



**POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY, 25 JULY 2022**

**ADDITIONAL PAPERS**

Date published: Tuesday 19 July 2022

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|---------------|--|
| Agenda Item 5 | SUB-COMMITTEES, TASK & FINISH GROUPS & WORKING PARTIES<br>To receive the minutes of the following and to consider any recommendations contained therein:<br>i) Community Safety Sub-Committee 11 July 2022<br><br>(Pages 1 - 6)                          |
| Agenda Item 7 | SOUTH SIDE OF THE HIGH STREET<br>Further to discussion at the previous meeting:<br><br>To consider next steps in respect of land south of the High Street and the remit of the South Side working party (report from Cllr R Goodchild)<br>(Pages 7 - 10) |

PLEASE BRING THE ATTACHED PAPERS TO THE MEETING IN ADDITION TO  
THE PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED AGENDA.

# Agenda Item 5

## LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

MONDAY 11 JULY 2021 AT 1930 HOURS

Present: Councillors D Bowater  
V Harvey  
J Silverstone  
R Goodchild  
R Berry  
A Dodwell  
S Owen (substituting for A Gray)  
C Palmer (substituting for R Yates)  
P Carberry  
T Morris

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio (Town Clerk)  
M Jahn, (Committee Officer)  
Inspector G Twyford (Beds Police)  
PCSO E Weedon (Beds Police)  
PC 5747 Danielle Taylor (Beds Police)  
Stephen Swain, Groundworks (remotely)

Members of the Public: 3

#### **107/CS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor A Gray substituted by Councillor S Owen and Councillor R Yates substituted by Councillor C Palmer.

#### **108/CS APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR 2022-2023**

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor J Silverstone be appointed Chair of the Sub-Committee for 2022-2023. There were no further nominations.

**RESOLVED to appoint Councillor J Silverstone, Chair of the Community Safety Sub-Committee, for the municipal year 2022-2023.**

#### **109/CS APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR 2022-2023**

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor D Bowater be appointed Vice Chair of the Sub-Committee for 2022-2023. There were no further nominations.

**RESOLVED to appoint Councillor D Bowater, Vice Chair of the Community Safety Sub-Committee, for the municipal year 2022-2023.**

**110/CS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any interests, including the nature of those interests, which they had in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

Councillor C Palmer declared a personal interest as a member of Leighton Linlade in Bloom and Councillor Carberry, as a serving firefighter, shared his working environment with Bedfordshire Police.

**111/CS QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Two members of the public spoke to raise concerns regarding the increased antisocial behaviour and vandalism in the town especially over the last few weeks and the difficulty when trying to report this to the police on 101.

The first member of the public faced daily abuse, harassment and damage to property as a volunteer in a charity shop and the second member of the public, also a volunteer, spoke of the damage caused to the garden in Linlade Recreation Ground where plants were trampled, and equipment broken on numerous occasions. A request for an adjustment to the already installed CCTV cameras was made so the garden could be monitored as this was not covered at present.

The Town Clerk suggested an audit could be carried out of all community gardens to offer up recommendations/options for a solution.

The members of the public were thanked for attending the meeting and speaking about the problems they encountered, and it was hoped solutions could be found.

**112/CS MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

(a) The Sub-Committee received the draft minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 April 2022.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 April 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.**

(b) Updates from the previous minutes were given.

**Agenda item 102/CS Operation Dodford** it was confirmed there were no plans to give PCSOs additional powers at the present time.

Concerns were raised regarding the increase in antisocial behaviour issues in the town and the Sub-Committee requested that more proactive actions were taken to improve this and Councillors kept informed of the outcomes.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That this Sub-Committee views the current level of vandalism, antisocial behaviour, threats and intimidation in Leighton Buzzard as unacceptable.
- (b) That the Sub-Committee instructs the Town Clerk to request the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner urgently to
- (i) Effect an immediate strengthened Police presence in the town
  - (ii) Provide local Police Commanders with an increase in uniformed Police Officers, up to the previously promised level of ten permanently assigned officers
  - (iii) Pursue a strategy of proper public accountability for juvenile offenders, to reassure the public and local businesses that Leighton Buzzard is adequately policed.

**Agenda item 103/CS Community Safety Budget** – Stephen Swain from Groundworks spoke to update members on the Youth Club and to discuss whether the club which ran 2 evenings a month from the Vandyke Road site could be amended with one night at that site and another in the town centre or Linslade area. Members agreed the option of using another site or building in Linslade would need more exploration but thought it was an idea which could be considered. Stephen Swain and officers could liaise with the police regarding location, what evenings would be available and how this would work.

Stephen Swain had encountered problems at the youth club from a few young people who caused criminal damage to his car and assault to him personally which resulted in the closure of the club whilst the investigation was happening.

The Sub-Committee were concerned that this behaviour would escalate and cause serious injury as this seemed to be a growing problem and effective action was needed involving children's social care, the parents/carers and the police.

Following further discussion, members agreed a recommendation should be made to the Cultural & Economic Committee for a Summit Call between the relevant organisations to find ways of working together to clamp down on this behaviour.

**RECOMMENDATION to Cultural & Economic Services Committee that a Summit Call between Social Services, Bedfordshire Police, TACTIC and Groundworks be scheduled to explore ways to curtail this behaviour.**

**Agenda item 105/CS "Watch" Scheme Updates** – it was confirmed that the Facebook Shop Watch Group was still current and it was hoped the group would be able to restart soon.

**113/CS OPERATION DODFORD**

The Sub-Committee received a report on Operation Dodford activity, reported crimes and antisocial behaviour during the period April – June 2022.

Concerns were voiced regarding the increase in antisocial behaviour in the town and questioned whether police numbers were sufficient to provide adequate coverage for the town. Inspector Twyford confirmed a recruitment campaign was underway to address this situation, but the difficulties faced by Beds Police in arresting and detaining juveniles in custody remained challenging. The effectiveness of the non-emergency number 101 was also questioned as the wait times when using this number were unrealistic. The very high demand on this number was causing increased problems and frustration when trying to report incidents. Inspector Twyford confirmed he would take back all comments and frustrations discussed to Andrew Selous, the Chief Constable and Police Crime Commissioner.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**114/CS CCTV & DEPLOYABLE CAMERAS**

The Sub-Committee received reports of recorded CCTV incidents in Leighton Buzzard for March – May 2022. These reports were publicly available and published monthly on the Central Bedfordshire Council website.

The Sub-Committee agreed the new CCTV cameras would provide good quality images but concerns were raised on where they were positioned. It was felt that recent vandalism in the parks could be addressed if cameras were sited to overlook the areas which had been targeted. It was suggested that once the cameras had been upgraded by Central Bedfordshire Council the feasibility of the Town Council investing in some alternative back-up redeployable cameras could be considered.

**RESOLVED to note the CCTV reports and that the Town Clerk proactively engage with the relevant team to explore potential of alternative back-up cameras in appropriate locations.**

**115/CS “WATCH” SCHEMES UPDATE**

Street Watch patrols regularly take place on a Tuesday and Saturday and Speed Watch two or three times a month. Pub Watch runs a Facebook Group at present, but it was hoped it would reform shortly.

**116/CS EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no matters requiring exclusion of the public.

The meeting closed at 2151 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2022.

Chair

17 OCTOBER 2022

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## **AGENDA ITEM 7c - LAND SOUTH OF THE HIGH STREET**

### **REPORT ON INDICATIVE MASTER PLAN PROPOSAL**

#### **HISTORY**

The current iteration of the South Side Working Party seeks to progress with the development of the currently derelict land south of the existing High Street. Given the many years of procrastination by the Planning Authority and leading landowner, Central Bedfordshire Council, the working party has been set up to provide a lead for future development by Leighton-Linslade Town Council.

To that end, discussions have already taken place with two of the other landowners and it was clearly evident to members that they were very frustrated after 30 years or more of inactivity but were buoyed by the positive vibes emanating from the working party members. The working party has yet to speak to other similar stakeholders but it is felt their views will be much the same.

The Town Council has expressed a keen interest in the provision of a Civic Centre to provide better accommodation for their administrative activities, more practical space for council meetings and expanded facilities for the public interface. The design of the building could also facilitate outreach offices for Central Bedfordshire Council and other community organisations together with a museum and arts centre already mooted by the Peppercorn Trust.

There is no doubt that there will be many calls on the use of the site and these will inevitably include an allocation of housing and an increase in the retail offer to provide commercial viability. However, Policy & Finance Committee approved a recommendation from the South Side Working Party to investigate commissioning a social infrastructure needs analysis for the town to gain an insight of what other uses/facilities might else be required within the future development and to explore whether S106 funds could be released to fund this important analysis.

Whilst the Local Plan dictates that the only major town centre development activities would be concentrated on Dunstable and the recently completed £7 million re-vamp is evidence of that policy, this Council has continued to press Central Bedfordshire Council officers and portfolio holders to provide us with an insight of what strategic objectives they had for the South Side, what timescale they to achieve the objectives and whether financial resources had been allocated to that work. Furthermore, clarification has again been sought from Central Bedfordshire Council on whether any supplementary planning advice would be issued in respect of the land south side of the High Street given that this has not altered since 2012.

Policy & Finance Committee set a deadline for this information to be received by its next scheduled meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

## INDICATIVE MASTER-PLAN

At a recent meeting of the South Side Working Party, Cllr Goodchild offered to investigate the potential costs and timescales of commissioning an indicative master-plan design from a professional consultancy that he was working alongside in a professional capacity on a major development project for a mutual Client. Cllr Goodchild assured members that he has no current nor future pecuniary interests in the company he approached.

The consultancy was emailed with an enquiry on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022 attaching extracts from the CBC Development Brief 2012 to inform on location, existing build and potential site area. They were advised that there were several potential calls for the mixed use development area including a Civic Centre, Arts venue, Museum, Health hub, Police hub, Multi-storey car park including space for market trader vehicles, Housing, Hotel, Retail and re-construction of the Rothchild garden.

The brief also indicated that there were access points at each end of the site and this would allow a service road to the new retail areas and the rear of the existing high street retail outlets thus providing relief to the High Street of delivery vehicles and buses.

The consultancy issued their proposals in short time and to take this exercise forward they suggested the following scope:

- One day site visit linked with a briefing meeting so that we can understand fully the site constraints, opportunities and importantly your vision for the site.
- Up to 4 high level masterplan options looking at varying uses and concepts.
- One day workshop to review the concepts and select a preferred option.
- Develop the preferred masterplan into a coloured presentation masterplan showing uses with floor area schedule and means of access, servicing and movement strategy.

In terms of timescales, the company advised the following:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| • Site visit and initial concept design     | 1 week  |
| • Design workshop/subsequent scheme updates | 2 weeks |
| • Developing the preferred masterplan       | 2 weeks |

To carry out these works, the consultancy propose a fee of **£10,250** plus VAT. This would be inclusive of expenses (assuming 2 site visits) but excludes 3D models and CGI's.

In addition they would require a digital Ordnance Survey base to work from that the Town Council can provide or alternatively the consultancy can provide one at a cost of £320 plus VAT

The consultancy also provided a portfolio of their mixed use developments which will be available for members to view at the meeting.

## **CONSTRAINTS**

Following up on a concern raised by the Town Clerk that permission may be required from landowners prior to the commencement of any feasibility study, the consultancy has advised that it is fairly normal to carry out studies for private developers on third party land without informing the landowner. However, they felt that as a public body we may prefer to advise the landowners that we are looking at some feasibility studies involving their land, particularly if there may be any form of public consultation. In conclusion, the Town Council does not require permission but should, as a courtesy, advise landowners of its intent.

## **BENEFITS**

1. The commissioning of this master-planning exercise will provide valuable data on what a mixed development could bring to the town,
2. It will confirm Leighton-Linslade Town Council's determination to lead and strongly influence the planning process for the development.
3. It will also strengthen the relationship between the Town Council and the independent landowners and other stakeholders by placing an indicative design on the table thus building confidence and a resolve to make the project happen.
4. The master-plan will bring into focus the major candidate elements of the whole South Side redevelopment and provide a first plan of the sequential action steps needed.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

a). To use the £10,000 from the ear-marked reserve for consultation on town facilities as resolved by Council on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and draw down up to £570 from General reserves to meet the outstanding balance in respect of carrying out a scoping master plan exercise on land south of the High Street.

b). Request the Town Clerk to formally advise landowners of the Town Council's intention to commission a professional consultancy to carry out a number of feasibility studies leading to an indicative master plan involving their land.

**Cllr Russ Goodchild**

16<sup>th</sup> July 2022

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