

# Sandy Town Council

**Minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee of Sandy Town Council which was held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 commencing at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs S Baker, A Effiong (left at 20.33), J Hewitt, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne (Chair), M Pettitt, M Scott and P Sharman.

**In attendance:** Mrs. N Sewell (Clerk), Cllrs N Aldis and S Sutton.

	Actions
<b>1 Apologies for Absence (81-2023/24)</b> None	Admin
<b>2 Declarations of Interest (82-2023/24)</b>  i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest - None ii) Non-disclosable Pecuniary Interest - None iii) Dispensations – None  Cllr Pettitt declared an interest in item 6 Scale of Charges as a Member of Sandy Colts Football Club and Sandy Cricket Club and as such would not take part in any debate around fees pertaining to these.	
<b>3 Minutes of Previous Meeting (83-2023/24)</b> <b>RESOLVED</b> to receive the minutes of the meeting of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.	
<b>4 Public Participation Session (84-2023/24)</b> No members of the public were present. A query had been submitted from residents regarding an infestation of moles at Beeston Green which was supported by the Beeston Working Group, where mole hills were deemed to be having a detrimental effect on the look of the green as well as posing health and safety issues for residents using the area and possible damage to equipment during grass maintenance exercises. A quote had been received for £800 to treat the area and the company had suggested due to the size of the infestation that the area would need a second treatment. Two Members raised concerns about the extermination of moles in this case and requested the Council look at alternative methods to deal with them. It was advised that £1,400 was available in the budget from cost centre 500 budget line 4037 and that the matter be deferred to full council for a decision.	

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## 5 Financial Reports (85-2023/24)

i) Members considered the balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget ending 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. The Chairman took Members through the report page by page.

**RESOLVED** to note the reports.

ii) Members received and considered a budget report from the Town Clerk.

**RESOLVED** to note the report. A query was raised regarding the overspend on salary budget for Admin Works. The Clerk to investigate the matter with the Town Council's Accountants and report back to Members.

iii) Members scrutinised a schedule of payments for November 2023 and December 2023.

**RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments.

iv) Bank reconciliations and statements.

**RESOLVED** that the Chair of Policy, Finance and Resources check and approve the bank reconciliations and statements.

## 6 Scale of Charges 2024/25 (86-2023/24)

Members received and considered the Council's 2024/25 scale of charges.

**RESOLVED** to approve the Scale of Charges for 2024/25 with the addition of costs to place a Memorial Bench as per the Memorial Bench Policy.

A Member raised a query about the future use and upkeep of the Cemetery Chapel and it was agreed that the matter be deferred to the Cemetery Working Group, who would report back to PF&R at a later date.

## 7 Event Budget 2024/25 (87-2023/24)

Members received and considered the Event working Group's budget proposal for Events in 2024/25.

**RESOLVED** to agree a budget of:

- £7,000 for the Christmas Lights Switch-on Event
- £5,750 for Community Events Support (which includes a £900

Town  
Clerk/Financial  
Admin

Town Clerk

Town Clerk

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provision towards Community Event Grants).  
This would make a saving of £450 from the previously agreed budget of £13,200.

## 8 2024/25 Draft Budget and Precept (88-2023/24)

- i) Members received a 2024/25 draft budget update report from the Town Clerk. This included changes to the last version of the budget as recommended and agreed by Members. The Chairman took Councillors through each budget line on the report.
- ii) Members considered the latest draft 2024/25 budget and precept by cost centre documents.

**It was RESOLVED** that the 2024/25 budget and precept as set out in the papers submitted to the committee be recommended to the Full Council for approval. The proposed budget will require an increase in the budget of £46,843 resulting in a total precept of £680,302. This will result in a Precept per Band D Equivalent of £167.89, which will be a £11.36 (7.26%) increase per Band D Equivalent for the financial year 2024/25 (or 22p per week).

A recommendation by the Town Council's Accountants to apply for a Public Works Loan Board loan to pay for the next phase of the Cemetery Extension Project would be taken to the next Full Council meeting for approval. It was noted that as funds could be diverted from the Town Council's Rolling Capital Fund it would not be necessary to increase the precept to cover any loan repayment charges. The Town Council would ensure to publicise the works and costs of the project to its residents.

## 9 Payments made under Delegated Authority (89-2023/24)

Members received the following payments made under delegated authority:

- Replacement Defibrillator at Library Market Square - £770.00 + £25 delivery charge (Community Heartbeat Trust)
- Two replacement Desktop PCs for Admin Team Leader and Outdoor Team Leader including delivery and set up - £1,596.96 (Chess IT)
- Replacement doors for ladies' toilets in the High Street damaged by vandalism - £580.00 (A J Day).

**RESOLVED** to note the payments.

*Cllr Effiong left the meeting at 20.33*

Town Clerk

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## 10 Ditch Clearance at Sunderland Road (90-2023/24)

Members received and considered a report and quote for works from the Deputy Clerk regarding clearance work on the ditch at Sunderland Road Recreation Ground.

*This item was moved by the Chairman to be discussed before Item 8 so that any budget consideration could be considered before the budget and precept recommendation was agreed.*

Deputy Clerk

**RESOLVED** that the Deputy Clerk request a quote for the clearance of the full length of the ditch and that the funds from any underspend from the 2023/24 budget be used to pay for the works.

## 11 Calendar of Meeting 2024/25 (91-2023/24)

Members considered a report from the Town Clerk recommending a reduction in the instances of Council and Committee meetings across the Civic Year 2024/25.

Town Clerk

**RESOLVED** to agree in principle a trial period of a 7-week cycle of meetings for Full Council, the Community, Services and Environment Committee and the Policy, Finance & Resources Committee with Development Scrutiny continuing to take place every 3 weeks and Human Resources every quarter. Clerk to produce a new schedule of suggested meeting dates in collaboration with Committee Chairs to be completed and brought back to the Council for agreement.

## 12 Small Donation Policy for Voluntary Groups Supporting Town Council Events (92-2023/24)

Members received a draft policy on donation payments from the Town Council to Volunteers and Groups that support Town Council Events.

**RESOLVED** to agree the Policy in principle and for the Clerk to re-draft the policy to remove the word 'grant' and remove the section requiring a formal application for donations.

Town Clerk

## 13 Carpentry works 10, Cambridge Road (93-2023/24)

Members received and considered the following quote for essential carpentry work/repairs needed at 10, Cambridge Road; to replace a fire exit door in the conservation area and make repairs to the post and entrance portico:

- Replace fire door using existing push bar - Paint in white £680 +vat.
- Carry out works to the outside of the front porch timber. Finish in white gloss. £1,180 +vat.

Deputy Clerk

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**RESOLVED** to approve the quotes.

**14 Chairman's Items (94-2023/24)**

None

**15 Date of next meeting (95-2023/24)**

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Meeting ended at 21.21