

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on
Tuesday 3rd January 2023, 7.10pm held in the Community Centre, Potton.

Present: Councillors Dr C. Craig, Mr J. Day, Mrs L. Fox, Mr A. Gibb, Mrs V. Gwilliam, Mr J. Hobbs (Chairman), Mr A. Inkersole, Ms L. Kitchener, Mr J. Lean, Mrs C. Leggatt, Mr A. Macdonald, Mr D. Norman, Mr J. Price Williams and Mr A. Zerny.

Absent: All present.

Also Present: CBC Cllr Ms T. Wye, David Fovargue, Planning Director from Marrons Planning, Tom Thornewill, Associate Director and Lauren White, Development Planner from Hallam Land Management, two members of the public and the Town Clerk.

1 Apologies for absence

All present.

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.

3 Public Participation Session

The Chairman asked if members of the public had any questions and if members had any questions from the public for the town council.

No questions.

4 Hallam Land Management - Land at Sandy Road, Potton

The Chairman spoke about the town's Neighbourhood plan, which includes the inspirations for the town.

David Fovargue, Planning Director from Marrons Planning and Tom Thornewill, Associate Director and Lauren White, Development Planner from Hallam Land Management introduced themselves to the town council.

A copy of our presentation in the form of handout was handed out to members in advance of the meeting.

Mr Fovargue mentioned we are at an early stage, with emerging proposals which we want to share with you and then gain your feedback. The site is Land north of Sandy Road, west of Nursery Close and south of the Potton to Deepdale Bridleway, Potton.

A member asked when you looked at the Neighbourhood plan did you actually look at the supporting documents for example the site assessments.

Mr Fovargue advised yes we looked at the supporting documents.

The member mentioned that the site was assessed as part of the Neighbourhood plan, so you know the site was not supported.

Mr Fovargue mentioned that they have spent a lot of time looking at the Neighbourhood plan, evidence base and design guide. In planning terms the site is well connected to Potton via the Bridleway, the nearby lower school and middle school is obviously an advantage and proximity to the bus services and walk into the town centre for planning sustainability terms. Not with standing what the evidence base said about the site previously.

Mr Fovargue next page is opportunities and influences, for the master plan of the site and this is informed by Environmental surveys, Ecology surveys and drainage assessments. One of the biggest influences is landscaping, green space and ecology, existing belt of landscaping west of the public right of way, which were planning to retain. Trying to create a new landscaped edge for the west of Potton alongside the new residential development. Our landscape advisors have suggested not to place development in the northwest part of the site, to retain an open aspect to the countryside beyond. Biodiversity net-gain under national and local policy, habitats on site and further land for habitat creation. Ecology links to the neighbourhood plan as this site is identified for acid grassland and the plan would be to deliver acid grassland.

Mr Fovargue next pages are technical & environmental considerations with regards to Heritage & Archaeology, Landscape, Ecology & Biodiversity, Flooding & Drainage, Utilities and Transport, access & movement. With regards to Transport, access & movement, 30mph zone extended, new gateway, new vehicular access to the site and existing footway widened to 2metres.

Mr Fovargue next page is the masterplan / concept showing where green spaces and development would be placed. The development is for up to 178 homes.

Mr Fovargue next page aligning with the Potton Neighbourhood Plan Policies, Hallam Land Management's approach & scheme response, with regards to Homes 30% would need to be affordable and 10% self-build. Green Wheel, Green Infrastructure, Transport, Infrastructure and Design.

Mr Fovargue advised he would welcome feedback on the proposal.

The Chairman advised that it is good that the neighbourhood plan is being thoroughly looked at, this site was not supported in the neighbourhood plan as it is too far from the centre of town.

A member queried about the 2 metre wide footpath and part of it appears to be in the ownership of the property on Sandy Road.

Mr Fovargue advised that the transport consultants have looked at this and they believe enough space within the adopted highway, though will arrange for this to be checked.

A member mentioned that the neighbourhood plan supports proportionate development up to 500 homes over 2016-2035, the town has already gone

beyond the 500 homes limit which the town is willing to accept over the period of the plan. Further expansion of Pottton towards Deepdale, could see Pottton, Sandy and Biggleswade becoming a conurbation. Housing needs to be absorbed in to the town for facilities, services and infrastructure in the town being developed and expanded appropriately to cater for the town. As it stands it is not possible to get an appointment at the Doctors surgery, Section 106 would extend the surgery, though the problem is a lack of Doctors to provide the services for the town. At this point in time the site is not appropriate.

Mr Thornewill advised that we want to take onboard any comments and there is a housing shortage across the whole of the country.

A member mentioned about over 750 objections for the Ridgeway / Paddocks planning application.

Mr Thornewill advised objections to development is not uncommon.

A member mentioned that the Member of Parliament for this area had also objected to the Ridgeway / Paddocks planning application. Echo the difficulties of the NHS over the housing crisis.

Mr Thornewill advised about with regards to expansion to Deepdale, the western edge would be for bio-diversity net gain. The NHS is under a lot of pressure.

A member mentioned these houses would not be for local people as local people would not be able to afford them.

A member mentioned about a lack of food supply in this country and the land is needed for agriculture.

A member mentioned that the development will not give an economic boost to the town as people will drive to other places, as there is nowhere to park in Pottton.

Mr Fovargue advised that they will try to speak to the NHS.

The Chairman mentioned that the site is in the wrong place and at the wrong time. The infrastructure in the town is not keeping up, traffic problems.

A member mentioned the need for you as the Chairman to reiterate that none of the comments given this evening should be seen as the view of Pottton Town Council, they are merely the observations of individuals and should not be stated as being the view of Pottton Town Council.

The Chairman thanked the member and agreed the comments made are merely the observations of individuals and should not be stated as being the view of Pottton Town Council.

Mr Thornewill mentioned we may start to carry out public consultation and

we want to make you aware.

The Chairman mentioned this is feedback from individuals and the site is wrong time and wrong place.

Mr Fovargue mentioned that we want to maintain a dialogue with the town council.

The Chairman mentioned that it was advised (Central Bedfordshire Council) that we meet with prospective developers. When you carry out a public consultation the feeling of the town will be such that the Neighbourhood plan advises what the aspirations of the town are.

A member mentioned that the Neighbourhood plan was approved by a town referendum.

The Chairman thanked David Fovargue, Tom Thornewill and Lauren White for attending the town council meeting.

5 Minutes of Potton Town Council

A member spoke about minute 17 Tall Trees – Public Open Space during which *'It was **resolved** to instruct Woodfines Solicitors to represent the town council with regards to the transfer of the Public Open Space excluding the play area.'*

Requesting an amendment to add *'**and triangle area adjacent to the community hall land.'***

Members approved the amendment to the resolution which is now as follows *'It was **resolved** to instruct Woodfines Solicitors to represent the town council with regards to the transfer of the Public Open Space excluding the play area and triangle area adjacent to the community hall land.'*

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 1st November 2022, which had been circulated with the above amendment were approved.

6 Minutes of Town Council Committees and groups where a Cllr(s) is(are) appointed by the town council

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

- Planning Committee – 1st November 2022, 29th November 2022 and 19th December 2022.
- Potton Youth Council – 21st November 2022.
- Environmental Committee – 13th December 2022.

7 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors

Cllrs Wye reported that the road surfaces are deteriorating and keeps reporting via Fix my Street.

Cllr Zerny reported about mitigating surfaces for pot holes which broke up due to the weather in December 2022. Footpath between Tall Trees and Sheepwalk Close consultation, if any objections are in place at the 13th

January 2023, the footpath will then have to be considered by the Secretary of State.

Biggleswade Road by the Petrol Station is still an ongoing matter between Central Bedfordshire Council and the owner of the Petrol Station.

Cllr Zerny invited members of the town council to advise him of any white lining that needs to be undertaken.

A member reported the Market Square and the No Entry white lines on the junction with King Street adjacent to the bus shelter and Tysoe being worn out.

The Chairman thanked Cllrs Wye and Zerny for their reports.

8 Councillor Surgeries

a) Surgeries since the last meeting surgeries have taken place as follows;

Saturday 5th November 2022 – Cllrs Hobbs and Lean
Cllr Hobbs reported about parking in the square and businesses parking for longer than permitted. Broken kerb outside One King Street and a personal injury.

Saturday 10th December 2022 – Cllrs Craig and Inkersole
Cllr Craig reported about Speedwatch and about setting up Street, Dog and Horse watches. The Police were in attendance. Tree Giveaway with one of the Ukraine refugees being in attendance.

It was **resolved** that a letter of thanks be sent to Ukraine refugees who was in attendance at the December surgery.

b) Surgeries scheduled are as follows;
Saturday 14th January 2023 – Cllrs Leggatt and Zerny

c) Future Cllr Surgeries

The report from the Town Clerk was noted with regards to engagement.

A member suggested to have a Cllr Surgery when an event is taking place for example the Seasonal Market. They then suggested members of the public could request a Cllrs Surgery.

The Chairman suggested about having an electronic feedback form on the website.

A member suggested the Cllrs Surgery is reduced to one hour and having a feedback form for people to complete at the surgery.

A member suggested about having a banner on the Christmas lighting poles in the Market Square.

A member suggested that we need to be public facing.

A member suggested about having an A-frame in key locations for example the school where a large number of people visit.

A member mentioned that people need to know who the Cllrs are and have an opportunity to speak to them.

Cllr Inkersole asked that any requests for an A-frame outside the school, should come via him.

It was **resolved** that the Management Committee consider Cllr Surgeries at their next meeting.

9 Potton Warm Spaces

The Chairman invited Cllr Gibb to speak about Potton Warm Spaces.

A member suggested about relocating the Sunday warm space from Mill Lane Pavilion to the Community Centre.

A member suggested about having Warm Spaces as a social event with drinks rather than just as a Warm Space.

A member suggested about co-ordinating and promoting warm spaces via the Community Agent.

A member advised that the Community Agent is aware about warm spaces and is promoting them.

The Chairman suggested that the Community Agent is contacted about asking for permission to use the games at the Warm Spaces in the Community Centre.

It was **resolved** that the Warm Spaces on Sunday is relocated from Mill Lane Pavilion to the Community Centre for the month of January 2023.

Cllr Gibb asked for volunteers for the Warm Spaces in the Community Centre from 2 – 5pm.

Members volunteered to attend the Warm Spaces in the Community Centre from 2 – 5pm.

10 Cllr Lean – Resignation

It was noted that Cllr Lean who has been a town cllr since May 2015 has written to the Chairman of the town council to advise that he is resigning from the town council at the end of January 2023.

Cllr Lean thanked his fellow Cllrs and the Town Clerk.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Lean for his assistance with the Neighbourhood Plan and his tenure as a town cllr which included a year as Chairman of the town council.

11 Finance

a) Potton Community Football Pitch

Correspondence from Potton Community Football with regards to gaining an extension. At the town council on the 5th April 2022 £3,324 was placed in Ear Marked Reserve for a 3G Pitch, with a condition that 3G Pitch Ear Marked Reserve is only available until the end of March 2023 and the facility is open to the community (open to public use / other groups other than just Potton United).

A member suggested to not approve of the extension and advise that they reply at a later date.

A member suggested to agree to a twelve month extension until March 2024.

It was **resolved** to agree to a twelve month extension until March 2024.

b) Verify Bank Reconciliations against statement 1st August – 31st August 2022.

Members proceeded to go through the Bank Reconciliation.

It was **resolved** that the Bank reconciliation for 1st August – 31st August 2022 be approved.

c) To receive an income and expenditure by budget heading report showing progress against the budget 2022/23 at the end of August 2022.

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 August 2022.

d) Verify Bank Reconciliations against statement 1st September – 30th September 2022.

Members proceeded to go through the Bank Reconciliation.

It was **resolved** that the Bank reconciliation for 1st September – 30th September 2022 be approved.

e) To receive an income and expenditure by budget heading report showing progress against the budget 2022/23 at the end of September 2022.

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 September 2022.

f) Verify Bank Reconciliations against statement 1st October – 31st October 2022.

Members proceeded to go through the Bank Reconciliation.

It was **resolved** that the Bank reconciliation for 1st October – 31st October 2022 be approved.

g) To receive an income and expenditure by budget heading report showing progress against the budget 2022/23 at the end of October 2022.

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 October 2022.

h) Verify Bank Reconciliations against statement 1st November – 30th November 2022.

Members proceeded to go through the Bank Reconciliation.

It was **resolved** that the Bank reconciliation for 1st November – 30th November 2022 be approved.

i) To receive an income and expenditure by budget heading report showing progress against the budget 2022/23 at the end of November 2022.

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 2022.

12 To note the date of the Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Town Council is scheduled for Tuesday 7th March 2023.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Signed: Date:

Chairman

Mission Statement

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