulberry Homes to ask them to improve their wheel washing facilities/road cleaning.

It was **resolved** to ask the Town Clerk to contact Breedon Quarry and Mulberry Homes to ask them to improve their wheel washing facilities/road cleaning.

Cllr Wye advised that she has reported four blocked drains recently to CBC and that they are to be cleared. Cllr Wye suggested that if anyone knows of any blocked drains, to take photos and email them to her and she will request they are cleared.

A member mentioned road sweeping in the town and that it would be good to know the road sweeping schedule for Potton. Cllr Wye advised that she had previously requested a schedule from CBC, but their response was that they cannot say when it is scheduled.

10 Development in Potton (Agenda item 9)

10.1 Property Count

The Town Council noted the property count.

10.2 Planning applications considered by the Planning Committee on 21st January 2020 for recommendation at the next Town Council meeting.

Application No: CB/19/04308/RM

Location: Land at Mill Lane, Potton

Proposal: Reserved Matters: Following outline application CB/16/04460/OUT (62 dwellings) approval of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

It was **resolved** to object for the following reasons:

- The issue of access along Mill Lane has not been fully addressed, particularly the following issues:-
 - Dandara state that Mill Lane will be made up to adoptable standards, but CBC will not adopt it. Instead, it will be managed and maintained by a 'management company' without clarifying how this management company will be formed and where the money for maintaining the roads will come from.
 - Since Mill Lane will not be adopted by CBC it will remain a Bridleway. As CBC Rights of Way Officer has already stated, 'Please can you ensure that the road patterning and works do not compromise bridle use'.
 - We understand that a priority system of traffic management has been proposed at the pinch point to allow one-way traffic only with priority to vehicles exiting the development onto Mill Lane/Newtown junction. If the road is unadopted, signage cannot be erected to advise of this one-way system and cannot be controlled or policed.
 - Dandara state that they have full and legal access rights across Mill Lane under a provision granted in 1775. No evidence of this legal right has been produced. CBC have also confirmed that the road in question is a private road and there is no evidence that the owner will allow access as required for this development.
 - The 'pinch point' on Mill Lane is 3.95 metres wide and the footpath is 1.3 metres wide. In order to make the footpath 2 metres wide (Highways England CD 143 absolute minimum width and Green Travel Plan paragraph 7.5) the carriageway would have to be reduced to 3.25 metres wide.

- The Green Travel Plan supplied as part of the Reserved Matters does not refer to Bridleway 6 on Mill Lane. It is merely a fairly generic document aimed to try to reduce the incidents of single occupancy car journeys and encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport. In this regard it ignores the fact that the bus service is wholly unsuitable for connection to Sandy Railway Station at commuter times.
- Paragraph 4.2 of the Planning Statement states that the Potton Neighbourhood Plan is a supporting document. This does not mean that the Neighbourhood Plan supports this development which was energetically resisted at the initial outline planning phase. The Potton Neighbourhood Plan merely records that the site has prior planning approval by CBC.
- Paragraph 4.4 states that Potton will allocate an indicative figure of 150-250 new dwellings. This figure has already been exceeded and therefore this proposed development is not required.
- Paragraph 4.5 shows a map from the Neighbourhood Plan with the site as 'Already Approved'. Again, this does not mean that the Neighbourhood Plan supports this development since the map was only prepared after the approval of the outline planning application. These comments are also relevant to paragraph 5.1.
- Paragraph 5.27 gives details of parking spaces per property. Do these parking spaces include garage space? Paragraph 5.29 seems to indicate that it does presume parking in a garage. If so, off-road parking will be an issue since garages are rarely used to park cars. On-road parking will therefore become the norm with associated access issues for refuse removal and emergency vehicles.
- It is our view that either the development between The Ridgeway and Sutton Mill Road OR the Mill Lane development should be allowed to proceed at this time – not both. This is because both developments would take the total amount of development to 555 dwellings which exceeds the supported development of up to 500 dwellings over the period of the Neighbourhood Plan. Additionally, in order to ensure that the developments are sustainable and community infrastructure can develop to cope with the increased population, whichever development is allowed to continue, construction should be deferred to much later in the Neighbourhood Plan period. This is in particular reference to medical services which are currently over-stretched.

In general, these issues are detailed in the Potton Neighbourhood Plan (<http://pottonneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/the-neighbourhood-plan/>) and in particular the Policies, the Design Guide (Annex E) and the Green Infrastructure Design Guide (Annex F).

Policy Concerns

Policy CI-2. Is there provision for easy and safe non-vehicular access to Potton Town Centre? In particular we would like to see provision of a cycle path along Mill Lane from Newtown up to the end of the site.

Policy HO-3. Is at least 5% of the development bungalows? There is a clearly identified shortage of this type of property in Potton. We would like to see at least 3 and ideally more of the properties to be bungalows.

(Dandara Response. No. 'The proposal does not include bungalows. Further consideration is being given as to how these may be incorporated into the scheme, but this will require further work which may not be completed within the deadline contained within the extant permission'.)

Policy HO-4. Does the development include properties that are designed to Lifetime Homes standards, making them suitable for frailer, elderly people?

(Dandara Response. The Design Compliance Addendum states that the scheme has achieved twelve 'Greens' on the Building for Life 12 Assessment.)

Policy EI-1. Does the proposed development include high-speed fibre broadband connections to all new residential and commercial properties?

Green Infrastructure Design Guide issues

1. We request that any new structural planting use native species of local provenance and located where, on reaching maturity, they enhance and do.
2. Please confirm that the development retains and enhance existing hedges and you will plant new hedges to link with those in the surrounding landscape (the species should be of local provenance and characteristic of the area, including elm and cherry plum in the mix).
3. Please confirm that the street and plot planting is balanced appropriately between native and non-native species and that ornamentals are of the highest wildlife value for pollinators. (See GI Design Guide appendix 1)
4. Please confirm that the development includes local heritage fruit trees in plot planting at an approximate ratio of 1:5 (trees:plots) across the development.
5. Please confirm that any new grassland is sown with an appropriate flower rich mix, even where regular mowing will be required under the conditions of management.
6. Please confirm that the development has avoided the use of invasive non-native species in formal planting schemes. (See GI Design Guide appendix 2)
7. Please confirm that, where restorative work has been undertaken as part of a tree protection plan or, as a last resort, a tree must be removed, all arisings, as far as is practically possible, remain and will be utilised on site, where they can have a number of multifunctional uses and benefits.

8. Has informally, dead or decaying timber been retained as standing deadwood? For example, where safe to do so, the butt of a tree can stand for many years, with any cut limbs being left as intact as possible beneath, where practical and safe to do so.
9. Have branches and brash been used discretely among structural planting to provide lying deadwood? These are of great wildlife value for many species of invertebrate, mammal, bird, amphibian or reptile that may use them for breeding, shelter and basking. Brash, along with rubble, is also a primary material in the construction of reptile and amphibian hibernacula?
10. Have any standing or lying deadwood features been incorporated into a nectar rich planting? They may also be a sculptured art feature or used to provide natural play.
11. Has any consideration been taken regarding lighting impacts on wildlife corridors? Directional lights with no spillage should be used.
12. Has the development included hibernacula primarily for reptiles? On the free-draining substrates typical of Potton, the bulk of the fill would be sited in an excavated depression. They should always be positioned in suitable terrestrial habitat. Follow guidance set out in the Reptile Management Handbook.
13. Have only supplementary nests for birds in need of conservation action been provided, such as swift, house sparrow, house martin and starling? Other common species can still access these if they so wish.
14. Have house martin cups been located beneath suitable eaves and gables, avoiding placing above doors or windows and in direct heat of the sun? In Potton they seem to prefer west and easterly aspects.
15. Where suitable, have mature trees adjacent to open grassland been used for starling boxes? These should be sited facing any easterly aspect, out of direct heat and prevailing weather conditions. Where there are several trees a number of boxes can be used.
16. Have integral bat bricks been located away from doors, windows, street or security lighting? They should be located as close as possible to existing mature wooded cover and hedges or to landscape that will be suitable once mature. Bricks must be in groups of three to face south, south west and west. This might be on a single house or spread between two or three adjacent houses.
17. Have 13 x 13 cm holes been provided in garden boundaries to enable hedgehogs, reptiles and amphibians' movement around and through the site?

It was **resolved** no further comment.

A member congratulated the Planning Committee for its work.

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow a member of the public to voice his concerns about the access from Mill Lane and the problem "pinch-point" from Mill Lane into the bridleway and how the developer is worried about the time it is taking for the application to be decided.

Cllr Zerny mentioned that if the application fails, outline permission will lapse and then the developer will not be able to reapply within three years.

10.3 Planning applications considered by the Planning Committee on 4th February 2020 for recommendation at the next Town Council meeting.

Application No: CB/20/00184/FULL

Location: 15 Bull Street, Potton, Sandy SG19 2NR

Proposal: Double and first floor rear extension. Changes to the fenestration. Rebuilding of existing glass house to the rear.

The Planning Committee **resolved** no objection.

It was **resolved** no further comment.

Application No: CB/20/00194/FULL

Location: 17 Brook End, Potton, Sandy SG19 2QS

Proposal: Erection of single garage.

The Planning Committee **resolved** no objection.

It was **resolved** no further comment.

Application No: CB/TCA/19/00552

Location: 6 Sun Street, Potton, Sandy SG19 2LR

Proposal: Works to Trees Within a Conservation Area: Unknown species (T1) – trim branches by 10% or less to improve shape. Remove Elder Tree (T2).

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

It was **resolved** no further comment.

11 Richard Fuller MP (Agenda item 10)

Members considered correspondence from Richard Fuller MP.

A member suggested that Mr Fuller should make himself available to Potton Town Council instead of Town Council members having to go to London.

Members discussed the work experience programme intended for young people and the evening tours of Parliament for constituents offered in the letter and suggested that both should be added as news items in the Town Council newsletter and website.

It was **resolved** that the work experience programme intended for young people and the evening tours of Parliament for constituents offered in the letter be added to the newsletter and website.

Members suggested that Mr Fuller could be invited to attend a future Councillor Surgery.

It was **resolved** to invite Mr Fuller to attend a future Councillor Surgery.

Following further discussion of Mr Fuller's correspondence by members, it was suggested that Cllr Macdonald contact Mr Fuller to raise the Town Council's specific concerns with regards to overdevelopment in Potton and stress on local infrastructure, and to also advise Mr Fuller that Potton has recently adopted a Neighbourhood Plan.

It was **resolved** to request that Cllr Macdonald contact Mr Fuller with the Town Council's concerns.

12 Finance (Agenda item 11)

i. To approve the list of payments.

Members noted the list of payments.

It was **resolved** that the payments up to the 4th February 2020 be approved.

ii. Verify Bank Reconciliations against statement 1st December – 31st December 2019.

Members proceeded to go through the bank reconciliation.

It was **resolved** that the bank reconciliation for 1st December – 31st December 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 December 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 31st December 2019.

13 Ivel Sprinter Bus Representative (Agenda item 12)

The Town Council noted the correspondence from the Town Council's Ivel Sprinter Bus Representative, Charles Belcher, in which he announced his resignation from the Ivel Sprinter committee.

Members discussed possibly appointing a Town Councillor or a member of the community, specifically Terry Woods, to replace Mr Belcher as the Town Council's representative on the Ivel Sprinter committee. It was noted by Members that in fact Mr Woods is already Secretary of the Ivel Sprinter Committee and that more recently Mr Belcher would only occasionally attend meetings for something specific.

A Member suggested that possibly someone from the Neighbourhood Plan group could join the Ivel Sprinter Committee.

It was **resolved** that a Town Council representative is not required for the Ivel Sprinter Bus.

It was commented that as the Town Council has supported the Ivel Sprinter and made financial contribution to the purchase of a new bus, that the Town Council could request a report from the Ivel Sprinter Committee once or twice a year to keep the Town Council informed.

It was **resolved** to request a report from the Ivel Sprinter Committee so that the Town Council can be kept informed.

14 Potton Consolidated Charity – Trustee (Agenda item 13)

Members noted correspondence received by Cllr Macdonald from Jean Way advising her resignation as a trustee of Potton Consolidated Charity.

Members also noted that the Charity is served by nine trustees, four of which are nominated from the Town Council, currently Alan Leggatt, Angus MacDonald, Jean Way and Anna Adnitt. Members discussed and agreed that at least one of the trustees nominated by the Town Council should be a serving councillor as it is appropriate for the Potton Town Council to be kept informed as it doesn't receive any feedback/reports about what Potton Consolidated Charity does.

The Town Council considered nominating a Town Councillor or consider asking a member of the community as a replacement for Jean Way and noted that Potton Consolidated Charity does not have to accept the Town Council's nomination.

The Chairman suggested Terry Woods as a possible replacement for Jean Way.

It was **resolved** to support the Chairman's suggestion to nominate Terry Woods to replace Jean Way.

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow Kim Gutteridge to mention that the Potton Consolidated Charity website lists all trustees and its financial information and be found on the Charities Commission website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>.

A member suggested that Cllr Kitchener could be considered as a trustee. Cllr Kitchener declined.

15 Bedfordshire crime statistics - December 2019 (Agenda item 14)

The December 2019 Bedfordshire crime statistics were noted.

16 Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils – Bugle (Agenda item 15)

The latest edition of the Bugle was noted.

17 Party on Potton – Henry Smith Playing Fields (Agenda item 16)

Members noted the correspondence from Party on Potton.

Members considered the request to use Henry Smith Playing Fields from Tuesday 25th August to Tuesday 1st September 2020 inclusive for Party on Potton's Big Weekend.

It was **resolved** that Party on Potton can use Henry Smith Playing Fields for the Big Weekend.

18 Youth Club Report (Agenda item 17)

Members noted the Quarterly report from Groundwork.

Liz Smith commented that there seems to be a number of youths that leave the building and running about during the Youth Club sessions, which raises concerns for their safety.

Members commented that one of the reasons that the Youth Club moved from the Pavilion to the Community Centre was so that the young people could have access to the shops and skatepark and that is why they leave the building.

Members commented that the Youth Club is well-used.

19 Sue Ryder – Angus Macdonald (Agenda item 18)

The correspondence from Angus Macdonald with regards to a donation towards to Sue Ryder was noted.

20 Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire (Agenda item 19)

Correspondence from Kathryn Holloway, Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire was noted.

21 Community Asset Grant Scheme (Agenda item 20)

Correspondence with regards to the Community Asset Grant Scheme was noted.

Cllr Wye advised that the Town Council can only apply once every three years and that the fund is limited to £182K per year across the whole county, but thought that funds are rolled over to the next year if not fully taken up. Potton Town Council would need to fund slightly more than half of the cost of the project (for example, for a £50K project, the Scheme would prefer £30K funds are already in place and cannot be match funded with money from Central Bedfordshire Council).

A Member suggested that the Community Asset Grant Scheme should be an agenda item for the next Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting.

Members discussed projects that could benefit from the Central Bedfordshire Council Community Asset Grant Scheme and suggested the football pitches and tennis courts at Mill Lane Recreation Ground. A member mentioned that Potton Tennis Club has been awarded funding from Potton Consolidated Charity for new tennis courts at Mill Lane Recreation Ground.

Members asked if Potton Town Council could apply for something not yet an asset (for example, not yet built?). Cllr Wye advised she would find out.

Members proposed the Town Council apply for £25K for Mill Lane Recreation Grounds playing fields improvements.

Cllr Zerny advised that Potton Colts will possibly play at The Hollow in future. A Member advised that Potton Town Council has already committed £8K for pitch improvements at Mill Lane in support of Potton Colts. Members suggested that the Town Council should write to Potton Colts to ask them for clarification on their mid to long-term plans.

It was **resolved** to write to Potton Colts to clarify their mid to long-term plans with regards to using Mill Lane Recreation Ground and The Hollow.

Cllr Zerny suggested Potton Town Council should apply for monies after consulting with all sports groups/clubs.

Members noted that 28th February is the closing date to apply for Community Asset Grant funding.

Members suggested that the Community Asset Grant Scheme should be publicised, and that letters should be sent to the sports groups/clubs (Tennis Club/Potton Colts) to make them aware that the fund exists and to strongly advise that they apply for funding before the 28th February deadline.

It was **resolved** to write to all sports groups/clubs in Potton to make them aware of the Community Asset Grant Scheme.

A Member advised that Potton Utd and the Cricket Club are aware of the fund.

22 Confidential – Commercial Matter (Agenda item 21)

Councillor Jonathan Lean (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.

23 Date of the Next Meeting (Agenda item 22)

Tuesday 3rd March 2020.

Cllr Lean gave his apologies for the meeting on Tuesday 3rd March 2020.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Signed.....ChairmanDate

Mission Statement

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