

**LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Councillors	C Palmer (Vice-Chair) T Morris S Hemmings S Owen A L Dodwell V Harvey E Wallace K Ferguson D Bowater (Chair)
Also in attendance:	M Saccoccio, Town Clerk V Cannon, Head of Cultural and Economic Services S Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk M Jahn, Committee Officer
Joining remotely	S Hughes, Community Engagement Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council G Borelli, Chair, LB First S Caldbeck, Central Bedfordshire Council S Lakin, Central Bedfordshire Council A Cundy, Central Bedfordshire Council Cliff Andrews, Bedfordshire Rural Communities T Stephenson, Central Bedfordshire Council S Childerhouse, Central Bedfordshire Council Councillor G Perham

Members of the public:	3
Members of the press	0

106/LLP **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Tricia Humber, Bob Chandler and Councillor Kharawala.

**107/LLP APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2021-2022**

A proposal was made for Councillor Morris to be Chair of the Committee, but he declined to stand. It was proposed and seconded that Councillor D Bowater be appointed Chair of the Committee for 2021-2022. There were no further nominations.

**RESOLVED to appoint Councillor D Bowater Chair of the Partnership Committee for the municipal year 2021-2022.**

**Councillor Bowater took the Chair.**

**108/LLP APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR 2021-2022**

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor C Palmer be appointed Vice Chair of the Committee for 2021-2022. There were no further nominations.

**RESOLVED to appoint Councillor C Palmer Vice-Chair of the Partnership Committee for the municipal year 2021-2022.**

**109/LLP APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARIAT 2021-2022**

Members unanimously agreed that Leighton-Linslade Town Council be appointed secretariat for the 2021-2022 municipal year, in accordance with the committee Terms of Reference.

**RESOLVED that Leighton-Linslade Town Council be appointed secretariat for the 2021-2022 municipal year.**

**110/LLP DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Harvey declared a personal interest as a member of South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth and Leighton Buzzard Society.

No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared and no dispensations were requested.

**111/LLP QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 minutes per person; maximum 15 minutes)**

A member of the public spoke to thank the South Side Task & Finish Group for the informative factual work completed by them and he hoped that equal attention would be given to the process for reviewing the temporary pedestrianisation of the High Street.

**112/LLP MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- (a) The Committee received the draft minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 15 April 2021.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 15 April 2021 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.**

- (b) Members received the following updates from the minutes:

Minute reference 98/LLP Tiddenfoot Waterside Park – a request was made to include this as an item on future agendas. Officers advised it was programmed to return on 2 December. A request was made that this could possibly be added to the Partnership Project List and this addition was supported by the Ouzel Valley Park steering group.

Minute reference 100/LLP Consideration of how Partnership Committee engages in Section 106 Matters – a scoping paper would be presented at the next meeting.

#### 113/LLP **APPROVED DECISIONS 5 MAY - 27 JUNE 2021**

The Committee received a record of approved decisions made between 5 May to 27 June 2021 through the delegated authority procedure approved by the Town Council, with email approval from at least a quorum of members of the Council.

Councillor Owen raised a concern that his proposed amendment was not supported by the majority of Councillors, and this was not a good start for a review of the Partnership Project List.

**RESOLVED to note the decisions.**

#### 114/LLP **COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION**

The Committee considered a replacement for Community Representative after the closure of Community Action Bedfordshire. All members agreed to the co-option of a representative from the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity to join the Partnership Committee as Community Representative.

**RESOLVED that a representative from Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity be co-opted onto the Partnership Committee as Community Representative**

#### 115/LLP **PLACE DELIVERY**

- (a) Sam Caldbeck, Central Bedfordshire Council gave a verbal update on the Welcome Back Fund. This was a government initiative to

encourage shoppers back into the town centre following the Covid-19 pandemic and provided funding to enhance the High Street. Leighton-Linslade Town Council had started a programme this month to provide entertainment in the High Street, an advertisement had been placed on the back of a bus, more Market gazebos and benches had been ordered. A Welcome Back Letter would go to every householder by the end of September to promote the town. Sam Caldbeck confirmed benchmarking studies would be carried out to track changes in car park usage, footfall and changes from pre-Covid to after the lifting of restrictions.

A concern was raised by Councillor Harvey as the original activity promised from the temporary pedestrianisation and now the Welcome Back Fund had not yet been delivered completely. The High Street was still waiting for benches, a deep clean and repairs to the street surface. Promises were made last summer by Central Bedfordshire Council, and she felt that a more honest approach to a completion date would have been the preferred option. Delays in supply of the benches, now funded through the Welcome Back Fund, had caused a slip in completion date but it was confirmed that the Town Council had delivered as quickly as possible under the current circumstances.

- (b) Tobin Stephenson, Central Bedfordshire Council spoke to update the Committee on the Hockliffe Road care home facility. He confirmed planning permission had been granted and a contractor identified to start in less than a month. The build was scheduled as a 60 week build. This would be the first sustainably built care home in the area with solar panels, air source heat pumps, electric charging points and outdoor spaces. Members were encouraged by this and hoped the construction kept to schedule without too much disruption to residents.

A question was raised regarding the Day Care facility and it was confirmed the consultation would re-open in the New Year for comments to be made on preferred options and use of community space in the building.

- (c) Andrew Cundy, Central Bedfordshire Council spoke to the Committee to update on the development delivery progress at Clipstone Park, Chamberlains Barn and Stearn Land. Concerns were raised regarding the provision of schools within the developments and why they were still following the 3-tier process when a 2-tier system was being considered. A question was raised regarding the roof height to the newly constructed warehouse building and its relation to new homes thereabouts. It was confirmed the planning permission had been granted over 10 years' ago and could not be changed.

A question was raised regarding the green infrastructure and availability of the planned allotments. The Committee was advised that this information would be relayed to the Town Clerk who would then circulate it to members. Leighton-Linslade Councillors requested they should be included in dialogue to discuss where the destination of S106 money could be best spent to

benefit the town.

- (d) Steve Lakin, Central Bedfordshire Council spoke to update members on plans to survey and engage stakeholders on the temporary pedestrianisation of the High Street. This was an experimental temporary traffic order put in place to enable social distancing when restrictions were lifted during the Covid-19 pandemic. The ETRO would expire at the end of March 2022 so a decision needed to be made before then as to the future of the High Street. The options would be to leave as it is now or revert to before the pandemic. An Economic Impact Assessment was being commissioned and stakeholder engagement was due to take place in December-January.

Committee members felt strongly that public consultation was essential to better understand resident views and felt that additional options should be considered, not just the binary choice of keeping or removing the ETRO. A suggestion was made by the Committee for a 'middle view' where the High Street would be closed on market days and open on other days. A full and clear picture was needed on what choices would be available to residents so they could make an informed decision once the consultation began.

Thanks were given to all the officers from Central Bedfordshire Council for attending the meeting and providing detailed presentations to the Committee.

**RESOLVED to note the information.**

#### 116/LLP **LAND SOUTH OF THE HIGH STREET**

- (a) The Committee received the draft minutes of South Side Task and Finish Group held on 26 July 2021.
- (b) Councillor Palmer, Chair of the South Side Task and Finish Group informed the Committee that the group unanimously agreed that the land south of the High Street was a priority project for the town. He emphasised the need to keep the momentum moving forward and that Central Bedfordshire Council should give priority to the marketing and development of the site. Consideration should be given to the potential uses of the land with provision for adequate parking and research into the surrounding areas. Thanks were given to the Task and Finish Group for their work on this important issue and Sam Caldbeck in keeping the group informed of progress.
- (c) The Committee considered the recommendations made by the Town Council's Policy and Finance Committee on 23 August 2021. Recommendations were approved unanimously but it was also agreed to keep this matter as a standing item on the Partnership Committee agendas going forward.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) To note the report from Councillor C Palmer summarising the work of the Land South of the High Street Task and Finish Group.
- (ii) That Central Bedfordshire work streams relating to Land South of the High Street (e.g. revision of the 2012 development brief, planning matters, Local Plan review), that consideration be given to potential uses of the site such as a performing arts and cultural facility, civic facility, police accommodation and/or location for the integrated health services hub.
- (iii) That the Land South of the High Street Task and Finish Group be formally disbanded following completion of its initial investigations and that the work continue through a new working party to report to the Town Council's Policy and Finance Committee with a suggested membership of Councillors: C Palmer, S Jones, T Morris, S Owen, R Goodchild, M Freeman, V Harvey and one member of the Labour group. Terms of reference and membership to be reviewed further by the group itself and approved by Policy and Finance Committee.

That Central Bedfordshire Council be requested to –

- (a) Support the ongoing work of the working party with Central Bedfordshire Council officer involvement
- (b) Explore whether S106 monies could be utilised to fund a feasibility study/business case for a civic facility on land south of the High Street.
- (c) Support of Town Council's aspirations to be actively involved in any future work around the place making agenda that the principal authority may undertake for Leighton-Linslade, including land south of the High Street and the eastern urban at Chamberlains Barn, Clipstone Park and the Stearn Land

#### 117/LLP **BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Susan Childerhouse, Assistant Director Public Protection and Transport informed Members the consultation for a bus service improvement plan would end on 22 September and was live on the Central Bedfordshire Council website at the present time. A link would be forwarded to the Committee members.

**RESOLVED** to note the information.

#### 118/LLP **COMMUNITY FORUM UPDATE**

The Committee were informed the results of the Community Forum survey

would be brought back to Committee on 2 December.

**RESOLVED to note the information.**

119/LLP **STANDING ITEMS**

No updates were given.

120/LLP **COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN**

The Committee received and considered the objectives and work plan for the municipal year 2020-2021.

**RESOLVED to note the information.**

121/LLP **ITEMS FOR REQUESTING ATTENTION BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

Two items were identified as requiring attention by Central Bedfordshire Council

(a) Repairs to the pavements in the High Street particularly around the Market Cross to eliminate trip hazards.

(b) Notification to be sent to the Town Clerk when the roadworks by the Canal Bridge would be completed.

122/LLP **BUDGET REPORT**

The Committee received a brief report regarding the current year budget to date.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

The meeting closed at 9.54 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2021.

Chair

2<sup>nd</sup> DECEMBER 2021