

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee of Sandy Town Council which was held at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy on Monday 26 July 2021 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, P Blaine, J Hewitt, R Lock, C Osborne (Chair), M Pettitt, and P Sharman.

In attendance: Cllrs A Gibson and T Knagg, Mr C Robson (Town Clerk) and two members of the public.

Actions

1 Apologies for absence (33-2021/22)

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Hill, Jackson and Scott.

2 Declarations of interest (34-2021/22)

None.

3 Minutes of previous meeting (35-2021/22)

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 14 June 2021 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

The Chairman commented that at the next meeting of the Full Council, the Council will be re-adopting its Scheme of Delegations and a record of those resolutions taken since the 7th May, when a temporary Scheme of Delegations was agreed, will be included on the agenda.

4 Public Participation Session (36-2021/22)

There were no questions from members of the public.

5 Magpas Air Ambulance Grant

The Chairman took agenda item 6, ii) early in the meeting as the applicant was present and could leave, if they wished, once the item was completed.

Nicola Cooper spoke on behalf of the applicant to state that the grant requested was for helicopter fuel. On average there are four call-outs a day for the service, which provides hospital level care at the scene of an emergency.

A Member asked why there were two air ambulance services in our region. The applicant explained that this is because of demand for the service, but that Magpas covers the Cambridgeshire/Bedfordshire area including Sandy.

A Member asked how much was currently available in the grants budget. The Clerk confirmed that there was £3,500 in uncommitted funds. It was proposed and seconded to award a grant of £600 to the

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Magpas Air Ambulance.

A Member asked if other local councils had been asked for grant funding, such as Biggleswade. The applicant believed that they had.

RESOLVED that a grant of £600 be awarded to the Magpas Air Ambulance Service.

Admin

6 Financial Reports (37-2021/22)

i) Members considered a balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for June 2021. The Chairman took Members through the report page by page.

A Member asked about the level of the VAT control account, which seemed high. The Clerk explained this was VAT the Council would claim within the current quarter and fluctuated dependant on what was due to be claimed back during points within the year.

It was noted that there would be an overspend in the cemetery rates, which had increased higher than the RPI increase allowed for during the Council's 2021/22 budgeting.

It was agreed to note the balance sheet and financial reports.

ii) Members received a budget overview report for June 2021. The Chairman took Members through the report page by page.

It was agreed to note the report.

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

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of June 2021 payments.

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

Cllr
Osborne

7 Grant Applications (38-2021/22)

Members received and considered grant applications from the following;

i) Members considered a grant application from Keech Hospice Care for £200 towards their music and art therapy service. It was proposed and seconded that the full amount applied for be awarded.

RESOLVED to award a grant of £200 to Keech Hospice Care.

Admin

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ii) Members noted that a grant application received from Magpas Air Ambulance had been dealt with earlier in the meeting.

The Chairman commented that two grant applications had been received for community events to be run in Sandy. If the Council were minded to grant funds to the events, the money could come from the Council's Community Event Support budget.

Members received and considered community event support grant applications from the following;

iii) Let's Get Going Interest Group for the running of a community event day on 22nd August 2021, which could be very good for the community after the last year. Members applauded the initiative to bring such a community event forward and expressed their desire to support the event. Concern was expressed over some of the costs, which might be able to be mitigated by lending resources from other local community groups. Members were also concerned that the amount bid for included payment of time, the Council did not usually make a grant for this. It was queried whether the grant amount was excessive or if it was the price that had to be paid for a community event.

A Member commented that they were in favour of supporting and STC don't have the resources to organise such events. Supporting community initiatives will help ensure the residents of Sandy get access to events such as the one proposed.

Members supported the application, but felt that the Council should do what it could to reduce the costs (ie provide Hi-Vis jackets). Members also felt organisers' time should not be included.

RESOLVED to award a community event support grant of up to £1,000 to Let's Get Going Interest Group to support the holding of a family fun day event in Bedford Road recreation ground on 22nd August 2021. Final amount subject to working with organiser to reduce costs.

Admin

iv) Members received and considered a grant on a proposed music event in the community stand. The organiser spoke on behalf of the application to explain that the idea was to put on some live music in the market square to help get people back into the town centre. The event would be free and anyone could come along and listen to the music, which would benefit those businesses who could engage the extra footfall. The acts would all be local musicians and it would utilise the community stand. The funds applied for would cover the cost of musicians and the PA system and tech support needed.

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A Member queried the proposed date. The organiser said that the date was open for discussion with the Council, but that a Friday in August was proposed.

A Member queried whether a licence would be needed. The Clerk stated it was likely a Temporary Event Notice would be needed at a cost of £21.

Members asked whether a road closure would be put in and the Clerk said the organiser would need to submit a request to Highways at a cost of £180 if it were to be. The roadway should also be kept clear for emergency vehicles.

Members expressed some concern about setting a precedent for granting money to a business to run such an event. It was confirmed that the event was non-profit and that the organiser would also be contributing funds.

RESOLVED to award a grant of £400 to Pecero/Salt and Pepper events for a community music event to be held in Sandy Town Centre in August 2021.

Admin

8 **Sunderland Road Knee Rail Fencing (39-2021/22)**

Members received and considered a report and quotes for the repair/replacement of damaged knee rail fencing at Sunderland Road recreation ground. Members commented that due to the growth of vegetation the knee rail fencing was no longer really needed and its entire replacement was not economically justified.

RESOLVED that the Council's outdoor team make secure any post/sections of Sunderland Road knee rail fencing and only the most damaged sections are replaced, totalling approximately 20m at an estimated cost of £843 by the contractor submitting quote 2.

Outdoor Team

9 **Bedford Road Recreation Ground Slide (40-2021/22)**

Members received recommendations and quotations for repair work to a slide at Bedford Road.

RESOLVED to approve quote 3 at a cost of £2,121.60 inc VAT. That costs come from the Outdoor/Play Parks maintenance budget. (500 – 4042)

Admin/
Outdoor Team

10 **Community Event Support Grants (41-2021/22)**

Members received and considered a report and draft community event support specific grant application form from the Town Clerk. Members agreed that there should be a separate grant application form for community event support, but felt that the form needed more work.

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Members raised concerns over point 11 of the grant 'Terms and Conditions', which they felt was too prohibitive. An example was prohibiting support for events which are connected with gambling. Many community events have a tombola or raffle, which could be classed as gambling. Members agreed that gambling and a number of other points should be removed and wording added such as "any other activity the Council deems inappropriate."

Members also asked that point 4, which stated the applicant must spend the event grant funds within 3 months be removed or amended. It was suggested that this could be changed to indicate expenditure must be within a council year, however it was acknowledged that the time between awarding a grant and holding an event could span the end of a council year and the start of a new one. It was agreed a longer time allowance should be stated.

Members asked that point 12 of the draft application form be re-worded to make it clear the applicant is being asked about other funding they have in place for the event for which they are applying.

It was agreed that the draft form required more work and the Clerk was asked to review and bring back an amended version to the next committee meeting.

Town Clerk

11 Internal Audit Plan (42-2021/22)

Members reviewed the Council's Internal Audit Plan.

It was **RESOLVED** to readopt the Council's Internal Audit Plan.

Admin

12 Information & Data Protection Policy (43-2021/22)

Members reviewed the Council's adopted Data Protection Policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to readopt the Information & Data Protection policy.

Admin

13 Freeman/Woman of the Town Policy (44-2021/22)

Members reviewed the Council's adopted Freeman/Woman of the Town Policy. A Member queried whether this could be awarded posthumously. The Clerk said he would look into this and advise accordingly.

Town Clerk

It was **RESOLVED** to readopt the Freeman/Woman of the Town Policy.

Admin

14 Death of a Royal Protocol (45-2021/22)

Members reviewed the Council's adopted policy for actions to be taken in the event of a Royal death and noted the amendments made in red. Members agreed the amendments but commented that section 8, box 2 which referred to the Mayor's role should the Royal Train pass through

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Sandy, should include 'or the Deputy Mayor' in case the Mayor were not able to attend.

It was **RESOLVED** to readopt the policy subject to the addition of 'or the Deputy Mayor' under section 8, box 2.

A query was raised about whether the Sussexes should be included in those listed in the policy. The Clerk stated that it may now be the case that they should be removed and that he would take advice and amend the policy accordingly.

15 Chairman's Items (46-2021/22)

There were no Chairman's items.

16 Date of Next Meeting (47-2021/22)

It was noted that the next Policy, Finance and Resources Committee meeting will be on Monday 6th September 2021 and the Committee would start the 2022/23 budget setting and review process.

Admin

Town
Clerk