



**FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting**  
**held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at the Rufus Centre**

**Present:**

Cllr Thompson (Chairman)  
Cllr Toinko  
Cllr Platt  
Cllr Wilsmore  
Cllr Connell  
Cllr Livens  
Cllr Earles  
Cllr Snape

Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk (TC)  
Susan Eldred - Community Services and Amenities Manager (CSAM)  
Sarah Burgess - Amenities Officer (AO)  
Zoe Putwain - Community Services Officer (CSO, ZP)  
Sue Quinn – Community Services Officer (CSO, SQ)

Two members of the public attended in person.

**1221. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received from Cllr Copleston.

**1222. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) No Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item where declared.
- (b) No non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item were declared.

**1223. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Earles back to the committee.

Members were invited to attend the Remembrance Service and Parade on the 10<sup>th</sup> November at Flitwick War Memorial and were also invited to register with the Community Services Officer (ZP) if they were able to support the Christmas Lights Switch on event on the 24<sup>th</sup> November.

**1224. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Two members of the public attended the meeting to discuss an item not on the agenda. As such they requested to address the Council at the second public open session.

**1225. INVITED SPEAKER**

There was no invited speaker at the meeting.

**1226. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Members raised no questions at this time.

**1227. MINUTES**

Members received and adopted the minutes of the Community Services meeting held on **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024** with no amendments.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Community Services meeting held on **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024** with no amendments.

*Action – Reception*

**1228. MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr Livens requested that the Officers pursue the previous request and correspondence with Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to the allocation of new benches in the Town. The Chair suggested that Cllr Livens raise the issue at the next Town Council meeting to the Ward Cllrs, if there had been no response.

**1229. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**a. Nature Park Master Plan**

Following the approval of the Nature Park Master Plan by the Nature Park Working Group, Members were asked to approve the plan as presented, allowing the plans to be submitted for the formal planning process.

The Chairman brought to the Members attention that some aspects of the plan such as the carpark were added for the planning permission and would not be delivered initially if planning was granted as funding would be required- to add this aspect to the project in the future.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Nature Park Master Plan as presented and submit said plan for formal planning.

*Action – AO*

**b. Manor Park Management Plan Update**

Members received a report from the Amenities Officer and considered the recommendations within the report in relation to the management plan for Manor Park.

Clarification of locations of suggested work was sought by Members determining the impact on the site and especially drainage.

Members expressed the overwhelming need to ensure that the working group, before the public was recruited, had -terms of reference to ensure that the boundaries of the group were set in place. It was also confirmed that the working group would report to the Community Services Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to set up a Manor Park working group consisting of Members and Officers to implement moving forward with the Parkland Management plan for Manor Park.

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Councilor Toinko, Councilor Earles and Cllr Wilsmore into the Manor Park working group.

*Action – AO*

**c. Skate Park**

Members received a report from the Amenities Officer and considered the recommendations within the report in relation to work at the Skate Park. The report included the option to add additional work to the skate park improvements to concrete the top part of the skatepark to make it suitable as a landing pad.

Members and Officers confirmed that this had been requested by users and identified a need for balance between existing users and widening access.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the additional skate park works subject to approval of section 106 funds.

*Action – AO*

**d. Public Art**

At a previous Community Services Meeting, Members tasked Officers to investigate three projects as part of the Public Art Project (funded by Section 106): Musical Instrument Park, Graffiti Wall and Benches.

CBC Officers had approved the Musical Instrument Park Project, which would be installed in early 2025.

Officers have, however, had difficulty obtaining proposals for the Graffiti Wall and the Benches. It had also become apparent that the allocated Section 106 funding could be utilised for anything related to the public realm and not just public art, as previously advised.

Members were asked to consider how to progress with the Public Art Projects (Graffiti Wall & Benches) in light of the confirmation that the funds previously believed to be earmarked for Community Art, were able to be used on other Public Realm eligible projects such as play parks.

Members confirmed that they were happy to continue with the Musical Instrument but not to progress with the graffiti wall and benches to allow for funds from 106 to be used in other areas.

*Action – CSO (SQ)*

**e. Community Fridge**

(i) Members receive an update from the Community Service Officer (SQ) surrounding the increase in attendance of the Community Fridge with a suggested average of 45/50 people attending in each two-hour slot. The Officer identified problems with people using the fridge multiple times a day and expressed the attendance from outside of the local area.

A suggestion was raised and discussed to introduce a membership card scheme which would remove 50% of the admin tasks from the fridge administration and aid in gaining information, as well as restricting repeat visitors through the same day. It was confirmed that this would remain a FREE service and membership would be granted at no charge.

(ii) Members discuss the [Food Fairness Grant Scheme](#) and the ability for the Council to apply to the scheme for funding to allow for cooking lessons and creating formal food network partnerships. Members agreed they were happy for officers to pursue funding in this area.

*Action – CSO (SQ)*

**f. Draft 2025/26 Community Services Budget**

3 Community/ 05112024

Formatted: Font: Not Bold, No underline

Members considered the draft budget for 2025/26 and noted the suggested changes listed below. The Chairman requested that any suggestions of other savings be brought to the next Community meeting.

- 300/-4051 – Removing the Grant funding for 2025 /2026 at a value of £5000
- 302/4072 – Allotment maintenance reduction at the value of £500
- 4084/303 – Public Realm Purchase reduction at the value of £500
- 4085/303 – Public Realm Equipment Maintenance reduction at the value of £500
- 4118/303 – Bins and seats reduction at the value of £1000
- 4132/311 – Hub Building Maintenance reduction at the value of £500
- 4138/311 – Reduction of Hub Equipment at the value of £500
- 4206/313 – Removal of Scarecrow festival budget at the value of £240
- 4208/313 – Removal of Skate Comp budget at the value of £1,150
- 4211/313 – Removal of Easter Egg Trail Budget at the value of £750
- 4618/313 – Reduction of Community Events Expense at the value of £1000

Members discussed the suggested changes and were in agreement that these be included in the revised DRAFT budget which would be presented at the next meeting.

It was noted that Members and Officers were working through the scale of savings needed, and may need to push further than the savings mentioned, at the next meeting

#### 1230. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

##### a. **Community Financial Report**

Members received and noted a report from the Senior Finance Officer.

##### b. **Officer Update**

Members noted the Officer update.

##### c. **CBC Highways Partnership Working**

Members were informed that the Community Services and Amenities Manager would collate all information on Highway issues proposed by Members. Members were requested to send any details by email.

#### 1231. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Two members of the public attended the meeting and addressed the Committee in relation to the removal of Tea Dances from the Council programme of events. The accounting of the income verification and outgoing was questioned as to how the well-attended event made an overall loss.

The Community Services and Amenities Manager confirmed costs and explained financial reasons for the removal of the service.

The Chairman also confirmed that other avenues had been investigated, such as making it a commercial event and offering for the group to run it themselves. Both avenues had unfortunately not progressed, but an effort had been made to find a way for the event to continue without there being a financial loss to the Council.

The Chair apologised for not being able to reintroduce the event, but thanked them for taking the time to attend the meeting and address the members.

Formatted: Font: Not Bold, No underline

Formatted: Font: Not Bold, No underline

Formatted: Indent: Left: 1.74 cm

Formatted: Font: Not Bold, No underline

Formatted: Font: Not Bold, No underline

1232. **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 ended 9.07pm*