

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 26th February 2018 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, T Cole, A M Hill, W Jackson, C Osborne M Pettitt, M Scott (Chairman), P Sharman

In attendance: Mr C Robson (Town Clerk)

Actions

1 Apologies for absence (89-2017/18)

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr D Sharman.

2 Declarations of interest (90-2017/18)

None declared.

3 Public Participation Session (91-2017/18)

No members of the public were present, and no questions had been received in advance of the meeting.

4 Minutes of previous meeting (92-2017/18)

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 15 January 2018 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Financial Reports (93-2017/18)

- i) A balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for the year to 31 January 2018 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Members reviewed the income and expenditure summary and the following comments and explanations were made;

A Member queried the figure of £3,746 in debtors control. This figure relates to unpaid 'customer' invoices issued by the Town Council. The bulk of the figure relates to an invoice for parking passes for Shannon Court Surgery which is outstanding. An amount of £675 is also due from Central Bedfordshire Council for Market Town Regeneration Fund costs.

A Member asked about a large credit in electricity costs. This was due to a rebate for over charge in previous years and related to the depot. As power at the depot site had now been cut off, limited expenditure had been incurred.

Members queried incoming rent of the cricket club pitch. This had fallen off the debtors list and the Clerk will have the Administration

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Team Leader chase up.

Members discussed work to the War Memorial to rectify the pooling on one side. This was due to joints in the steps being filled in and water now having nowhere to escape. A cost for alteration work will be brought to Council.

Town Clerk

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the report.

ii) Members received and considered a budget overview report.

It was noted that the streetlight maintenance budget was overspent due to repair work on damaged columns. It was **RESOLVED** to leave the overspend within the revenue budget to demonstrate the increasing costs incurred to help future budgeting calculations.

The Committee looked at the expenditure of the Christmas Light Switch on Event. A Member of the Friends of Sandy Christmas Lights commented that the group would not be running the Children's Light Design Competition next year, and would be looking for cheaper staging. It was therefore envisioned expenditure would be less in 2018/19.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the report.

iii) Members scrutinised a schedule of payments made since the previous meeting.

RESOLVED to approve the schedule of payments.

iv) Bank reconciliations and statements.

RESOLVED that Cllr Scott scrutinise the bank reconciliations and statements and sign these as approved at the end of the meeting.

Cllr M Scott

6 Grant Applications (94-2017/18)

i) Members received and considered a grant application from The Need Project. A Member queried whether the applicant had already received a grant within the financial year. It was clarified that a grant application was received in March 2017 - the last financial year, but that the grant itself was awarded at the beginning of the current financial year.

Members discussed the application and commented that the

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need for the grant stemmed from wider failings in funding at national level, but that this should not stop the Council supporting the project if there was a clear need for it in Sandy. Members agreed that the project did an extremely good and valuable job within the town and that the Council should support it where it could.

It was proposed and seconded that a grant of £250 be awarded.

RESOLVED that a grant of £250 be awarded to the Need Project to support the valuable work they do within Sandy.

- ii) Members received and considered a grant application from the Shannon Court Surgery Patients Group which was seeking funding to display art within the newly opened Shannon Court surgery. Members considered the project and costs, expressing some concern that the value of the project seemed quite high. It was noted that there were a lot of local art groups in Sandy who would no doubt be willing to supply and help display local art at lower rates. The Committee appreciated the aim of the proposal but did not feel that when the grants budget was established it was intended to cover something of this nature, and the Council has supported the surgery and its relocations in other ways. In addition, giving a grant may set a precedent for other groups to seek funding for similar projects.

Admin

RESOLVED that no grant be made to the Shannon Court Surgery Patients Group for the provision of internal wall art work.

7 Action List (95-2017/18)

The Chairman went over the action list and commented that the cemetery project was moving forward. The working group are to meet on 28th February to approve tender documents for the build of the depot and the associated yard. A special meeting of Council will most likely be needed to approve the working groups recommendation. The dates will be confirmed following the working group's meeting. A Member asked about the cemetery area itself. This would need time to settle following excavation, and the working group was looking at phased development. The depot and yard were phase 1, which would be followed by the car park and first area of cemetery land. If the archaeologists are ready to start prior to the demolition, they will begin at the Potton Road end of the site and work towards the depot area.

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Members noted that the Jenkins contract was due to be signed by the end of the month. The Clerk was awaiting to hear from CBC.

Two contractors had visited the Fallowfield site and were due to submit quotes for a lighting scheme.

8 The Pinnacle Clean-up (96 -2017/18)

Members noted the cost of the recent clean-up of The Pinnacle Field site following an unauthorised encampment on the land. The payment due to Central Bedfordshire Council for the clean up work was currently allocated to the revenue budget but could come from earmarked reserves if the Committee wished.

It was commented that the revenue budget could handle the cost due to underspend elsewhere and that by leaving it in revenue it gave a realistic picture of the costs the Council was incurring and assisted in agreeing budget levels for future years.

Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that the £2,715 cost of cleaning up The Pinnacle site is taken from the revenue budget and be allocated to 403 – 4017 (Refuse Disposal)

Admin

9 Hanging Baskets and Planters (97 -2017/18)

Members received and reviewed quotes on the provision of summer hanging baskets and planters in the town.

The Clerk informed Members that the companies both had good reputations and experience of working with smaller and larger Councils. Both companies would be able to provide the Council with the service it required.

It was noted that Company B was significantly more expensive than Company A, and the major price difference appeared to be for 3 tier flower towers.

RESOLVED that the quote from company A be accepted on a three-year contract at a cost of £2,145,00 + VAT per year.

Town Clerk

10 Cemetery Regulations (98-2017/18)

Members considered charges for the replacement of headstones/memorials as these were not currently detailed in the Council's scale of charges. It was noted that administration time would be involved in requests for the replacement of headstones/memorials to ensure they met with Council regulations. It was therefore agreed that a fee was appropriate, as with new inscriptions. A Member commented that the replacement of older

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headstones helps maintain the appearance of the cemetery and that a fee should not discourage this.

It was Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** to approve the following amendments. Item 1: interments in a vault or bricked grave to increase from three to six days' notice; item 5: change the first sentence to read 'Unless agreed in writing by Council all graves will be excavated and opened by a sub-contractor' (and to delete 'the Councils employees'); item 7: change the first sentence to read 'The interment of cremated remains will be permitted in any grave (purchased or not)'; item 40 to be deleted and item 41: amend the review date to May 2020; and that under item 29: a fee of £50 be applicable for the replacement of an existing headstone or memorial.

Admin

The Clerk informed Members that he had received an enquiry about the Council's approach to the expiry of Exclusive Rights of Burial. It was agreed that the matter would come back to Council for consideration.

11 Unreasonable Behaviours and Vexatious Complaints (99-2017/18)

Members reviewed the Council's adopted Unreasonable Behaviours and Vexatious Complaints policy document. It was noted that the position of Deputy Town Clerk no longer existed and that this needed to be removed from the document.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Unreasonable Behaviours and Vexatious Complaints policy subject to the removal of 'Deputy Town Clerk'.

Admin

A Member asked for clarification on when this would be reviewed again by the Committee. It was confirmed that the document would be reviewed in March 2020.

12 Chairman's Items (100-2017/18)

The Mayor informed the committee that he would be running in 'The Sandy 10' and any sponsorship would be gratefully received. All money raised would be going towards the Leprosy Mission.

A Member raised a query from a trader who wished to get permission to have a stall in Sandy. The Town Council can only give permission for stalls in the car park and one side of the walk way leading from the car park to Cambridge Road. Permission for other areas would need to be sought from CBC or the owner of land in question.

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The Chairman raised no other matters.

13 Date of next meeting (101-2017/18)

It was noted that the date of the next committee meeting will be 9 April 2018.