

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2022 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors D Bowater - left 20:55
 F Kharawala (Chair)
 C Palmer
 R Berry
 A Dodwell
 M Freeman
 S Jones
 T Morris - left 21:38
 G Perham
 S Hemmings - arrived 20:13
 J Silverstone
 R Goodchild
 A Gray
 S Owen
 P Carberry – arrived 19:43

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio, Town Clerk
 S Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk
 I Haynes, Head of Grounds and Environmental
 Services
 M Jahn, Committee Officer

Members of the Public: 4

Prior to the start of the meeting prayers were led by Reverend Steve Marsh including a minute's silence in reflection of the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

356 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence for the meeting had been received from Councillors P Snelling, K Cursons, V Harvey, D Scott, B Spurr and R Yates.

357 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Freeman and Kharawala declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 (request for use of Town Council Arms) as members of the Carnival Committee.

No pecuniary interests were declared and no dispensations were requested.

358 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Kharawala spoke to reflect on the Platinum Jubilee celebrations

held for Queen Elizabeth II in June 2022 and the importance of the legacy she had left, following her death in September 2022. The Mayor thanked her Deputy, Councillor Hemmings, for standing in at the thanksgiving and commemoration service held at All Saints Church.

Looking ahead, two fundraising events taking place soon were a coffee morning on 15 October and the Rock of Ages concert on 5 November.

359 LEADERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor S Jones, Leader of the Conservative group, spoke to thank Town Council staff for all their work relating to the death of Queen Elizabeth II and proclamation of King Charles III. Councillor Jones also welcomed the police hub recently opened by the Police Crime Commissioner and looked forward to seeing future plans for its development.

Councillor R Goodchild, Leader of the Liberal Democrat group, echoed thanks to Council staff during the period of mourning and agreed that the police hub needed to be more clearly signposted and visible. Councillor Goodchild noted the recent public consultation on a proposed development at "Astral Green" and suggested that as this fell outside the parish boundary, discussions with neighbouring parish councils should take place.

Councillor P Carberry, Leader of the Labour group, advised the Council about a local fundraising event for a child with a disability.

360 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

361 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Council received the draft minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 June 2022.

Minute reference 350: it was noted that Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre had now been registered by the local authority as an asset of community value.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 June 2022 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

362 DELEGATED DECISIONS

Delegated decisions made on behalf of the Council (with email approval from a majority of Members) since the last meeting were circulated. These were in respect of meeting changes necessitated by the period of national mourning.

RESOLVED to note the delegated decisions made since the previous meeting.

363 END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS & EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT 2021-2022

Council received the external auditor's report for 2021-22. There were no issues arising and therefore no action plan was required.

RESOLVED to approve and accept the Auditor's Certificate and Opinion on the Annual Return for 2021-2022.

364 LINSLADE MEMORIAL PLAYING FIELDS AND GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE CAR PARK

Council received a report to consider proposals from Central Bedfordshire Council for car park management and installation of electric vehicle charging points in the car park at Linslade Memorial Playing Fields and Garden of Remembrance. Whilst supportive of the principle, concerns were raised about security and enforcement of any parking restrictions. It was also noted that the car park was well used by fisherman at weekends. On being put to the vote, proposals were carried (12 in favour, 2 abstentions).

RESOLVED:

- (a) to endorse the proposed car parking management measures at Linslade Memorial Playing Fields and Garden of Remembrance, including management by the town council of permits and proposed restrictions.**
- (b) To agree the funding of ticket machines from general reserves.**
- (c) To endorse the installation by Central Bedfordshire Council of four Electric Vehicle charging points over eight bays in the car park, noting that the car park would need to be kept open overnight to enable use by residents.**
- (d) To support Central Bedfordshire Council going out to consultation on a Traffic Regulation Order that applies controls to the car park.**
- (e) To delegate to the Grounds and Environmental Committee authority to determine more detailed matters such as the issuing of town council parking permits or the introduction of additional security measures into the car park.**

365 REQUEST FOR USE OF TOWN COUNCIL ARMS

Council received a report to consider a request from the Carnival Committee to use the Town Council's Arms in 2023 Carnival publicity material.

RESOLVED to approve the request from the Carnival Committee to use the Town Council's Arms in 2023 Carnival publicity material.

Councillor Hemmings joined the meeting at 20:13 hours.

366 COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Council received a Motion proposed by Councillor Owen to consider how the Town Council could best make a grant or grants, totalling up to £1,000 per month over the next ten months, to local charitable/not for profit organisations which provide food and other emergency aid to local people in need. The intention was to ensure benefit to residents of the parish given the cost of living crisis.

Councillors were supportive of the principle but some discussion took place regarding the duration of the scheme. On being put to the vote, the Motion was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To provide additional grant funding totalling £10,000 between October 2022 – 31 March 2023 for local charitable/not for profit initiatives to provide food, warm shelter and other emergency aid to residents of the parish due to the current cost of living crisis.**
- (b) To delegate to the Town Clerk authority to draft scheme parameters and to make initial approaches to appropriate organisations.**
- (c) That the scheme be monitored and managed by the Grants and Awards Sub-Committee.**

367 POLICING IN LEIGHTON-LINSLADE

Council received a Motion proposed by Councillor Owen and seconded by Councillor Goodchild in respect of policing. It was noted that since receipt of the Motion, correspondence received from the Police Crime Commissioner and from the Superintendent of Community Policing had been circulated to all councillors and would be formally received by the Community Safety Sub-Committee on 17 October 2022.

A number of councillors expressed support for the Motion. Whilst the recent opening of a police “hub” was welcomed as a first step, there was a clear desire in the town for a manned desk and it was agreed that further information was needed in terms of how the hub would improve local policing. It was unanimously agreed to support the proposed Motion.

RESOLVED that this Council, noting

- a) The considerable current public concern at various aspects of criminal behaviour and vandalism, including the recent damage to the Market Cross, one of the oldest structures in Leighton Buzzard**
- b) the absence of update to the Leader of the Council’s announcement at the 27 June 2022 Town Council meeting that Andrew Selous MP was meeting the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner to press for a 24/7 Police**

presence in the town

- c) the announced opening of a Police contact point on 30 September 2022 at the Bossard House (size, function, staffing and opening hours awaited at the time this Motion was submitted).

requests the Town Clerk to

1. Contact the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner demanding an immediate increase in Police staffing in the town.
2. Ensure that the October meeting of Community Safety sub-committee receives full updates on the requests for action from the 11 July meeting.
3. Bring a report to Policy & Finance Committee on 14 November on the options available to the Town Council for taking civil action against those responsible for vandalism and criminal damage (including graffiti) against adults, juveniles, and those adults responsible for juveniles.
4. Request the Police and Crime Commissioner to provide details of the intended aims of the new Bossard House Police point and the facilities available for a) the public to contact the Police, with opening hours and available staffing, b) the accommodation available for duty police officers.

368 COMMITTEE MINUTES & DELEGATED DECISIONS

Council received and noted the minutes of the Committee meetings held between 28 June – 30 September 2022 and gave consideration to the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED to receive and note the minutes of the following meetings:

- Planning and Transport Committee 20 July 2022
- Policy & Finance Committee 25 July 2022
- Planning and Transport Committee 10 August 2022
- Grounds and Environmental Committee 5 September 2022
- Policy and Finance Committee 26 September 2022

and the delegated decisions made on behalf of the Cultural & Economic Committee and Planning & Transport Committee in September 2022.

Council considered any recommendations made by committees.

RESOLVED to endorse the Learning & Development Policy and Procedure and the Councillor Learning & Development Policy.

RESOLVED to consider taking civil action against perpetrators who damage Town Council assets, where this course of action was supported by legal advice.

RESOLVED to endorse funding of the following five projects from the capital receipts obtained from sale of land at Vandyke Road:

- (i) Installation of adult outdoor gym £45,000.**
- ii) Improvement to Vandyke Road Playing Field play area £25,000.**
- iii) Creation of a newly constructed footpath £20,000.**
- iv) Creation of a new compound within Vandyke Road Cemetery £30,000.**
- v) Contribution to creating a new community woodland circa £20,000.**

Councillor Bowater left the meeting at 20:55 hours.

The Town Clerk gave a number of updates arising from committee minutes and questions were asked regarding land ownership on the land south of the High Street, the removal of foliage by the canal bridge by the Canal and Rover Trust to improve visibility and the need to meet with Buzzcycles in respect of the emerging draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Leighton-Linslade.

369 FUTURE OF THE HIGH STREET

Council received a report following a recent informal meeting with the Portfolio holder for Highways at Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of traffic management in the High Street and the future of the High Street.

Councillor Goodchild spoke to say that this was a comprehensive high level report but missing one important fact: Cllr Dalgarno's statement to the effect that he felt the town council should lead a collaborative approach to the development of the land south of the High Street. The High Street remained a critical area vital for the economic viability of our town and the development of the South Side must not threaten this but rather complement it, delivering a wider retail offer together with a balanced development of residential, civic, leisure and cultural amenities. Councillor Goodchild felt that the council should therefore consider extending the master planning brief to incorporate the existing High Street and that following that, both councils should work together to seek out any available Government funds specifically targeted at town centre re-generation.

Councillor Goodchild proposed an amendment to recommendation 1.2 in the report, replacing it with accepting the offer to meet with the local authority, to accept the invitation to lead on this matter and to ask officers to investigate funding streams.

Some brief discussion took place with Councillor Palmer agreeing that an

answer was needed regarding a needs analysis and that further information was needed before deciding who would lead on this matter. It was agreed that costs be obtained for extending the current masterplanning exercise. On being put to the vote, the amended recommendations were carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) that this Council restates its intent to promote the development of the land South Side of the High Street together with the re-generation of the existing High Street in collaboration with Central Bedfordshire Council.
- 3) To request the Town Clerk to accept the offer made by Cllr Dalgarno to convene a meeting with relevant CBC stakeholders in order to share the Town Council's vision for the potential development.
- 4) To consider the Town Council's willingness to act as lead for the scheme.
- 5) To ascertain the additional cost of extending the remit of the master planning brief to incorporate the re-generation of the existing High Street.
- 6) To commence discussions with CBC officers to research the availability of Government funding for High Street regeneration schemes.

370 QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS FROM COUNCILLORS

One question had been submitted by Councillor Harvey, in respect of collaboration with the local authority on town centre matters. The Head of Grounds advised that he had spoken with two Central Bedfordshire officers this week and that a town centre visit was due to take place next week.

371 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

The revised membership of the South Side working party was noted, with ten members reduced to seven with the removal of Councillors Jones, Kharawala and Freeman.

372 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Morris reported from the Ouzel Valley Park steering group that the upgraded towpath works had now been completed and officially re-opened.

Councillor Dodwell reported changes in the trustees of the Meadow Way Community Association and expressed thanks to those stepping down for all their hard work in keeping the building open.

373 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. The public and press to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of detailed discussion regarding Cemetery Fees and Resident Definition.

Councillor Morris and members of the public left the meeting at 21:38 hours.

374 CEMETERY FEES AND RESIDENT DEFINITION (to follow)

The Council received and considered a report regarding cemetery fees and the resident definition.

RESOLVED:

(a) To note the report.

(b) To endorse proposed amendments to the Town Council's Resident Definition in relation to Cemetery services with immediate effect, as follows:

Any person who was a resident within the boundary of Leighton-Linlslade Parish:

- i) for the period of at least twelve consecutive months immediately prior to their death or***
- ii) for the period of at least twelve consecutive months immediately prior to their move to care.***

Or any one of the following:

A still-born child, where the parents (or one of them) are, or at the time of the interment were, residents of Leighton-Linlslade.

Persons who lived outside the area of Leighton-Linlslade prior to their moving to Nursing or Residential Homes within Leighton-Linlslade Parish should have been resident there for a minimum period of 5 years.

For graves already purchased otherwise known as "purchase in reserve" Leighton-Linlslade Town Council will honour the Terms and Conditions at time of grave purchased, all original "purchase in reserve" grave owners will be handled at resident fees for both Interments and Memorials are subject to present Rules and Regulations.

If a Right of Burial owner or a transfer of the same results in them not being a resident of the Parish for more than 1 year, the non-resident

fees will apply after 1 year, in all cases.

If the first interment was paid at resident fees, all following Interments will remain at resident fees. In all other cases non-resident fees apply.

All fees, payments and sums set out in Parts 1, 2 and 3 apply and relate to the person to be interred.

(NOT the person purchasing the plot).

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Order 3(x) for a maximum of 10 minutes.

375 LEGAL MATTERS

As resolved by the Policy and Finance Committee, Counsel advice had been sought regarding the recent community governance review and had been circulated to councillors.

Councillor Goodchild raised a number of queries and asked whether it would be possible for Counsel to respond to these.

On being proposed and seconded, the following was unanimously resolved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) to note the legal advice provided**
- (b) to ask whether it would be possible for Counsel to respond to the additional questions**
- (c) to take no further legal action in respect of this matter**
- (d) to formally record the Council's thanks to Councillor Goodchild for his work on the community governance review.**

The meeting closed at 10.08 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2022.

Chair

28 NOVEMBER 2022