

Sandy Town Council

To: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, J Hewitt, L Ivanciu-Wilkinson, W Jackson, T Knagg, R Lock, C Osborne, M Pettitt, M Scott, P Sharman, S Sutton and N Thompson

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Sandy Town Council to be held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 11 April 2022 commencing at 7.30pm for the purpose of transacting the items of business below.



Nicola Sewell
Town Clerk
10 Cambridge Road
Sandy
SG19 1JE
01767 681491
4 April 2022

The Mayor will make a statement prior to opening the meeting.

A G E N D A

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations

Under the Localism Act 2011 members of Council are not required to make oral declarations of interest at meetings but may not participate in discussion or voting on any items of business in which they have a Declarable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) and under Sandy Town Council's Standing Orders must leave the room for the duration of all discussion on such items. (All members' register of interests are available on the Sandy Town Council website or on application to the Clerk.)

*This item is included on the agenda to enable members to declare new DPIS and also **those who wish to do so** may draw attention to their stated DPIS and also any non-declarable personal interests which they have declared under Sandy Town Council's adopted Code of Conduct and which may be relevant to items on the agenda.*

- i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests*
- ii) Dispensations*
- iii) Non Pecuniary Interests*

3 Public Participation Session

To receive questions and representations from members of the public. Members must raise their hand to indicate they wish to speak and the Chairman will advise them when it is time to do so.

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4 Minutes of previous Town Council meetings

To receive minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 7th March 2022 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Minutes of committees and recommendations therein

To receive and note the minutes of the meetings of the following committees and sub-committees and (if applicable) to approve recommendations therein which do not arise elsewhere.

- i) Development Scrutiny Committee held on 7 March and 28 March 2022
- ii) Community, Services and Environment Committee held on 14 March and 21 March 2022
- iii) Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 28 March 2022
- iv) Human Resources Committee held on 4 April 2022

6 Appointment of Committee Membership and Chairmanship

6.1 To appoint a committee member to the Human Resources Committee

6.2 To elect a committee Chairman for the Human Resources Committee

7 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors

To receive verbal reports from Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillors for Sandy.

8 Action List

To receive and note an action list on Full Council items.

Appendix I

9 Call to Action – Civility & Respect

To agree to write to our MP requesting he back an Early Day Motion calling for government to establish an appropriate and effective sanctions mechanism to deal with local councillors who have been found guilty of bullying and harassment following an independent investigation.

Appendix II

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Appendix
III

10 Vandalism at Bedford Road Recreation Ground – Update

To receive a report about recent vandalism at Bedford Road Recreation Ground.

11 Sandye Place and Jubilee Event

To receive a verbal update from the Clerk in regard to ongoing challenges with the use of Sandye Place for the Town Council’s Jubilee celebrations.

12 Christmas Lights Tender

To receive a verbal report following receipt of tenders for the Christmas Lights. Full report to be submitted prior to next meeting.

13 Planning Applications

To consider the following application which has been submitted for comment by Central Bedfordshire Council.

30.03.22	CB/22/01057/ FULL Land to South of Faynes Court Sandy	Construction of 8 dwellings with associated car parking and refuse storage at land to South of Faynes Court, Sandy. Near Neighbours 14,16,18,20,22,24,26,28,30,32,34,36,38, 40,42,44,46,48,48b, 48c Sunderland Road. 25,27,29,31, Sandy Health Centre, Northcroft. 10,11,12,13,14 Pleasant Place. 14,16,18,24,26 Downing Court, Sandy notified.
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14 News Release

15 Chairman’s Items

16 Mayoral Engagements

To note engagements undertaken by the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor;

Tuesday 8 March 2022 – Civic Service planning meetings by Zoom with Rev Huw Davies and Anne Elliott-Flockhart.

Thursday 10 March 2022 – Together with the Mayoress, the Mayor hosted an informal gathering in the Council Chamber to mark the leaving after 7 years of our former Clerk, Chris Robson and to make a presentation of gifts etc. Also attended by the Deputy Mayor, staff team members, including the new Clerk, Nicola, and other Members, their wives, CBC Ward Members, and Annabelle from Pecoro Restaurant who kindly provided refreshments.

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Wednesday 16 March 2022 - Mayor & Mayoress hosted the Sandy Swan Beavers and their leaders when they visited the Council Chamber. During their visit, three new Beavers took their vows and were invested. The Beavers were given a guided tour in small groups, had the content of the various display cabinets and Roman exhibits explained and the background and history of the Council offices, the Town Sign and the Town Badge also explained. They asked a lot of questions!

Saturday 19 March 2022 – Together with the Mayoress, the Mayor attended the Eve Appeal Tea Party held at the Scout HQ, Sunderland Road, organised by Anne Elliott-Flockhart.

Sunday 20 March 2022 - Mayor and Mayoress attended the Biggleswade Civic Service, hosted by Cllr Madeline Russell. Cllr Peter Blaine attended in his role of Chair of BATPC.

Tuesday 22 March 2022 – Accompanied by the Deputy Mayor, the Mayor visited Sandy Secondary School, where they had a one hour meeting with the Executive Principal, Miss Karen Hayward.

Sunday 27 March 2022 - Deputy Mayor hosted Sandy Civic Service at St Swithun's Church.

Tuesday 29 March 2022 - Deputy Mayor with Cllrs Osborne, Scott and Sharman, attended Sandy Fire Service memorial service for Chris Page and opening of Memorial Garden.

Thursday 31 March 2022 - Deputy Mayor attended CBC Community Safety Day in Sandy.

Saturday 2 April 2022 - Deputy Mayor and Cllr Knagg attended Sandy Councillor Surgery at the Community Stand.

Sunday 3 April 2022 - Deputy Mayor attended Huntingdon Town Council Civic Service.

Wednesday 6 April 2022 – Mayor and Deputy Mayor and their Biggleswade counterparts, Cllr M Russell and Cllr G Fage, met Mr Richard Fuller MP, to have ongoing discussions notably around the A1 and other issues.

Sunday 10 April 2022 – Mayor and Mayoress visited the Sandy Easter Market.

18 COUNCIL IN PRIVATE SESSION

19 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC To resolve that in accordance with

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Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the Meeting.

20 Staffing Matters

To receive report and recommendation from HR Committee.

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- 21 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC **To resolve** that the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and the Public be re-admitted to the meeting.**

Date of Next Full Council Meeting: 23 May 2022

AGENDA ITEM 8

APPENDIX I

Town Council - Action list

Subject	Action to be taken		Response/ Agenda no.
	Minute	Action	
Meeting 9/11/15			
East West Rail Link	(89-15/16)	Town Council strongly support the East West rail link coming through Sandy and to lobby the relevant authorities.	The Council submitted a response to the most recent EWR consultation on 9th June 2021. Letter issued to MP's office reaffirming Council's view. Cllr Blaine attended a stakeholder meeting and is due to report back to the Council. No further updates received.
Meeting 21/5/18			
A1 – Local Issues	(19-18/19)	To push for decisions on the future of the A1 and action on safety and environmental issues.	<p>Representatives of STC previously joined a meeting with a representative from Highways England, facilitated by local MP Richard Fuller. Working Group response to Highways England consultation on agenda for consideration.</p> <p>Mayor chaired meeting in January with representatives of neighbouring authorities to discuss shared concerns and priorities in relation to the A1 and further work undertaken with Biggleswade TC reps on developing a proposed joined up approach to take forward.</p> <p>R.Fuller's office has contacted the Mayor to arrange a follow up meeting.</p> <p>Cllrs Pettitt and Hewitt to meet with Mr Fuller MP on 6.04.2022.</p>
Meeting 17/12/18			
Sandye Place Academy	(142-18/19)	That the Town Council place on record its opposition to any future residential development on the site and all other aspects the site could be used for as highlighted in the Council's Community Plan and that CBC Ward Councillors support the Council's position.	Extraordinary meeting of Council considered the CBC public consultation on SPA. Response sent restating Council's previous position and emphasising value of site as a community asset. CBC stated that they should know the outcome of their application to have the site released from its DfE status in June 2022.

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Date:	11th April 2022
Title:	Civility & Respect
Contact:	N Sewell, Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with information regarding a call to action from the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC) following the Government's published response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) review.

Recommendation

2. That the Council notes the report.
3. That the Council writes to their MP asking that he back an Early Day Motion calling for the Government to establish an appropriate and effective sanctions mechanism to deal with local councillors who have been found guilty of bullying and harassment following an independent investigation.

Background

- 4.0 On 18 March 2022, the Government [published its response](#) to the [Committee on Standards in Public Life \(CSPL\) review](#) and recommendations on local government ethical standards. SLCC's Chair of the Board, Steve Trice, expressed his disappointment to this response in an SLCC [news bulletin on 22 March 2022](#).
- 4.1 Despite the disappointment of the Government's response, SLCC is continuing to campaign in this area and has sent a request to Clerks and Councils asking them to try to raise this issue in parliament.
- 4.2 Dr Julian Lewis, MP for New Forest East, has tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM) which calls for the Government to establish an appropriate and effective sanctions mechanism to deal with local councillors who have been found guilty of bullying and harassment following an independent investigation.

Information**5.0 What are EDMs?**

EDMs are motions submitted for debate in the House of Commons for which no day has been fixed. Whilst few are debated, many attract a great deal of public interest and media coverage.

- 5.1 They are used to put on record the views of individual MPs or to draw attention to specific events or campaigns. By attracting the signatures of other MPs, they can be used to demonstrate the level of parliamentary support for a particular cause or point of view.
- 5.2 The more MPs that support this EDM, the more likely it is to get discussed in parliament.

Draft letter

Model letter for councils to local MP



Dear (name of local MP),

On behalf of (name of town or parish council), I am writing to ask for your help in addressing concerns about the bullying, harassment and intimidation of local town and parish councillors and their staff, all working in and for their communities. It echoes the growing malaise around the safety of our MPs whose day to day work is made more difficult through incivility, online and in person abuse, stalking and even threats which sometimes reach families and constituency staff. Public servants, whether working nationally or locally, deserve protection from this.

At local level, this is an issue with a significant impact. It is partly reflected in the low numbers of candidates, particularly females, stepping forward as local councillors, uncontested elections and, in some cases, a reluctance to take on public facing work (for fear of abuse (e.g., attendance at councillor surgeries and meetings). With more than 10,000 town, parish and community councils (plus 735 in Wales) and with around 100,000 councillors, this worsening situation is magnified and clearly bad for democracy.

In the last 2 years, the high turnover of professional clerks, (a clerk is the executive officer steering the council and usually its responsible finance officer) is now heading towards a major recruitment and retention issue. Some clerks are experiencing not only casual abuse from the public as they run their councils but, sadly, in some documented cases, persistent incivility from the councillors they serve. Unlike most other employees, clerks have no recourse to this unacceptable behaviour and often, with little in the way of sanctions, the only option is for a clerk to resign.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), One Voice Wales (OVC) and County Associations representing local councils and councillors in England and Wales as well as the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), the professional body for clerks, have together recognised this. Investment has been made in a Civility & Respect Project which is coordinating a programme to support councillors and staff within our sector via training, good governance, clear policies and intervention processes. It will also work to influence relevant legislation to combat online abuse, introduce sanctions and enhance the role of monitoring officers.

It is work sitting alongside that already being taken forward by the Local Government Association (LGA) to promote civility in public life for councillors and staff working for principal councils. It also ties in with recommendations set out in 2019 Local Government Ethical Standards Report issued by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Name of council would welcome your support and that of your fellow MPs in raising this important national issue via parliament.

Yours sincerely

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Date:	11th April 2022
Title:	Vandalism at Bedford Road Recreation Ground
Contact:	N Sewell, Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with information regarding a spate of recent vandalism at Bedford Road Recreation Ground.

Recommendation

2. That the Council notes the report.

Background

- 3.0 On Tues 15th March the outdoor team had to remove a section of play equipment (toddlers train) from Bedford Road Recreation Ground after vandals had pulled the equipment from its fixings and broken the structure.
- 3.1 On Friday 18th March, further damage was sustained to the remaining parts of the train which the outdoor team discovered and tended to on the Monday morning to make the area safe.
- 3.2 On Friday 25th March the outdoor team reported that a picnic table in the area had also been vandalised, jumped on and an attempt to set light to the table was evident.
- 3.3 The Outdoor Team Leader has also reported that on most nights, particularly as the weather has been improving, there have been motorbikes being driven within in the park, young people in the park from about midnight, smells of cannabis being smoked and general anti-social behaviour. The outdoor team are working hard to make and keep all our equipment safe, and clear up any debris, on a daily basis.

Information

- 4.0 On attempting to access any CCTV footage of the incidents, it was discovered that the electrical supply to the cameras had failed. ADT have been contacted and were due to attend site on 6th April 2022.
- 4.1 Reports have been made to the Police (crime ref reference 40/17105/22 for the criminal damage and arson) and the Safer Central Bedfordshire Team. Both the local policing team and Safer Central Teams confirmed that extra patrols had been undertaken in the area and that no sign of further vandalism or antisocial behaviour had been reported/witnessed. Unfortunately, a lack of CCTV evidence means that any further investigation of the incidents will not take place at this stage.
- 4.2 A log has been created, under reference bp-26032022-0136 and sent to Bedfordshire Police's Anti-Social Behaviour team to review.
- 4.3 The Clerk is working with ADT to get the CCTV service up and running asap.