

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Community Services and Environment Committee held virtually via Zoom on Monday 7th June 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, A Gibson, A M Hill, T Knagg, R Lock, C Osborne, S Paterson, M Scott, S Sutton (Chair) and N Thompson

Absent: No committee members were absent

In attendance: Cllrs J Hewitt, M Pettitt, Mr C Robson (Clerk), Mrs C Baker-Smith (Admin Team Leader)

Action

1 Apologies for Absence (1-2021/2022)

There were none.

Admin

2 Election of Community, Services and Environment committee Deputy Chairman for the Council year 2021/22 (2-2021/2022)

Cllr Amanda Gibson was nominated and seconded.

Cllr Nigel Aldis was nominated and seconded.

Members proceeded to vote on the appointment. Neither candidate received a majority of votes, with each receiving five votes. The Chairman used her casting vote for Cllr Gibson, who was duly elected as Deputy Chairman of the Community, Services and Environment Committee for the forthcoming year.

3 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (3-2021/22)

- i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* – Cllr Sutton declared an interest in Item 6 as her husband is a member of both the Roundabout Club and the East Beds Model Railway Society.
- ii) *Non-Pecuniary Interests* – None
- iii) *Dispensations* – None

4 Minutes of previous Meeting (4-2021/22)

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the meeting of Community Services & Environment Committee held on Monday 26th April 2021 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Public Participation Session (5-2021/22)

There were no questions from the public.

Sandy Town Council

6 Action List (6-2021/22)

Members received and noted the action list.

A Member commented that an update previously received from CBC's Mr T Keaveney on The Meadows was disappointing. Community use of the former conference centre should be prioritised over commercial use. Another Member commented that CBC's primary concern had been the hotel for the purpose of temporary housing. The conference centre has deteriorated and would require a lot of work to make safe. It may be unrealistic that CBC spend a lot of money on the conference centre if they don't know what the long-term decision will be yet.

It was agreed to write to Tony Keaveney thanking him for meeting with STC and urging him to reflect on the proposals/options previously submitted by STC for CBC's consideration.

Town Clerk

SID signage will be put on the CBC/STC quarterly meeting for discussion and support in progressing.

Town Clerk

Cllr Hewitt commented that she and Cllr Lock had chased up CBC's Community Safety Team for a copy of the draft community safety plan. As soon as it is received, they will review and report back to the committee.

Cllrs Hewitt /Lock

7 Action Plan (7-2021/22)

Members received and considered an action plan for the forthcoming year. The following points were highlighted;

Welcome Back Fund - The Clerk commented that he expected the Welcome Back Fund actions to slip into July as formal approval was still needed from MCHLG.

Electric Charging Points – Members suggested that CBC be approached to see if they can support the Council in getting charging points in the town centre. CBC are currently surveying and consulting on electric charge points and a joint approach may prove more successful than waiting for Chargemaster to approve a scheme.

A Member raised a concern about the amount of work which was due to be done in the first part of the year. The Clerk explained that due to application and spending deadlines linked to the Welcome Back Fund and skatepark grant funding, this was unavoidable. Cllrs

Sandy Town Council

had offered their support in helping progress these matters by drafting grant applications and assisting in carrying out Welcome Back Fund actions.

Jenkins Extension - It was agreed that the Jenkins extension project should be on the Full Council action plan.

Outdoor Gym - The Chairman asked that getting an outdoor gym information board installed on the Jenkins be included in the action plan.

Youth Engagement – it was agreed that the previous actions agreed prior to COVID19 should be included in the new action plan. It was commented that engagement would need to wait until pandemic restrictions were removed.

It was noted 'maintenance of trees' had been duplicated in the 'ongoing business' section. This was to be amended.

Town
Clerk

8 Beeston Rural Exception Site (8-2021/22)

Members received and noted an update from CBC Housing on the proposed development of six affordable homes at a rural exception site in Beeston.

9 The Riddy Drainage Work (9-2021/22)

Members noted that clearance work by the Drainage Board was due to take place in the Riddy in September 2021. A section of drainage ditch at 'Willow Island' in Beeston will also be included.

The Clerk informed Councillors that he had enquired about the ditch/culvert at Beeston Green. The Drainage Board had responded stating that this watercourse is under the Board's control and is a mixture of open watercourse and culvert. The culverts have recently been surveyed and one small section needs replacing which they plan to do in a couple of months. The open section is checked annually for blockages and has been de-silted in the past. This work is not done too often as it creates a lot of mess. It may be put in the work scheduled for next year and STC would be advised in May 2022.

The Clerk was asked to approach the Drainage Board about clearing a ditch adjacent to the layby off the A1 slip road at Bidlake corner.

Town
Clerk

Sandy Town Council

10 Welcome Back Fund (10-2021/22)

The Clerk informed the committee that verbal approval had been given by CBC for the Welcome Back Fund delivery plan submitted by STC. Formal approval was still awaited but the Clerk would be moving forward with making orders and obtaining further quotes where needed.

Town
Clerk

11 Skatepark Project (11-2021/22)

- i) The committee noted that the Council had secured £3,115 in skatepark funding from the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire.
- ii) Cllr Paterson, Chairman of the Skatepark Working Group, introduced a report from the group. The Working Group had pulled forward the proposed time to tender for a contractor on advice received and a tender document was to go to PFR for approval. The Working Group will be applying for CBC Community Asset funding and to strengthen its application, it will need to demonstrate community support for the project. As such it is proposed to create a Facebook page and release comms on the Council's skatepark ambition.

In addition, the more money the Council has committed to the project, the higher the chance of successful grant applications. It was proposed that the Council consider allocating £7,000 in uncommitted EMR to the project to help strengthen funding applications. The £7,000 was received from a developer as a direct developer contribution to the Council. It should be spent on a project or activity which benefits the community.

RESOLVED that the committee note the Working Group's intention to release press and media statements about the project and establish a Skatepark project Facebook page.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to Full Council that an uncommitted £7,000 EMR received from the Tempsford Solar farm be allocated to the skatepark project.

Cllr Gibson, Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, indicated that recent survey work carried out by the NDP group had received responses evidencing community desire for a skatepark. This can be shared with the Council.

It was noted that some grant funding secured, needs to be spent in the current financial year. Members suggested that

Sandy Town Council

funders are usually pragmatic if they can see progress on the project. A contractor will help the Council build up a realistic timetable or consultation, design and build.

12 Events Working Group (12-2021/22)

The committee received and noted a summary of the last meeting of the Events Working Group held on 27th May 2021.

A Member thanked all those involved in the successful Spring Market event. Members suggested that bringing in an external company to arrange and run such events may be an option to allow for more markets to take place.

13 Chairman's Items (13-2021/22)

There were no Chairman's Items.

14 Date of Next Meeting (14-2021/22)

Monday 19th July 2021.