

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the Annual meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 22nd May 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, J Hewitt, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, M Pettitt, M Scott, P Sharman, S Sutton and N Thompson.

Absent: Cllr R Lacey

In attendance: Mrs N Sewell (Clerk), Ian Reed (Deputy Town Clerk)
CBC Cllrs S Bell, S Ford and R Pashby, and former CBC Councillor Caroline Maudlin.

Cllr Pettitt welcomed everyone to the meeting extending a special welcome to the newly elected Ward Councillors, particularly Cllrs S Bell and R Pashby who are serving their first term for Central Bedfordshire Council and stated he looked forward to working with them all over the next four years.

Cllr Pettitt extended his thanks to former CBC Councillor Caroline Maudlin, who he said had worked so hard previously and appreciated all that she had done to work so well alongside the Town Council. Similarly thanking Former Cllr Tracey Stock, who was not present, for her support as Ward Councillor too.

He went on to thank the Clerk for her advice and support over the past 14 months, which had been both an exciting and at times challenging period.

Finally he thanked Cllr Hewitt for her support as Deputy Mayor over the past two years and other members of the Council for working alongside him during his tenure as Mayor.

Former Ward Councillor Maudlin stated that it had been a real pleasure to look after Sandy over the past 14 years through difficult and challenging times and wished the new Ward Councillors all the best as they took things forward.

The Clerk apologized that the Agenda stated the date of the meeting as Monday 25th May 2023 in error, and that it should have been Monday 22nd May 2023.

	Action
<p>1 Election of Sandy Town Council Chair/Town Mayor for 2023-24 (1-2023/2024) Councillor Joanna Hewitt was nominated and seconded to be Mayor for the municipal year 2023/24. No other nominations were received.</p> <p>RESOLVED to elect Cllr Hewitt for the municipal year 2023/24.</p>	

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2 To receive Declaration of Acceptance of Office by newly elected Sandy Town Council Chair/Town Mayor (2-2023/2024)

The declaration of acceptance of office of Town Mayor was made by Cllr Hewitt and duly signed. The presentation of the Chain of Office was made to Cllr Hewitt.

Cllr Hewitt thanked everyone for their support and confidence in voting her in as Mayor. She extended particular thanks to Cllr Pettitt for his support and guidance over the past two years and also thanked the Clerk for her support. She added that she looked forward to chiring the Council across the next year.

Cllr Osborne moved a vote of thanks to Cllr Pettitt seconded by Cllr Ruth Lock for carrying out the role of Mayor in difficult circumstances in the past two years including Covid that affected the way the Council could function, the recruitment of a New Town Clerk, then seeing through a programme of bringing new staff into the office.

Cllr Hewitt then presented Cllr Pettitt with a past Mayor's Badge. Cllr Pettitt commented that he appreciated the kind words and the faith that had been placed on him. He also wanted to thank his wife Jackie, for her unstinting support over an extremely busy period.

3 Mayor's Charity Account (3-2023/2024)

RESOLVED that Cllr Hewitt as Mayor would become the new signatory on the Mayor's charity account.

4 Apologies for Absence (4-2023/2024)

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr R Lacey.

5 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (5-2023/2024)

- i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* - None
- ii) *Non-Pecuniary Interests* – None
- iii) *Dispensations* – None

6 Election of Sandy Town Council Deputy Chair/Deputy Town Mayor (6-2023/2024)

Councillor Paul Sharman was nominated and seconded to be Deputy Mayor. No other seconded nominations were received.

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RESOLVED to elect Cllr Sharman as Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2023/24. The newly elected Mayor presented the Deputy Mayor's medallion to the new Deputy Town Mayor. The declaration of acceptance of office of Deputy Town Mayor was made by Cllr Sharman and duly signed.

Cllr Sharman thanked Members for the putting their trust and faith in him. He said that would take the position in honour of his late father who also served as Deputy Mayor for Sandy Town Council.

7 Public Participation Session (7-2023/2024)

One member of the public was present.

Three questions were raised through Public Participation.

The first referred to Health Services in Sandy and the difficulty in getting appointments with GP services. Cllr Pettitt had spoken to the resident in question at the Annual Town Meeting and Sandy Big Lunch Event. He was waiting for confirmation of a face to face meeting. Cllr Osborne suggested the Town Council write to the MP to support the residents concerns.

Town Clerk

The second question was a request to make the dissemination of information regarding local crime statistics easier to understand. The Clerk stated that the format that the statistics are received in made it difficult to interpret into a more user-friendly one. However, a link to local crime statistics would be added to the website so residents could seek the information they were looking for.

Town Clerk

The third question came from a resident looking for support and empty buildings that could house a mental health facility they were hoping to set up. Former Councillor Maudlin had been in touch with the resident and put them in touch with the relevant CBC officers.

Ward
Councillors

8 Minutes of previous Town Council Meetings (8-2023/2024)

Receive the minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 17th April 2023 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

9 Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (9-2023/2024)

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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) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Development Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th May 2023.

10 Appointment of Members to Serve on Committees (10-2023/2024)

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that:

- i) The Development Scrutiny Committee comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, J Hewitt, R Lacey, M Pettitt, P Sharman, S Sutton and N Thompson (plus 3 vacancies).

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that:

- ii) The Community Services & Environment Committee comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, R Lacey, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, M Scott, S Sutton and N Thompson (2 vacancies).

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that:

- iii) The Policy Finance & Resources Committee comprise of Cllrs J Hewitt, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, M Pettitt, M Scott, P Sharman (3 vacancies).

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that:

- iv) The Human Resources Committee comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, J Hewitt, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, P Sharman, S Sutton.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that:

- v) The Grievance and Complaints Committee comprise of Cllrs J Hewitt, R Lock, M Pettitt and M Scott (1 vacancy).
To be reviewed at a later date due to historically not including members of the the HR Committee although not set out in Policy.

11 Election of Committee Chairs (11-2023/2024)

- i) It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that Cllr S Sutton be elected Chair of the Community Services & Environment Committee.
- ii) It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that Cllr N Aldis be elected Chair of the Development & Scrutiny Committee.
- iii) It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that Cllr

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C Osborne be elected Chair of the Policy, Finance & Resources Committee.

- iv) It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that Cllr P Sharman be elected Chair of the Human Resources Committee.
- v) It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that Cllr M Scott be elected Chair of the Grievance and Complaints Committee.

12 Working Groups (12-2023/2024)

It was agreed that:

- i) The Beeston Green Working Group and Beeston Allotment and Orchard Working Group be merged into the Beeston Working Group and that it would comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, R Lacey, M Pettitt, M Scott, Susan Sutton and Ward Councillor Pashby.
- ii) As above.
- iii) The Cemetery Working Group comprise of Cllrs M Pettitt, M Scott, P Sharman, S Sutton.
- iv) The Environment Plan Working Group comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, S Sutton and N Thompson.
- v) The Events Working Group comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, J Hewitt, P Sharman, S Sutton, N Thompson.
- vi) The Jenkins Pavilion Development Working Group comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, J Hewitt, C Osborne, M Pettitt and Ward Cllr Ford.
- vii) The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, J Hewitt, A Lock, R Lock and Ward Cllr Bell.
- viii) The Car Park and EV Charging Points Working Group comprise of A Lock, M Scott, S Sutton and N Thompson.
- ix) The Riddy & Pinnacle Working Group comprise of Cllrs N Aldis, J Hewitt, R Lock and M Scott.

13 External Representation (13-2023/2024)

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to elect the following Members to serve as representatives on outside bodies:

		2023/24
1	22 Squadron Air Training Corps Parents and Friends Committee	S Sutton
2	Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvement Group	N Aldis N Thompson
3	CBC Community Safety Action Plan Group	J Hewitt R Lock
4	Friends of Sandy Christmas Lights	No longer in action

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5	Police Priority Setting	J Hewitt N Thompson
6	Rural Market Town Group	J Hewitt
7	Sandy Carnival Committee	P Sharman
8	Sandy Charities (Incorporating Leeds Smith Trust)	P Sharman
9	Sandy Community Children's Centre	R Lock
10	Sandy Green Wheel	N Aldis M Pettitt
11	Sandy Sports and Leisure Association	N Aldis J Hewitt M Scott
12	Sandy Twinning Association	M Pettitt
13	Sandy Town Centre Group	J Hewitt A Lock
14	Village Hall Management Committee	J Hewitt A Lock
15	SG19 Road Safety Group	N Aldis
16	Talk of the Town Transport Committee (Age UK Bedfordshire)	N Aldis A Lock
17	EW Rail	N Aldis
18	BLEVEC	R Lock

It was commented that the agreement was for representatives to submit at least one report annually on these bodies but that the practice had fallen off. Cllr Pettitt suggested that rather than fill the Town Council agenda with these reports it would be better to publish these on the website.

14 **Bank Signatories (14-2023/2024)**

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that the current signatories remain the same;
Cllrs Aldis, Osborne, and Pettitt.
Town Clerk (Mrs N Sewell)
Administration Team Leader (Mrs C Baker-Smith).

15 **General Power of Competence (15-2023/2024)**

Town Clerk

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It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to take the powers of General Power of Competence and agree that the Town Council meets the criteria for eligibility relating to its Electoral Mandate and qualified Clerk.

16 Vacant Seats (16-2023/2024)

It was noted that following the Town Council elections on 4th May 2023 four seats remain vacant and that the co-option process to fill those seats had begun.

17 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Council (17-2023/2024)

The Mayor welcomed the new Ward Councillors to the meeting. Cllr Ford thanked Members on behalf of Paul Barrows who had recently been bestowed with the Freedom of the Town. As chair of Sandy Tigers he extended his thanks to the Council for allowing participants of the Tigers Football Tournament to park on Sunderland Road Recreation Ground. He reported that 72 vehicles had turned up so the facility had been appreciated. The event he added had raised £5,000 for the football club which was much needed.

Onto CBC news he reported that he was not happy to report that the anticipated installation of a crossing on the High Street by St Swithuns School had hit further problems and delays. This was largely due to a change in the CBC contractors and with the new contractor not accepting the design and road safety audit of the previous contractor effectively starting the process again. He said that moving forward he would be getting a weekly update on the situation.

He also reported that works at Sandy Secondary School were now 6 months overdue and millions of pounds over budget, due to a gas pipe being discovered in an area where they need to build the foundations. He added that he, the headteacher Karen Hayward and CBC Chief Executive Marcel Coiffait had been in discussions. By September the school can no longer use the temporary classrooms and was therefore looking for space.

He talked about the A1 and the ongoing need for speed cameras and that as well as closing the gap on the A1 at Caldecote there was talk of the need to also close the gap at New Road. They were looking at the pollution levels now compared to 12 months ago.

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The three Ward Councillors were looking to meet with Iain Berry to discuss Sandye Place Academy.

Ward Cllr Bell said she was insensed by the delays with the crossing and would be making it a priority to talk to the Chair of traffic management at the first opportunity.

Cllr Sutton commented that the air flight route north of Luton had been changed and as such craft were flying directly across Sandy. She commented that she had logged the flights and been able to ascertain they were Whizz Air. It seems the flights were not taking the designated route near Huntingdon. Cllr Ford addd there had been an incident near Wrestlingworth where a hazardous material believed to be a fuel dump had been found. The incident was being investigated.

Cllr Hewitt added she had noticed how low the craft were flying over Sandy and was concerned that the town was now being polluted by both air and road. This was only set to get worse when the extension to Luton Airport was complete.

Cllr Pettitt added that the delays to the High Street crossing were extremely disappointing. He went on to state his concerns that the A1 closure at Caldecote would have a detrimental effect on the Sandy roundabout adding that Sandy would become a bottleneck, much worse than it is now.

Cllr Osborne asked if there were any further updates on the Jenkins Pavilion? Cllr Ford said he had spoken to the foreman and that a perimeter fecne was due to go in during half term, after which the main centre of operations would move from the Village Hall Car park.

Cllr Pashby thanked the Council for inviting him to the meeting and stated he looked forward to working with Members.

18 Planning Applications (18 -2023/2024)

Members received and considered planning applications from CBC:

CB/19/04301/OUT – Land North of Biggleswade SG18 0HB

The application had been viewed by Members on previous occasions when the council had submitted objections. The plans had been resubmitted to address problems with the volume of traffic to the site. New data had been submitted by the applicants

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showing a more favourable volume. However, Members felt the results were misleading as the data had been taken during lockdown when the volume of traffic would have been significantly reduced.

RESOLVED to maintain the Council's original objection and support the objections made by Richard Fuller MP and Biggleswade Town Council. Also to challenge the validity of the data.

19 Internal Audit (19-2023/2024)

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that Haines Watts continue as the Council's internal auditor to complete the second half of the 2023/24 financial year audit.

20 Scheme of Delegations (20-2023/2024)

RESOLVED to make the following amendments to the Scheme of Delegations:

- Remove the Skatepark Working Group from the diagram and merged the Beeston Allotment & Orchard Working Group and Beeston Working Group as agreed under item 12
- Under section 8 Events working group change the wording of 8.1.4 to read To consider and propose one off and regular events throughout the year.
- Under section 9 Cemetery Working Group 9.1.4 change to read: To work with the Clerk to manage and progress the building and completion of the new cemetery and car park.

21 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (-2023/2024)

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to continue with the current Town Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations without any amendments or changes until such time as the Town Clerk or Council wishes to make changes or following advice from NALC.

22 Review of Council Policies & Procedures (22-2023/2024)

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council accepts its current policies and procedures and that these should be reviewed on a regular basis.

23 Subscriptions (23-2023/2024)

Members received and noted the subscriptions paid by the Council. The following errors in the agenda were noted: BATPC had moved their new address being Shefford House, 15 High Street, Shefford

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Bedfordshire SG17 5DD. And that the subscription fee is £2,186.00.

24 Riddy Grazing (24-2023/2024)

Members received a request from the Clerk to renew the agreement to allow a bull to graze alongside cattle at the Riddy as had been agreed in 2022.

24.i RESOLVED to renew the agreement under the same conditions as last year. It was also agreed that the grazing agreement should be reviewed in the Autumn to ensure no unnecessary delays were placed upon the grazier and that cattle could access the area as soon as possible.

24.ii Members were asked to note a spend of £460.56 made under delegated authority to enable the Bedfordshire Wildlife Trust to underake repairs to fencing in the area. The work included installing 40 additional posts with barbed wire and retention wire where necessary across the site.

RESOLVED to note the payment and request that if possible an alternative to barbed wire be sort. Another meet the cows event would be arranged with the grazier.

25 Proposed Revocation of Disabled Parking Bay on Churchill Way, Sandy (25-2023/2024)

Members received a report from Cllr Martin Pettitt regarding a consultation by CBC regarding the Proposed Revocation of Disabled Parking Bay on Churchill Way, Sandy

RESOLVED oppose the revocation of the bay and support a resident's request to keep it. Ward Cllrs were asked to take up the action with CBC.

26 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies (26-2023/2024)

Members received a report from Cllr Pettitt regarding the Twinning Association.

RESOLVED to note the report.

27 Mayoral Events (27-2023/2024)

Members noted the engagements undertaken by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

28 News Release (28-2023/2024)

- Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Community
Engagement
Officer

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- STC's support of Biggleswade Town Council's objection to planning application CB/19/04301/OUT
- Co-option call for 4 vacancies

29 Chairman's Items (29-2023/2024)

There were none

30 Date of Next Meeting (30-2023/2024)

Monday 26th June

The meeting closed at 21.24