

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 30th October 2023 at 7.36pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, B Blackley, A Effiong, J Hewitt (Chair), A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, M Pettitt, M Scott P Sharman and S Sutton

Absent: Cllrs Baker R Lacey and N Thompson

In attendance: Mr I Reed (Deputy Clerk), Ward Cllrs S Bell, S Ford, R Pashby and 3 members of the public.

Prior to the meeting commencement a presentation was given by Andrew Havergal showing findings from conditions survey he undertook at the potential allotment site at Beeston, where Central Bedfordshire Council are building the six affordable homes.

Action

1 **Apologies for Absence (130-2023/2024)**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Baker and N Thompson

2 **Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (131-2023/2024)**

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

3 **Public Participation Session (132-2023/2024)**

3 members of the public were present.

Further to the Council Meeting on 18th September (Minute 100 - 2023/2024 the Member of the public that raised the traffic issues in Bedford Road was in attendance again because he had not received a response from either Council. He was advised that volunteers were required for Speed Watch that collected speed statistics for submission to the Police.

Councillor Simon Ford gave a summary on how the highway issues including speeding issue in the locality were being addressed by Central Bedfordshire Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner Panel.

He also advised the member of the public to send his concerns via email to Central Bedfordshire Council Highwaysliaison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

Allotments in Sandy

The Chairman of the Sandy Allotments Association addressed the meeting about the lack of allotments in the Town. He addressed the meeting about the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908.

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The Act placed a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments according to demand. It also made provision for local authorities to compulsory purchase land to provide allotments. The representative was advised that the Town Council was very keen to bring allotments to Sandy. However, despite many attempts no land was available. (See minute 134 below).

4 Minutes of Extra Ordinary Meeting of Town Council (133-2023/2024)

Received the Minutes of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 18th September at 7.30pm and the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Town Council held on 27th September at 6.00pm and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

RESOLVED to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

Town Clerk

5 Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein (134-2023/2024)

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 16th October 2023.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 23rd October 2023
- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on 2nd October 2023 and agree the following recommendations:
 - a. That the Council consider creating a budget line of £2,500 for the maintenance and improvements of areas originally created by SEG for the financial year 2024/25.
 - b. That a sum of £2,378 be approved to be added to the costs of surfacing under the three-swing bay at Sunderland Road Recreation Ground.
 - c. That at this time the plan to conduct six soil tests at the potential Allotment site in Beeston for the sum of £1,563 be put on hold until further notice (see Minute 134 below)

Town Clerk

Town Clerk

iv)RESOLVED to receive and note the minutes of

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the Human Resources Committee held on 25th September 2023 and agree the recommendations to adopt the following Model Policies created under the Civility & respect Project:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Model Councillor/Officer Protocol
- Dignity at Work Policy (to replace the Council's current Dignity at Work Policy with the new model one, which is more comprehensive).

6 Potential Allotment Site – Beeston (village site) (135-2023/2024)

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk regarding the potential allotment site being offered by CBC as part of the development of six affordable houses at Beeston and agree next steps. In considering the report and the presentation about the site made that evening it was acknowledged that because the site had previously been a Market Garden delivery yard in the 1950s there was a substantial amount of builders rubble, wire and hard standings present in the soil and as such it was deemed too early in the process to agree to soil tests.

RESOLVED to ask Councillor Simon Ford to ensure Central Bedfordshire Council(CBC) considers the presentation submitted to the meeting and that it expects a response from CBC by the date of the next meeting of Town Council (11th December 2023) and if a positive response to clearing the site so it can be designed and developed as an allotment and community orchard is not received by the deadline the site be rejected by the Town Council.

7 Clerk's Report (136-2023/2024)

Members received a report from the Clerk. The meeting was advised the report had been prepared this month to assist Members in better understanding the administrative office's current and upcoming priorities and to recognise the need to focus on current projects to ensure they were taken through to completion.

Members once again commented on the time it would have taken the Clerk to prepare the report and discussed whether this report was appropriate to be submitted to the Town Council at every meeting. A discussion took place on how the Council should receive information on policy implementation.

RESOLVED

1. That the Clerks' report be received at every other meeting of the Council
2. That no action be taken on the revision of Burial Regulations

Deputy Clerk

Town Clerk

Town Clerk

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until March 2023

3. That a moratorium on any new projects/tasks being added to the workload until an agreed level of activity permits this to be lifted without placing too high a burden on officer's workloads

8 **Reports from Central Bedfordshire (137-2023/2024)**

Cllr Pashby reported on Community Speed Watch and the recruitment of volunteers. It was advertised on Facebook which had delivered one volunteer. A minimum of four volunteers were required. It was suggested the scheme was promoted in *The Villager* magazine.

Cllr Ford talked about the launch of a campaign directed at young and inexperienced drivers sponsored by Central Bedfordshire Council and Beds Fire and Rescue Service. As part of the campaign VR headsets were available for students at Sandy School to experience a 'car crash.'

Cllr Ford advised the meeting about the pedestrian crossing works, High Street, Sandy. The 'business as usual' arrangements had been successful.

Cllr Ford reported there would be a CBC annual plan for Sandy addressing utilities and road works. It was noted Brickhill Road would be resurfaced. The works also included St Swithuns' Way carriageway works, Western Way and Kings Road path.

In reply to Members comments Cllr Ford replied 838 kilometres of highways had been assessed.

Cllr Ford reported on flooding in Sunderland Road and clearing gullies was a priority

Cllr Ford reported on the Sandy Tigers Firework display. 1,400 people had attended at Sandy School and five complaints were received mostly related to noise issues. He thanked the Mayor for attending the event.

Cllr Bell reported on speed bumps. There would be a motion at CBC Council meeting for speed limits at Beeston.

Cllr Bell reported on car parking issues at Sandy School,

Cllr Bell advised re Sandy Secondary School that a SEN block would be in place by March 2024

The school pitches would have floodlights by September 2024.

9 **Events Working Group Report (138-2023/2024)**

Members received a report from the Events Working Group. It was noted that the following events were held so far this Autumn:
(a) Skate Jam

A successful event that promoted crime prevention and crime awareness. Bedfordshire Police and the community worker from Grand Union Housing Association had attended. Funding for the event was received from the High Sheriff through Bedfordshire

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Crimebeat charity and the Gale Family Trust. It was noted Old Red Barbers would assist with the organisation of the event in 2024.

(b) Archaeological Event in Sandy Library

The Loss and Discovery – Roman Sandy was a fascinating presentation with exhibits.

(c) Remembrance Sunday – 12th November 2023

Milestone - CBC's Highways contractor - would assist the Town Council in enforcing the road closure.

The parade would be led by a 'Remembrance horse' which would be led by two people, his owner; a local forces veteran and one other.

(d) Christmas Lights Switch On

The meeting was advised of the budget requirements for the event. Members noted that the Community Services and Environment Committee had not received a detailed report on the budget as the costings had only just been received, so it was difficult to determine the appropriateness of the budget for the event. It was also pointed out that although the Council had received £8,000 from The Friends of Sandy Christmas Lights there was no resolution made to allow the funding to be used to part fund the event. The Council budget line for the event was £4,000 and the costs were coming out at £9,684.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted
2. That the Community Services and Environment Committee be granted delegated powers to determine the budget for the Christmas Lights Switch on event 2023
3. That the Committee be also asked to consider the budget for future years.

Deputy
Town Clerk

10 CCTV (139-2023/2024)

Members received a report from the Town Clerk regarding issues with the Council's CCTV provision and considered a quote for a monitored solution that links into the CCTV offered by CBC's Safer Neighbourhood Team.

RESOLVED

1. That the quotation from the DSSL group and that appropriate provision be made for the cost of replacing the Council's CCTV provision for budget setting for 2024/25
2. That the contractors be asked to assess the coverage of the new cameras and if possible, reduce the provision by one camera
3. That the correct notices, as advised by DSSL be placed at each site asap.

Town Clerk

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11 **Standing Orders (140-2023/2024)**

Members were asked to adopt an updated version of Standing Orders which includes an amendment resolved by Town Council on 18th September 2023 regarding confidential items (Minute 105-2023/2024).

RESOLVED to adopt the updated Standing Orders with amendment resolved by Town Council on 18 September 2023 regarding confidential items (Minute 105-2023/2024)

Town Clerk

12 **Clerk's Management Committee (141-2023/2024)**

Members were asked to vote for a member of the HR Committee to fill a vacancy in the Clerk's Management Committee.

RESOLVED that Cllr Osborne would form the Clerk's Management Committee along with Cllrs Hewitt and Sharman.

Town Clerk

13 **Public Works Loan Board and Cemetery extension next steps (142-2023/2024)**

Members received information from the Town Clerk regarding the requirements of the Public Works Loan Board for a loan to pay for the next phase of the cemetery extension and were asked to consider the need for a loan, the repayment terms and options and next steps to move the project forward.

RESOLVED

1. That the Council agrees to seek approval from the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities to apply for a Public Works Board loan of £280,000 which is an estimated figure of the costs to carry out phase 2 (landscaping) of the new cemetery extension.

2. That a small working group (Membership of the Cemetery Working Group plus Cllr Osborne) be appointed to review and consider the repayment terms and rates and to agree next steps.

Town Clerk

14 **Christmas Raffle Contribution (143-2023/2024)**

Members receive a request from the Events Working Group for a sum of £150 to be offered as a prize for the raffle set up to raise funds for the Christmas Light's Switch-on event in 2024. Members are also requested to donate a bottle for a Christmas drinks hamper prize.

RESOLVED that the request for the sum of £150 to be offered as a prize for the raffle 2023 be agreed.

Town Clerk

15 **Tree Removal Request (144-2023/2024)**

Members received a request from CBC Housing Delivery to remove a tree and vegetation on Town Council land to facilitate the development of six affordable houses at Beeston.

RESOLVED That the Council will only give its consent if it sees a

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reinstatement plan that includes planting of native trees and shrubs and that the site is left in a safe and tidy condition and the Town Clerk be asked to approve the planting scheme

Deputy
Clerk

Members voted to suspend Standing Order 3x to allow the meeting to continue to progress longer than 2.5 hours but that business would finish no later than 22.30. (145-2023/2024)

16 Action plan (146-2023/2024)

Members received an updated Full Council Action Plan for 2023/24.

RESOLVED to note report.

17 Correspondence (147-2023/2024)

Members received a list of correspondence that had been circulated separately to Members prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED to note the list.

18 Mayoral Engagements (148-2023/2024)

Members received a report showing the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Engagements since the last meeting of Full Council on 18th September 2023.

RESOLVED to note the report.

19 Press releases (149-2023/2024)

RESOLVED to submit press releases on the following subjects:

- Winter Maintenance and the receipt of salt from CBC
- Cllr M Pettitt was appointed to Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils.

Admin

20 Chairman's Items (150-2023/2024)

Noted

21 Date of next meeting (151-2023/2024)

Full Council 11th December 2023

The meeting closed at 10.08pm