

# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022, AT 7.00PM

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## Committee Members present:

A Cooper - Chairman, L Anderson, S Buck, B Collier, Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, D Matthews, G Russell, B Saunders (& CBC Cllr), J Smith, J Talbot, H Wightwick.

## Also present:

Ms Caroline Jenkins – Assistant Clerk, Central Beds Council Ward Member S Dixon, 3 members of public

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Councillor A Cooper began the meeting with the sad news that the wife of Councillor Paul Makin, Mayor of Shefford Town Council had recently passed away after a long illness.

## **66/22 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Nominations were requested for the position of Chairman of Stotfold Town Council, who will also take the role of Mayor of Stotfold.

Councillors were also advised that the election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and committee chairs should be carried out by a show of hands, and ballot papers should be only used for co-options in connection with casual vacancies, in conjunction with our Standing Orders, 10b.

Councillors proposed that ballot papers be used for all voting with regard to election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and committee chairs.

**RESOLVED** that for this meeting, ballot papers will be used for voting in regard to election of Council Chairman, Vice Chairman and committee chairmen.

Councillors Collier and Buck were proposed and seconded. A paper ballot vote took place, and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the Chairman of Stotfold Town Council for year 2022/2023 is Councillor Steve Buck.

Councillor Alan Cooper was thanked by the Council for his hard work as Chairman.

## **67/22 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Buck signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the role of Chairman of Stotfold Town Council.

**Councillor Steve Buck now in the Chair.**

## **68/22 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Nominations were requested for the position of Vice-Chairman of Stotfold Town Council, who will also take the role of Deputy Mayor of Stotfold.

Councillors Collier and Hayes were proposed and seconded. A paper ballot vote took place, and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the Vice-Chairman of Stotfold Town Council for year 2022/2023 is Councillor Steve Hayes.

Councillor Hayes signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the role of Vice-Chairman of Stotfold Town Council.

#### **69/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Bhasin.

#### **70/22 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

There were no declarations of interests in respect of items on the agenda, and no requests for dispensations. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

#### **71/22 ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Members were previously provided with a copy of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Both documents had been reviewed in May 2021.

**RESOLVED** that the Council's Financial Regulations are adopted.

Standing Orders are to be reviewed separately by the Establishment Committee, with a draft document to be considered by Council.

#### **72/22 COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES & STEERING GROUPS**

**RESOLVED** that this Council shall have the following Standing Committees with number of members as follows:

- Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting – 10 members
- Cemetery Management – 8 members
- Buildings Management – 8 members
- Planning Management – 10 members
- Town Strategy – 8 members
- Establishment – between 7 and 9 members (consisting of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council, and Chairmen of each committee)

And working parties, sub-committees and steering groups:

- Town Plan Implementation Group (working party) – up to 12 members, at least 2 of which must be council members
- Etonbury Green Wheel (working party) – 8 or more members, 2 of which must be from the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee
- Stotfold Christmas lights – 2 council members plus residents/businesses (chairman shall be a council member)
- Stotfold Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – 10 members, up to 4 of which shall be council members (chairman shall be a council member)
- Arlesey Road Task & Finish Group – 4 members

And that the terms of reference for each Standing Committee are adopted.

**73/22 FORMATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN & VICE-CHAIRMEN – TO INCLUDE SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND STEERING GROUPS**

**RESOLVED** that councillor committee membership and chairmen and vice-chairmen thereof is as follows:

Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee

L Anderson, S Buck, B Collier, A Cooper, Mrs M Cooper, S Hayes, J Hyde, G Russell, B Saunders, J Talbot

Chairman – Councillor Steve Buck

Cemetery Management Committee

T Bhasin, S Buck, B Collier, A Cooper, Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde

Chairman – A Cooper

Buildings Management Committee

S Buck, A Cooper, Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, D Matthews, J Talbot

Chairman – S Hayes

Planning Committee

L Anderson, T Bhasin, S Buck, B Collier, A Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, D Matthews, G Russell, J Smith

Chairman – B Collier

Town Strategy

S Buck, A Cooper, S Hayes, J Smith, J Talbot, H Wightwick

Chairman – S Buck

Establishment

S Buck, B Collier, A Cooper, S Hayes, D Matthews, B Saunders

Chairman – S Buck

Town Plan Implementation Group

S Buck, J Smith, J Talbot

Chairman – J Talbot

Etonbury Green Wheel

L Anderson, B Collier, J Smith

Stotfold Christmas Lights

S Buck, A Cooper, S Dhaliwal

Chairman – A Cooper

Stotfold Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

L Anderson, S Buck, B Collier, J Talbot, (4 spaces as per Terms of Reference, but Council would like to include Cllr H Wightwick and Cllr J Smith in working groups)

Chairman – S Buck

Arlesey Road Task & Finish Group

B Collier, A Cooper, S Hayes, B Saunders

Chairman – A Cooper

Vice-Chairmen are to be elected at the next appropriate committee meeting.

#### **74/22 MEETINGS SCHEDULE FOR ORDINARY AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2021-2022**

**RESOLVED** that the meetings schedule for ordinary council and committee meetings for the period May 2022 to April 2023 is adopted. Noting that meetings may be subject to cancellation or postponement if there are no items for the agenda, the meeting will be inquorate or for other reasons determined by council or relevant committee.

#### **75/22 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER OR NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

**RESOLVED** that members are nominated or confirmed as representatives (where role continues) on the following outside bodies:

Community Governor for St Mary's Academy  
Councillor L Anderson

Community Governor for Roecroft Lower School

At this time, we are not able to put forward a nomination for this role. To look outside the Town Council for representative.

Community Governor for Etonbury Academy  
Councillor Glen Russell

Stotfold Football Club Committee  
Councillors S Dhaliwal, J Smith

Mossman Management Committee  
Councillor B Saunders

Stotfold Bowls Club Committee  
Councillor Mrs M Cooper, S Buck

Stotfold Scouts Committee  
Councillor J Talbot, A Cooper

Stotfold Chamber of Trade  
Councillor Brian Collier

Trustees of Eleemosynary Charity of William Field

Councillors S Hayes and J Hyde will continue to be the Town Council's representatives on the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field, as per their terms of office (Councillor Mrs J Hyde is the Chairman of the Charity, in her capacity as Church Warden). Councillor J Smith to be considered in November 2023 when a trustees term of office ends..

Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils  
Councillors J Talbot, A Cooper, J Smith

#### **76/22 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE THE COUNCIL**

**RESOLVED** that the following appointments of member representatives to serve the council are made:

Tree Warden

Councillor Mrs M Cooper

Highways Representative

Councillor J Smith

Bedfordshire Police & Priority Setting

Councillors J Talbot and J Smith

Stotfold Community Safety Plan Group

Councillors S Buck and J Talbot

## 77/22 AUTHORISED REGULAR/ANNUAL PAYMENTS

Members considered the list of payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty or obligation – to include subscriptions and memberships.

**RESOLVED** that all regular/annual payments as detailed on the list below are paid:

<b>Operating costs</b>	<b>£</b>
Landscape contract	75,912
Handyman contract	44,075
Street Lighting contract - quarterly inspection (work not included)	1,760
Central Beds Council - Non Domestic Rates - Brook Street car park	1,060
Central Beds Council - Non Domestic Rates - Memorial Hall	4,790
Central Beds Council - Non Domestic Rates - Part Simpson Centre	2,994
Central Beds Council - Non Domestic Rates - Part Simpson Centre	5,489
Central Beds Council - Non Domestic Rates - Cemetery	5,239
Central Beds Council - Non Domestic Rates - Greenacre Centre	13,223
The Play Inspection Company - annual play inspection	440
Bugs N Things - pest control - Norton Road Allotments & Cemetery	995
DANFO - Brook Street Toilets servicing	1,200
PHS - Sanitary bin charge - Greenacre Centre & Memorial Hall	2,040
PRS - music licence - Greenacre Centre & Memorial Hall	1,216
River Ivel Drainage Board - riparian costs	9
Cawleys - bin/skip hire - Greenacre Centre & Memorial Hall	2,500
T&J Fire & Wadys - Fire alarm/extinguisher contracts - Greenacre Centre & Memorial Hall	1,500
Watercooler Direct - watercooler service Greenacre Centre	145
ACE Security - Intruder alarm maintenance, monitoring & CCTV Greenacre Centre	775
Ambivent Facilities - heating & BMS contract - Greenacre Centre	1,890
Crescent (Legacy) Contract Cleaning - Greenacre Centre & Memorial Hall	23,595
Reactive Doors - powered door maintenance - Greenacre Centre	255
Southern Grille & Gate Ltd - Greenacre Centre security shutters	360
<b>Administration costs</b>	<b>£</b>
Stotfold News - advertising	3,000
Pitney Bowes - franking machine rental (plus postage)	346

IBT - office telephone & internet fee	1,737
British Telecom - office 365 & web licence	76
EE - office mobiles	1,285
RBS - Cemetery software licence & support	388
RBS - Booking software licence & support	402
RBS - Omega financial software licence & support	892
RBS - Allotments software licence & support	250
RBS - Allotments inspection app & support	180
RBS - Assets Inventory software licence & support	169
RBS - Annual financial year shutdown	600
SAGE - salaries software	360
ICO - data protection register	40
Assign IT - office IT support	5,330
Copycare - photocopier maintenance (depending on number of copies)	1,000
Annual external & internal auditor (Mazars & J Betts)	1,750
Worldpay - card machine transaction fee (depending on transactions)	410
SurveyMonkey - annual	384
Timetastic - leave records package	84
Zoom - virtual meetings	115
<b>Subscriptions</b>	<b>£</b>
CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England)	36
Woodland Trust	36
The Wildlife Trust	36
Open Spaces Society	36
National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners	55
ICCM (Institute of Cemeteries & Crematorium Management)	95
BATPC (Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils)	1,670
SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) membership x2	648

## 78/22 APPOINTMENT OF BANK SIGNATORIES

**RESOLVED** that signatories to bank accounts held by the council are as follows:

Unity Trust Bank – Councillors S Buck, B Collier, A Cooper, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, B Saunders and the Town Clerk

Barclays Bank – Councillors S Buck, B Collier, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, B Saunders and the Town Clerk

## 79/22 INTERNAL AUDITOR

Members were asked to confirm that Mrs Julie Betts continues in the role as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for 2022/2023. The Clerk has undertaken checks to ensure that Mrs Betts is competent and suitable to carry out the role. Mrs Betts' fee is £250 for half-year audits.

**RESOLVED** that Mrs Julie Betts is appointed as the council's Internal Auditor for 2022/2023.

## 80/22 COUNCIL POLICIES

**RESOLVED** that the council's policy documents, and their relevant review dates (accessible to members via the council's Google Drive and website) are noted. As per

Standing Order 6 (j) xvi, xvii, xviii, xix, following review of the council's complaints procedure, press policy, and policies and procedures relating to employment and obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation, these were also noted and adopted.

Any future changes will be raised at the next Establishment committee and referred back to Full Council for adoption.

#### **81/22 ASSET REGISTER**

Members were previously provided with a copy of the council's Asset Register. It was noted that some play equipment items are grouped together on the register. Council play equipment does not depreciate in value, in any insurance claim we would receive new for old.

**RESOLVED** that the council's Asset Register is adopted.

#### **82/22 INSURANCE COVER**

Members were previously provided with a copy of the council's insurance cover review.

The Town Clerk requested that the Town Councils fidelity guarantee is increased from £2 million to £5 million. This is insurance cover we are legally obliged to have which protects council's finances from theft. Bank balances have recently increased significantly due to receipt of commuted sums from developers and a larger precept income. Also, this year marks the last of our 3 year long term with Zurich, the clerk is seeking quotes for new insurance year.

**RESOLVED** that the council's insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks, is increased from £2 million to £5 million.

#### **83/22 COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RECORD**

This item will be deferred to the next Council Meeting

#### **84/22 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & CIVIC ATTENDANCE**

1<sup>st</sup> March – Leighton Linlade Mayors catch up - Declined

2<sup>nd</sup> March – Mayor of Sandy Charity Dinner - Declined

7<sup>th</sup> March – Cllr Farzana Kharawala Celebration of International Women's Day - Declined

11<sup>th</sup> March – Mayor of Leighton Buzzard Charity Quiz Night - Declined

19<sup>th</sup> March – Mayor of Flitwick Charity Murder Mystery Evening – Declined

20<sup>th</sup> March – Mayor of Biggleswade Civic Service – Attended

25<sup>th</sup> March – Mayor of Houghton Regis Pop Quiz - Declined

27<sup>th</sup> March – Mayor of Sandy Civic Service – Attended

2<sup>nd</sup> April – Mayor of Ampthill Wine Tasting Event – Declined

9<sup>th</sup> April – Councillor Brian Saunders Afternoon Tea and tour of Stotfold Watermill and Nature Reserve – Attended

24<sup>th</sup> April – Mayor of Houghton Regis Civic Service – Attended

29<sup>th</sup> April – Mayor of Ampthill Charity Concert – Declined

7<sup>th</sup> May – Mayor of Houghton Regis Tea on the Bowls Green – Declined

8<sup>th</sup> May - Councillor Brian Saunders Civic Service for HM the Queen Platinum Jubilee – Mayor and Deputy Mayor to attend.

10<sup>th</sup> May – Stotfold District Guide Association AGM – Cllr Alan Cooper and Cllr Mary Cooper to attend

15<sup>th</sup> May – Mayor of Leighton – Linlade Civic Service – to be advised



22<sup>nd</sup> May – Lord-Lieutenants Annual Service of Thanksgiving – Cllr Alan Cooper and Cllr Mary Cooper to attend.

Councillor Alan Cooper requested to attend two outstanding invitations as a Past Mayor.

#### **85/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

None present.

#### **86/22 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION**

Members received an update on Schools for Future new proposals for Shefford & Stotfold, and the latest BEST newsletter for information.

Members were reminded that if there were any questions or items to be raised on this correspondence, they should be at the next Full council meeting.

Members noted that after the recent presentation from Victor Wan, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning, they were pleased to see a date of September 2023 for the new sixth form provision at Etonbury Academy.

It was also noted that the members attending the councillor's surgery at the Stotfold Mill weekend had been provided day passes for entrance.

#### **87/22 COUNCIL MINUTES**

Members were asked to note and sign as a correct record, the minutes of the Extra Council meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022, and the Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Extra Council meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022, and the Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022 be taken as read and confirmed and signed as a correct record, with the following amendment:

Councillor John Talbot's name to be removed from the minutes as he was absent from this meeting.

#### **88/22 1 YEAR DRAFT ACTION PLAN – APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2023**

Members considered the review of actions taken on the plan ending March 2022, together with a draft 1 Year Action Plan for period April 2022 to March 2023.

**RESOLVED** that the review of the plan for period April 2021 to March 2022 is noted, and that the 1 Year Draft Action Plan for period April 2022 to March 2023 is adopted.

#### **89/22 LIBRARY RELOCATION PROPOSAL – UPDATE ON CONSULTATION**

Members were asked to note the library relocation consultation document and questionnaire, which is subject to final sign-off by Central Bedfordshire Council. The consultation will open Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 for a period of 12 weeks.

Councillors noted the wording on page 3 of the document "Stotfold also has a Good Neighbourhood Group who offer a pick-up and drop-off service, so members of the community can get to locations for appointments or events"



The Good Neighbour Group currently has 329 clients who they will provide a pick-up and drop-off service for. This will be highlighted to Central Bedfordshire Council and the consultation group.

Once the consultation document goes live, a link will be put on the Town Council Facebook page and website.

Councillor Steve Hayes was thanked for all his work on this project.

## **90/22 COUNCIL TECHNOLOGY**

Members were asked to consider a report and quotes to enhance council meeting technology which facilitates council's transparency within the community, modernises and improves council productivity and performance.

Members raised the question if Microsoft products could be uploaded to the Town Councils existing Chromebooks. It was noted that the two companies, Microsoft and Google are not compatible.

Councillors then asked whether this technology could be used in the newly divided Maple Room and whether a decision had been made by the Town Council on this. It was confirmed that the Town Council had made the decision to divide the Maple Room.

Members also queried the need for 15 separate Town Council mailboxes to be set up, as opposed to using councillors' own mailboxes, ie Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.

Not only would this improve the identity of town councillor mailboxes, as all of them would be unified, but there would also be the security aspect as if a lone account is hacked, this could affect the Town Councils security and GDPR.

Back referencing for information and documents will be accessed on the new laptops by Sharepoint.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. to accept the quote from Cloudy IT of £11,570.96 +VAT to supply and install hybrid meeting technology. This is because this company works specifically with local councils and understands the sector and our needs. There also further opportunities to improve our productiveness and efficiency through Cloudy IT, which can be considered at a later date.
2. to purchase x15 laptops for Councillors and x1 laptop for Clerk's use, and to dispose of the existing Chromebooks.
3. to set up x15 mailboxes for councillor use.

Funds from Establishment Committee's Office Equipment Earmarked Reserves.

## **91/22 STOTFOLD & ASTWICK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Members were asked to note meeting notes of the Steering Group's meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022, and to approve expenditure incurred in promoting the Plan, as previously authorised by council.

**RESOLVED** that meeting notes of the Steering Group's meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 were noted.

Expenditure incurred in promoting the Plan, as previously authorised by council were approved.

## **92/22 REPORTS**

### **a) Central Beds Council Ward Member Report**

#### **Councillor B Saunders**

- Central Bedfordshire Councils new Director of Childrens Services is Sarah-Jane Spedmore.
- Community assets grant scheme 4<sup>th</sup> round is opening on 23<sup>rd</sup> May and closing on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022. £200,000 available in grants of up to £25,000 match funded on the competitive bidding process.
- Member Grant scheme will be starting soon, each member has £2000, £1000 of which is match funded.

## **93/22 ACCOUNTS**

- a) Members considered the Expenditure Report for approval for May 2022 and the income received during April 2022 in the Income Report.

**RESOLVED** that all payments on the Expenditure Report are approved and are to be paid, and the Income Report be noted.

- b) Members considered the monthly committee budget report and bank balances as at end April 2022.

**RESOLVED** that the monthly committee budget reports and bank balances for month end April 2022 are noted.

## **94/22 PLANNING COMMITTEE – 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022**

Members of the Planning Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

## **95/22 PLANNING COMMITTEE – 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022**

Members of the Planning Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

## **96/22 RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE – 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022**

Members of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022 are a correct record. There were no recommendations from the committee. The minutes were noted by council.

## **97/22 ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE – 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022**

Members of the Establishment Committee confirmed that the minutes of their meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 are a correct record. Members considered recommendation contained within minute 30/22:

Organisation	Purpose of Grant	Amount Awarded
Stotfold Guides	Purchase of Play equipment for Guides Garden area	£1,500
Stotfold Bowls Club	Purchase of scarifier	£1,500
Stotfold Football Club	Purchase of full-sized portable goals to facilitate senior section training	£1,500

The recommendations were **RESOLVED** and the minutes were noted by council.

#### **98/22 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS ON ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MEETING**

There were none.

#### **99/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY**

Members noted that the debris under the Brook Street Bridge is increasing. It is now half way across the left hand culvert.

The Ivel drainage board continue to cut the weeds along the bank and quite a bit gets swept down to block bridge at Brook Street.

Grass cutting machines accessing the flood plains grass areas have now left ruts in the surfaces which people and dogs have been tripping up on.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.40pm.

**MINUTES APPROVED (date):**

**SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:**