

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Community Services and Environment Committee of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 5th February 2024 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, B Blackley, A Effiong, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, N Thompson, M Scott and S Sutton (Chair)

Absent: Cllr R Lacey

In attendance: Cllrs J Hewitt, M Pettitt, P Sharman, Tom Price, Central Bedfordshire Council, Ian Reed, Deputy Town Clerk, Mami Amuah Community Engagement Officer and two members of the public

- | | | Action |
|----------|--|---------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence (78-2023/24)
Apologies received from Cllr R Lacey | Admin |
| 2 | Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (79-2023/24)
The Deputy Clerk advised Members that they had the opportunity at the meeting to disclose any new items that needed to be disclosed
i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i> – None.
ii) <i>pecuniary interests</i> - None
iii) <i>Dispensations</i> – None. | |
| 3 | Minutes of previous meeting (80-2023/24)
RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Community Services & Environment Committee held on Monday 18 th December 2023 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings. | Deputy Clerk |
| 4 | Public Participation Session (81-2023/24)
Two members of the public were present | |
| 5 | Action List (82-2023/24)
Members received and noted the action list;

1. Allotment and Community Orchard at Beeston
The Committee agreed to discuss the issues at agenda item 11.
2. Re the EV charging points see item 6.
3. Beeston Green Drainage
A discussion took place about the clearance of rubbish from the ditch on B658 | Deputy Clerk |

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Mosaic; it was requested that the report be updated for discussion at the next meeting. The Chairman advised the meeting that the new plan for the mosaic was to celebrate the life of the late Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth.

6 **Electric Vehicle Charging Points - Carpark (83-2023/24)**

The Committee had been given a report on the proposed installation of EV charging points in Sandy for the benefit of residents and visitors. Mr. Tom Price from Central Bedfordshire Council attended the meeting. He made a presentation to the Committee covering the following issues:

- The cost of public charging was an issue across the industry and for all providers. Unfortunately, with the rise in wholesale energy costs, this had meant public charging rates had increased too. It was still cheaper to run an electric vehicle than a petrol or diesel, but the savings had reduced somewhat over the last couple of years if reliant on public charging.
- The cheapest way to run an electric vehicle was to be able to charge at home, but unfortunately this was not afforded to approx. 30% of Central Bedfordshire residents, hence the focus on providing local options for charging for residents (this is also the main objective of the Government's grant funding).
- The mix of charge points was good; 8 slower charge points for local residents was a sensible amount for Sandy (it would be necessary to find several more sites across the town to provide convenient locations for charging) and the 2 rapid charge points proposed was a good level. The mix of charge points was considered to be ideal.

Deputy
Clerk

The Committee also received information on usage from the charge points that went into operation in early 2023 particularly around the level of reimbursement from profit share at sites in similar sized towns. The cost to charge at those other sites will be the same as proposed at Sandy, reflecting BP Pulse's national tariffs.

A general discussion took place and the issues discussed included:

- There would be one installation of the charging points rather than two as originally planned
- The removal of the barriers

On the proposal to allow the car park to be open 24 hours a day and the concerns raised it was noted that the barriers were currently allowing 24-hour access and there were still plenty of spaces during the day. The numbers were being monitored by Town Council staff. On the future operation of the car park, it was suggested spaces be allocated for salt bins and staff vehicles.

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It was RESOLVED:

1. That the Council continues its partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council to provide EV charging points in the Sandy Town Council car park covering the combined projects.
2. That the Council agrees to remove the barriers to the car park at the point of installation to facilitate the installation and use of the EV charging points.
3. That a Car Park and EV Charging Working Group be appointed as the previous Working Group had only met informally due to it being inquorate over a number of meetings and its terms of reference be reviewed at its first meeting.
4. That the following Members be appointed to the Working Group; Councillors J Hewitt, A Lock and M Scott

7 Great British Spring Clean 15th - 31st March 2024 (84-2023/24)

The Committee was requested to consider a suggestion that the Town Council supports a litter pick on Friday 22nd March 2024 between 12 noon and 1.30 pm. The Council would provide volunteers with litter pickers, gloves and rubbish bags and the Council would ensure the disposal of collected rubbish/recycling items. Members were encouraged to attend and the scheme would be supported by the Grounds Team, Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, the Community Engagement Officer and STC volunteers.

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It was RESOLVED: That this Committee supports and welcomes this scheme once again.

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8 Events Working Group (85-2023/24)

The Committee considered a report on the 2023 events held by the Town Council and the setting of events for 2024. The provisional dates/events were the Mayors Civic Service, Spring Market, D Day commemoration, Skate Jam, Autumn Market, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Lights Event. It was noted the Big Lunch in 2024 in Sandy would be the Town Council supporting local street parties/events rather than one event for the Town.

The Committee was also advised that the Carnival would be held at Sandye Place in June 2024. It was understood this would be the last permission Central Bedfordshire CBC would grant until further notice. The Committee discussed the Outdoor team mowing the fields in the Spring. It was estimated that it would require four cuts. Obviously, this would have an impact on their workload.

The Mayor raised plans for a SPA Community Action Day. The Committee was interested in the proposal and requested costings and risk assessments and she undertook to report back to the Working Group.

Deputy
Clerk

The Chairman commented that the Events Working Group had not met since October 2023 and she asked that a meeting be arranged

It was RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report be noted
- (2) That subject to it receiving a report on the implications of the mowing the Outdoor Team be asked to mow the former playing fields at SPA in the Spring 2024.

9 Tree and Other Planting Schemes (86-2023/24)

The Committee received reports on the following

(a) Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Tree Schemes

It was noted that in accordance with the Councils' Environment policies applications for trees to be planted at the former SEG site at the Sandy Train Station 8 apple trees and 7 Silver Birch tree at Bedford Road Recreation Ground.

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(b) Purchase of Replacement Trees

Following the failure of two trees (species Prunus Serula) one planted at Faynes Corner donated by the Royal British Legion (Sandy Branch) and the other was donated by the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire at the Sandy Cemetery. The trees had been replaced at a cost of £400.

(c) Incredible Edible Scheme

The Committee considered a scheme to assist the maintenance of the former SEG sites in various areas of the town. It was suggested to the Committee that by adopting an Incredible Edible scheme in the Town volunteers would plant edible plants

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with the scheme managed by BRCC. The role of the Outdoor Team would be to assist the volunteers with transporting soil and equipment.

It was RESOLVED: That the reports be noted and the terms of reference for Incredible Edible Sandy be agreed and the scheme be registered with the Incredible Edible Network.

10 **No May Mow (87-2023/24)**

Further to the last meeting of the Committee it considered a report outlining a proposed plan to create a No Mow May policy for the Town Council and considered an approach from Central Bedfordshire Council to work with Town and Parish Councils to increase biodiversity and enhance the local environment by adopting appropriate no-mow policies.

It was RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee accepts a limited No Mow May policy for Sandy.
2. That the Committee identifies The Limes as a suitable No Mow May area to protect flora and fauna.
3. That CBC be requested to exclude the following areas from the No Mow May due to its impact on the areas;
The Green, Beeston and Fallowfield Recreation Ground with parts of The Green Beeston being used for wildflower areas and the rest of the area should be mowed throughout May. At Fallowfield Recreation Ground a large area of grass should continue to be mown.

Deputy
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11 **Provision of an Allotment Site (88-2023/24)**

Further to the meeting of the Committee in October 2023 the Committee received an update report on the provision of an allotment site.

The Committee noted no further information had been received about the site at Beeston Green where the six affordable dwellings were being constructed.

The Committee was reminded that the site at Beeston that had been identified as a potential site in 2022/2023 numbered 2 on the map and its suitability for allotments had been discussed by CBC and the Town Council. Subsequently, sites 1 and 2 had been planted with trees in 2023 and the Town Council's understanding was site 3 was unsuitable due to archaeological features being identified. Councillor Hewitt advised the meeting that CBC was still ready to discuss with the Town Council the use of site 3 for allotments. The representatives of the Sandy Allotment Association present at the

Deputy
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meeting welcomed the news that a site that they thought had been withdrawn was still available. They also offered their help in working towards delivering an allotment with sufficient plots to meet the demand based on the Town Councils' waiting list.

It was RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the processes involved in reviewing potential allotment sites and welcomes the continued involvement of Central Bedfordshire Council in identifying potential sites that the Town Council can work on to develop allotment plots and requests a further report be submitted to its next meeting on the suitability of site 3. Also, the Mayor, the Chairman of this Committee and the Deputy Clerk to meet with relevant team at CBC to discuss the site and the Town Council's requirements

12 Sandy Green Wheel Working Group (89-2023/24)

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 19th January 2024.

Councillor Scott requested clarification on the proposed provision of a pedestrian crossing at Girtford Bridge

It was RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Sandy Green Wheel Working Group be received

13 Repairs and Intervention Works (90-2023/24)

The Committee received an update on recent drainage works at both public toilets including the Bedford Road Recreation Ground pavilion and the quotation received for the clearance of the total length of the ditch at Sunderland Road.

It was RESOLVED: that the reports be noted

14 Summer Floral Display for Summer 2024 (91-2023/24)

The Committee received a report from the Deputy Clerk on the provision of the Summer Floral Display for 2024. The three-year contract with Plantscape had recently come to an end. It was suggested a one-year extension be agreed for 2024 at a cost of £2,772. It was suggested that the floral display for 2024 was based on a D Day theme. The Deputy Clerk would work with the Outdoors Team to present to the Council in the Autumn a proposed inhouse planting scheme for 2025 onwards.

RECOMMENDED

1. That the Council accepts the quote from Plantscape for Summer 2024 in the sum of £2,772.
2. That the Council supports the suggestion of the Deputy Town Clerk to investigate future planting and summer display schemes

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that are guided by bio-diversity and environmental policies as well as the views of residents and the Town Council's Outdoor Team.

3. That the proposals for future planting schemes be considered in the Autumn cycle of meetings 2024.

4. That if possible the Summer planting scheme for 2024 has a D-Day Commemoration theme.

15 Lettings Policy (92-2023/24)

The Committee was asked to review the current lettings policy for the letting of community facilities managed or owned by the Town Council. It was acknowledged that a review was required as the Council no longer takes bookings for football pitches and commercial keep fit activities organised by for profit operators. Also, running groups with a commercial leader did not contribute to the upkeep of the Pinnacle. The Committee was not in favour of charging for these activities at the recreation grounds or at the Pinnacle but supported the suggestion that the Town Council controlled and marked out the areas of the recreation grounds that would be the areas designated for these activities. The Council would also request keep fit leaders who used the recreation grounds submit their insurance details to ensure they were adequately insured.

It was RESOLVED: that the report be noted and the actions detailed in the minute be implemented.

16 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 25th March 2024

The meeting closed at 21.46