A meeting of the Town Council was held in the Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon on Thursday 3rd March 2016.


Absent: There were none.

In attendance: Rev’d Andrew Milton, Robin Howe, Deputy Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council; Chris Stopford, Head of Community at Huntingdonshire District Council; Greg Hilton, Managing Director of Churchill Retirement Living (Eastern Region); Ben Martinez and Gary Pile, residents of Huntingdon, Sophie Day, Hunts Post and Doug McIlwain.

WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed those in attendance and before the commencement of proceedings, followed with prayers by the Mayor’s Chaplain, Rev’d A Milton.

90. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors; A Dovans, T Forster, L George, S Hassell, and B Manning.

91. CHURCHILL RETIREMENT LIVING

The Mayor welcomed Mr Greg Hilton, Managing Director of Churchill Retirement Living (Eastern Region). Mr Hilton wished to speak to Members regarding a proposed development on land at 12-13 Ermine Street Huntingdon (former Travis Perkins site). Following a presentation at a PAP meeting in December 2015, the applicant had made amendments to the application, taking into consideration comments made by Huntingdon Town Council (HTC) and later Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC).

The amended drawings showed that consideration had been given to the heights and designs of the properties and that they had been lowered on the site facing onto Ermine Street and overlooking Sayer Street. This was now considered to be more in keeping with surrounding properties. The flats, which originally overlooked Sayer Street had been re-orientated and a sunlight test had shown that the new design was not overshadowing the street. The heights of the flats were raised as the site moved along Edison Bell, in keeping with incline of the road.

Members had expressed concern over a limited number of parking spaces; 20 spaces for 51 apartments. The new designs showed that the site now had 27
spaces for a reduced number of apartments (47). Research and experience of the planners, architects and Churchill Retirement Living had shown that 1 space per 3 flats was sufficient to meet parking demands, and that this proposed development now offered in excess of this (approximately 1 space per 2 flats). This therefore proposed greater parking than any previous Churchill Retirement development or competing developments in Huntingdon (McCarthy & Stone / Country Court Care).

Mr Hilton explained that the HDC Planning Officer had confirmed that if HTC recommend Approval for the new application then HDC would allow a delegated approval.

A Member questioned if there was or would be a waiting list for the proposed flats. Mr Hilton clarified that at this there was not, however there would be sufficient demand and that usually once signage was displayed, enquiries would begin to come through. At approximately 6 months into the development, Churchill Retirement would begin selling plots. Research had shown that there was sufficient demand and local demographic to justify a need for the development.

Members commented that they still felt the parking was insufficient to suit 47 dwellings and potential visitors. Mr Hilton explained that residents tended to relinquish their cars when purchasing a retirement property as they were unlikely to need a car or perhaps be in a fit state to utilise the vehicle. It was recommended that as visitor parking wouldn’t automatically be provided, visitors would need to use local car parks or public transport. Members heard that residents didn’t tend to have visitors to the site, but preferred to meet and socialise out and about. In the past, Churchill Retirement had also offered financial incentives to residents, encouraging them to relinquish their vehicles and utilise public transport.

A Member asked whether parking would be provided for carers. Mr Hilton stated that residents needing that level of care would have usually relinquished their cars. This meant that as the demand for carers increased, vehicle ownership decreased and subsequently allowed for carers to use the car park.

Mr Hilton wished to conclude that Churchill Retirement would not be able to offer 1 car parking space per dwelling and additional visitor car parking, but that based on surveys from highways and planning, the local demographic and statistics and the experience of the planners and Churchill Retirement Living, this site offered sufficient car parking.

Members thanked Mr Hilton for his presentation.

92. **CCTV**

The Mayor welcomed Mr Chris Stopford, Head of Community at Huntingdonshire District Council, to the meeting where he gave a brief presentation of Huntingdonshire District Council’s provision of CCTV.

The District Council started monitoring CCTV in 1997, and in 2012 began a shared service with Cambridgeshire County Council. In June 2014, this service financially shared with Cambridge City Council, Huntingdonshire District Council
and Huntingdon Town Council (HTC) (Service Level Agreement), reducing costs across the district and increasing efficiency of the service.

Members were told there were 51 cameras in and around Huntingdon town centre and the CCTV services worked closely with HBAC (Huntingdonshire Business Against Crime) and BID Huntingdon. The system was able to relay live images to Cambridgeshire Constabulary and could relay up to 4 camera feeds at a time. A quarter of all CCTV incidents in Huntingdon were handled through CCTV working with partners (police, HBAC or BID)

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) had plans to upgrade the CCTV network, with the aim of providing a wireless (digital) network rather than analogue. New revenue streams to support the provision of CCTV were being identified through developers, such as Church Manor (Chequers Court development). One of the benefits of a new system would be the ability to stream live video and images to Police Officers, accessing live streams through portable tablets and devices whilst on patrol. A digital platform would also open up new markets such as key holding, alarm monitoring, enhanced lone worker monitoring and 'lifeline alarms'.

Members were invited to ask questions. A Member asked who was responsible for lifeline alarms (alarm systems used by the elderly or vulnerable). It was explained that NHS lifeline alarms were outsourced to private companies, and that Luminus had their own systems which were managed by them and that care homes would have their own systems managed either in house or by contractor.

A Member questioned if the new systems saw a reduction in costs, would taxpayers see a reduction in council tax and other payments. Mr Stopfold stated that HDC aimed to reduce costs and save money where possible, whilst being as efficient as possible. The target for HDC was to provide a service which was cheaper and more efficient than the current market.

A Member questioned whether partner bodies such as HBAC financially supported the provision of CCTV. Mr Stopfold clarified that it was financially supported through HDC and Cambridge City Council, with a Service Level Agreement with HTC.

Members thanked Mr Stopfold for his time and presentation.

93. PUBLIC ADDRESS

A Member wished to address the Council and it was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.

Councillor J Dyne wished to speak on behalf of local residents in regards to the removal of a street light near to his home address on Coronation Avenue. This street light was removed by Balfour Beatty in 2015 and since then there had been at least one burglary, and an accident of a serious nature resulting in a fatality. Councillor Dyne felt that if the street light had been in place then this may have been prevented. Councillor Dyne wished to ask Members to consider the reinstating of the street light.

Mr Gary Pile, resident of Coronation Avenue also expressed concern regarding the safety of pedestrian use of the road/pavement since the street light was
removed. Residents were left unable to see to the other side of the road and pedestrians had resorted to using the torches or lights on their mobile phones.

Councillor Kadewere raised awareness of the removal of a street light on Norfolk Road, where residents had not been aware that the street light was being removed and subsequently had asked if the Council would reinstate the light.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to reconvene the meeting.

94. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Brown, Kadewere and Sanderson declared an interest under item 104 as Huntingdonshire District Councillors.

Councillor Dyne declared an interest under item 101 as a resident of Coronation Avenue.

95. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

District Councillors who were in attendance, informed Members that Huntingdonshire District Council had agreed to provide Shopmobility an additional 3 months funding to rent the port-a-cabin until the 31st July 2016. District Councillor Sanderson expressed an interest in seeing if the Town Council would be able to provide financial support for Shopmobility, using CIL money. This could be potentially £10,000 to cover rent from August 2016 for a period of 12 months. BID Huntingdon would also be looking at providing support to Shopmobility.

In January 2016 Cambridgeshire County Council approved a Traffic Order for Great Northern Street, restricting two way vehicular access. As of 3rd March no actions had been taken at the street, but it was hoped that restrictions and signage would be installed soon.

Town Clerk’s note: Work on Great Northern street had been delayed due to the Iron Bridge repairs over running.

96. MINUTES

Members had before them minutes of the Town Council Meetings held on Monday 15th February 2016 (M9).

A Member commented that the minutes stated a figure of £185,000 under item 88, whereas it should state £18,500.

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED to approve and adopt these minutes subject to the amendment and they would be duly signed by the Mayor.

97. PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES

Members had before them minutes from:

(i) Planning Committee, 4th February 2016 (M5)
98. **CLERK’S UPDATE**

The Town Clerk updated Members on the following items:

- The amount available under the Local Plan grant had been increased to £9000.
- The application for Minor Highway improvements including dropped kerbs and bollards at Princes Street had been approved, and would cost £1000.
- Members were reminded of the Beacon Lighting at Castle Hills to celebrate HM The Queen’s 90th Birthday, taking place on 21st April 2016, at 7:45pm. It would constitute a robed procession and therefore Members should arrive before 7:30pm at the Town Hall.
- The Mayor of Szentendre would be visiting Huntingdon from 31st March 2016 until 3rd April 2016. There would be a formal dinner in the Town Hall to mark the visit on Saturday 2nd April. Tickets were £18 per head.
- In support of moving the Town Hall towards heritage status and becoming a Tourist Information site, display cases had been donated from the Norris Museum in St Ives, who also supported sharing temporary exhibitions with the Town Hall. The Cromwell Museum had also suggested the loan of temporary exhibitions.

99. **COUNCIL MEETING CALENDAR 2016/17**

Members had before them copies of the proposed calendar of Huntingdon Town Council meetings for 2016/17.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to adopt the proposed calendar.

A Member commented that any meeting held on 23rd June 2016 may experience poor attendance due to the EU referendum.

100. **REPRESENTATION OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members were invited to select a representative for the following bodies.

It was proposed seconded and **RESOLVED** to recommend the following Members as representatives.

i. Freeman’s Charity – Councillor Ann Beevor
ii. Hartford Conservation Group – Councillor Alan Mackender Lawrence
iii. Cromwell Museum Trust - Councillor Sarah Gifford
iv. Friends of the Cromwell Museum – Councillor Patrick Kadewere
101. **STREET LIGHTING**

Members discussed the replacement of 3 columns in Huntingdon and the request from residents to have the columns reinstated. Members were concerned over the health and safety implications of removing certain columns. Arguments were raised stating that Members were willing to reinstate a column based on image, and therefore had ‘opened the floodgates’ for any resident to request a light be re-instated.

Members agreed that the safety of residents was paramount and therefore it was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to request an independent audit of the street lighting to ensure it met Cambridgeshire County Council Standards. (10 Members voted in favour, 4 voted against, there were no abstentions)

A Member noted that Balfour Beatty and/or Cambridgeshire County Council should be responsible for any costs incurred by undertaking an audit.

It was further proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to request quotations for the reinstatement of the 3 columns in question.

102. **CIL EXPENDITURE**

Members had been consulted on what to spend £26k CIL payment from Huntingdonshire District Council. Ideas had been submitted to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

Members discussed a proposed payment to Shopmobility. A representative of Huntingdonshire District Council clarified that Shopmobility currently had approximately £44k in reserves. The District Council had recommended that there be a more structured audit of how Shopmobility spent their income. Accounts showed that the majority of income was spent on staff costs; however the charity could use volunteers to save money. It was noted that the charity needed approximately 3-6 months’ rent in reserves plus monies to cover any dispute. The representative stated that HDC had offered Shopmobility the lease of the port-a-cabin, making the charity responsible for its base in Huntingdon. The port-a-cabin could not be purchased outright from port-a-cabin UK. The lease renewal being £8k per annum, of which HDC had paid £2k to cover Shopmobility’s rent until 30th June 2016.

Members discussed deferring Huntingdon Town Council’s payment of £10,000 until further information could be obtained in regards to the financial accounts and budgets of Shopmobility.

The following CIL Payments were discussed and **RESOLVED** as follows:

i. Shopmobility, £10K to retain services in Huntingdon. It was **RESOLVED** to approve in principle, subject to further information and discussion.

ii. Huntingdonshire Society for the Blind, £5k towards building extension. It was **RESOLVED** to approve this payment

iii. Medway Christian Fellowship, a sum of money towards the refurbishment of a new kitchen. It was **RESOLVED** to defer this payment subject to further information.

iv. Vibrant Huntingdon, a sum of money for new signage in the High Street and a new gate between Cromwell Museum and All saints Church. It was
RESOLVED to defer this payment subject to further information, including accurate costings.

v. Cromwell Museum and Commemoration Hall. It was RESOLVED to refuse funding as money had been allocated to both organisations within the Council budget.

vi. Bloomfield Park drainage and reinstatement of flower beds. It was RESOLVED to refuse funding as money can be used from Neighbourhood Green funding.

vii. Ornate light column, Church Lane, Hartford. It was RESOLVED to approve payment of £2400.

viii. Town hall furniture. It was RESOLVED to approve payment of £4260, replacing furniture used by hirers and Town Council to something more in keeping and fit for purpose.

Members argued whether the purchase of new Town Hall furniture was suitable for CIL expenditure. 9 Members voted in favour of the purchase, 5 voted against, there were no abstentions.

103. CROMWELL MUSEUM

The Town Clerk informed Members that the official handover of the Cromwell Museum had been delayed due to the process with Charity Commission registration taking longer than anticipated. Until the Charity Commission registration was completed, Cambridgeshire County Council’s legal department was unable to complete the transfer. The handover was deferred until 31st May 2016.

104. ASSETS AND BUILDINGS

The Mayor welcomed Cllr Robin Howe, Deputy Leader HDC, who addressed the meeting specifically on two buildings which both authorities had interest in.

One Leisure, owned by HTC and leased to HDC, with lease expiry date of January 2017 and the Medway Centre, although built by HTC, sat on HDC land leased to HTC, with expiry date of 2020.

Cllr Howe raised the issue of HTC transferring One Leisure to HDC, and in return HDC would transfer the Medway Centre to HTC, recognising that the Medway Centre had been constructed over 35 year ago, was in need of major refurbishment or a new build.

Members then discussed the report, previously circulated, from the Town Clerk, which detailed the options recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee on 4th February 2016.

Members noted that the three options open to them with regards to the Medway Centre were:

- A – Total refurbishment
- B – Demolish & rebuild
- C – Build new centre on alternative site (Coneygear Park?) and use income from sale of Medway Centre to fund this project.
Members noted that option A & B would need to be funded via Precept and the centre would be closed to all users for approx. six months. Option C would generate income from the sale of existing site to fund new build and the Medway Centre could remain open until the new building was ready to move into.

Cllr Howe was questioned on the financial support HDC would be able to give? Whilst funding a new build was not an option, an interest free loans was an option, with repayment being when the existing Medway Centre was sold.

Members agreed that this option should be investigated further and alternative sites addressed. Cllr Howe was thanked for his address to Members and requested for HDC to provide draft Heads of Terms for HTC to discuss.

105. TOWN BOUNDARY CHANGES

The Town Clerk informed Members that the Town Council had now received the results of the County Boundary Review and that Huntingdon was to be split into 5 wards, instead of 3. The Town Clerk advised that Huntingdonshire District Council had the powers (under item 8) to review these boundary changes if they wished.

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED to recommend that Huntingdonshire District Council reviewed the proposed Huntingdon wards boundary changes, maintaining that Huntingdon remained split into 3 wards.

106. POLICIES

Members had been advised prior to the meeting that electronic copies of the policies were available. Some Members had expressed that they were unable to view the documents. The Town Clerk clarified that hard copies would not be distributed to save paper, printing and postage costs.

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED to defer adoption of the reviewed policies until all Members had read the amended documents.

107. YOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Members had before them a report compiled by the Administration Assistants, detailing the current circumstances of the Youth Town Council and proposed options for carrying youth engagement forward. Members argued whether the Youth Town Council was still a relevant project for today’s youth and where responsibility should lie if Members wished to continue with youth engagement. Councillors Brown, Jacobs, and Kadewere indicated they wished to be involved with the youth programme.

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED to support recommendation 3.1ii in the report for an officer led programme working with schools and organisations to offer 1-2 youth events per year.
108. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting of the Town Council was noted as an extra ordinary meeting on Thursday 17\textsuperscript{th} March 2016

**MAYOR**