



## FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Extraordinary Flitwick Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at the Rufus Centre at 7:45pm

Present:

Cllr Roberts (Chairman)  
Cllr Snape  
Cllr Livens  
Cllr Toinko  
Cllr Blazeby  
Cllr Patterson  
Cllr Wilsmore  
Cllr Thompson  
Cllr Platt  
Cllr Harald

Also present:

Stacie Lockey - Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
Stephanie Stanley – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO  
Paulina A Danielewicz – Luton Borough Council (LBC)  
Luis Cadete – Luton Borough Council (LBC)

#### **5665. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Parsons – work commitment, Cllr Gleave – work commitment, Cllr Hodges – family commitment, Cllr Connell and Cllr Earles – holiday.

No apologies were received from Cllr Copleston.

#### **5666. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.

(b) Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.

#### **5667. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public.

#### **5668. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

*Cllr Harald entered the meeting at 19.48.*

##### **(a) 3 Station Road**

##### **(i) Planning drawings set of documents**

LBC gave an overview of the design plans and the timelines for the project;

- The restaurant would be stripped out to a 'shell and core' specification.
- The shell for the retail unit would be more advanced, with floors and ceilings.
- The planning application would be submitted by the 18<sup>th</sup> July.
- The tender document was currently being prepared for the main construction of the site.
- Once planning permission was concluded (October 2024), a contractor would be appointed following the tender process.
- The proposed design of the building included some amendments to the elevations, such as new windows and doors, cleaning the facades, changing the entrance to the restaurant, and including a new entrance to the side of the building for the retail unit (Kings Road side).
- A conversation had taken place with Post Office Ltd, and requirements for this service had been taken into account. This included a slightly enlarged footprint to accommodate a storage space.
- The designs included minimal work in the service yard to the rear of the building, following the transport consultant's report. This included cyclist parking and limited staff car parking.
- The consultant's report to improve the energy consumption of the building was yet to be completed. However, it was likely to include a new roof, replacement windows and doors, and cavity insulation.
- A separate tender process was being carried out for the roof works to ensure the funding received would be spent within the appropriate time frames.
- There were three options to consider with regard to the current roof railings – replace roof railings, refurbish the current railings, or install a man-safe system. LBC recommended refurbishing the current railings as this would avoid ongoing maintenance costs.

Cllr Blazeby asked about the additional storage space for the retail unit and wondered if the proposed access would be sufficient. LBC confirmed that the access was adequate to fulfil the Post Office requirements. LBC also expressed that a clear division of the restaurant and retail unit was required and felt this would be more attractive to future tenants.

LBC advised that when the initial analysis of the building was carried out, guidance from FTC was that a retail unit with a Post Office function was the preferred option, as opposed to a Post Office with a retail function. LBC needed guidance from FTC on this matter and whether the storage area should be included or not. This would affect the rental income for the units. LBC advised that a decision on this storage space was not required until February/March 2025 as it did not affect the planning submission.

Cllr Blazeby mentioned that no toilets were shown on the ground floor. LBC advised that the plan was to strip out the existing toilets, which would then provide more flexibility for future tenants to arrange the space as they wished.

Members questioned access to the first floor. LBC advised that the existing staircase and lift shaft would stay in situ as they were providing structural support. The fire consultants advised that the current staircase was sufficient, but this would depend on how many people would be accommodated on the restaurant's first floor. It was likely that a second staircase could be required, but this would be up to the future tenant.

Cllr Thompson commented that a substantial amount of roof work was required and asked if solar panelling had been explored. LBC advised that this had been considered, but budget constraints would not accommodate it. The roof structure would, however, be suitable for solar panels if this changed in the future.

Cllr Snape asked how the Council ensured the building was fully accessible. LBC advised that all options had been explored, but the budget restricted some improvements. Members were advised that there was a 'license to alter' process that could be followed. This meant that when a tenant took on the building, the proposals would be checked to ensure they complied with regulations.

Members commented that one of the façades at the front of the building was damaged and asked if this could be replaced and for details on the finished proposed design. LBC advised that it would be repairable and that the facades would be painted white to complement the building.

Cllr Snape asked what fencing was being proposed along the side of the building and expressed that he would not be in favour of palisade fencing. LBC commented that the current plans proposed palisade fencing as it would provide the most security. A lengthy discussion took place about the type of fencing, and it was agreed that LBC would investigate alternative options and report back to Officers.

Cllr Toinko commented that the tree survey indicated that one of the trees was in bad condition and asked if it was being removed. LBC advised that the current proposals recommended that it not be removed, but this could change once the planning application was submitted.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the planning designs and documentation for the planning application at 3 Station Road subject to review of the fencing options.

**(ii) Updated Cost plan**

Members noted the updated cost plan.

**(iii) Procurement strategy**

Members were advised on the available procurement strategies, and Luton Borough Council recommended using an 'open tender' process. This process allowed local companies as well as known reputable companies to be approached.

Cllr Snape asked about the process for scoring social value. LBC advised that this element included the contractor's proposals of what they would be able to offer to the local community, such as purchasing materials from local suppliers, employing local contractors, and if they would donate or support the community in any way, e.g., talks in schools, etc.

Members were in agreement that a full FTS procurement was the preferred process. LBC recommended providing a 'wish list' for this element.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with a full FTS procurement and delegate the final tender evaluation criteria to the Town Clerk.

**(iv) Roof works – tender set of documents**

Members discussed the roof options.

It was **RESOLVED** to keep the current railing and make necessary repairs.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the tender set of documents for the roof works.

**5669. EXEMPT ITEMS**

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

**No Items**

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960  
Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature  
of the business about to be transacted.

Meeting closed at 20.57.