

Sandy Town Council

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

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Sandy Town Council to be held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy on Monday 4th March 2024 at 7.30pm for the purpose of transacting the items of business below.



Nicola Sewell
Town Clerk
10 Cambridge Road
Sandy
SG19 1JE
01767 681491
28th February 2024

A G E N D A

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations

Under the Localism Act 2011 members of Council are not required to make oral declarations of interest at meetings but may not participate in discussion or voting on any items of business in which they have a Declarable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) and under Sandy Town Council's Standing Orders must leave the room for the duration of all discussion on such items. (All members' register of interests are available on the Sandy Town Council website or on application to the Clerk.)

*This item is included on the agenda to enable members to declare new DPIs and also **those who wish to do so** may draw attention to their stated DPIs and also any non-declarable personal interests which they have declared under Sandy Town Council's adopted Code of Conduct and which may be relevant to items on the agenda.*

- i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests*
- ii) Non Pecuniary Interests*
- iii) Dispensations*

Sandy Town Council

3 Public Participation Session

To receive questions and representations from members of the public. Members must raise their hand to indicate they wish to speak, and the Chairman will advise them when it is time to do so.

4 Minutes of Town Council meeting

To consider the Minutes of Sandy Town Council Extra Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 18th December 2023 at 6.50pm and the Minutes of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 22nd January 2024 at 7.30pm to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein

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) Development Scrutiny Committees held on 5th February 2024.
- ii) Policy, Finance and Resource Committee held on 19th February 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To agree payment of £6,318.00 to CDS to undertake soil and water sampling at the site of the new cemetery extension, as required by Planning Condition 3.

- iii) Community Services and Environment Committee on 5th February 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Council agrees to a further year's contract with Plantscape for its Summer Planting scheme in 2024 at the cost of £2,772.
2. That the Council supports the suggestion of the Deputy Town Clerk to investigate future planting and summer display schemes that are guided by biodiversity 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.

6 Reports from Central Bedfordshire

To receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Sandy Town Council

Speed Watch – Cllr Pashby has successfully found enough residents and volunteers to get the Speed Watch group up and running. Their training will be on Monday 4th March and is being held at Sandy Fire Station. There have been 4 roads identified so far for the group to be active upon. Further Roads can be looked at but must be risk assessed first.

- High Street, Sandy
- Bedford Road, Sandy
- St Neots Road, Sandy
- West Road, Sandy.

In conjunction with this CBC are about to launch a new Road Safety Strategy as Central Bedfordshire has the highest rate of fatalities or serious injury collisions in the three boroughs. Cllr Ford has been working with all three boroughs and Bedfordshire Police over the last few months, this strategy will be going to CBC Exec committee in April for approval.

Anti-Social Behaviour – There has been a significant increase in graffiti tagging including “33”, “EDL” and “FARAGE”. These incidents have been reported to Beds Police and is being investigated.

Belam Way Parking issues – All three ward councillors met with Grand Union regrading severe parking issues in Belam Way, we will be working with them to try and provide a scheme that is suitable for the area. This will be a long term project, but we wanted to inform STC members of such work.

Ward Councillors carried out a Council Surgery at the Fire Station – several residents attended with various issues brought up. Parking in Longfield Road, Pleasant Place adoption, The Carnival Committee regarding the use of SPA, CCTV enquiries, Fix My Street enquiries, and Anti-Social Behaviour. All issues will be taken forward by Ward Members and residents updated.

7 Pitch Management at Sunderland Road Recreation Ground

To receive a report from the Town Clerk regarding the historic and current management of the football pitches at Sunderland Road and consider recommendations.

Appendix I

8 Martyn’s Law

To receive a report from the Town Clerk regarding Martyn’s Law and the Home Affairs Committee’s current consultation that ends on 18th March 2024.

Appendix II

Sandy Town Council

9 Planning Applications

To consider the following application submitted for comment by Central Bedfordshire Council all planning applications are available by visiting <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning-register> and entering the planning application reference.

CB/24/00362/REG3	Sandy Service Station, Tower Hill House, New Road, Sandy, SG19 1NY Erection of 35 affordable dwellings with associated parking and landscaping.
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<https://plantech.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/PLANTECH/DCWebPages/acolnetcgi.gov?ACTION=UNWRAP&RIPNAME=Root.PgeResultDetail&TheSystemkey=636687>

10 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies

To receive the following reports from Council representatives on outside bodies;

- i) Cllr M Pettitt – Sandy Twinning Association – verbal update
- ii) Cllr M Pettitt – SSLA – verbal update
- iii) Cllr Hewitt – Sandy Village Hall Management Committee – verbal update.

11 Report following CPRE Planning Workshop

To receive a report from Cllr Baker following attendance of a CPRE Planning Workshop.

Appendix III

12 Reception Area and Tourist Information

To receive a report from the Town Clerk regarding the Town Council Office's reception area and change to its Tourist Information offering.

Appendix IV

13 Financial Risk Assessment

To receive and agree the annual Financial Risk Assessment for Sandy Town Council from the Town Clerk as per audit requirements.

Appendix V

14 Permission to Name The Limes Queen Elizabeth II Wood

To receive a report from the Deputy Clerk outlining the need to make a formal application to the Cabinet Office for permission to name the woods at the Limes 'Queen Elizabeth II Wood.'

Appendix VI

Sandy Town Council

15 Mole Pest Problem at the Green Beeston Green

To receive a report from the Deputy Clerk outlining further information regarding mole control as requested at the last meeting of Town Council in January.

Appendix VII

16 Green Infrastructure Plan

To receive and adopt the Green Infrastructure Plan for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix VIII to follow

17 Remedial Works to Boundary Fence

To receive quotes and agree a contractor to undertake remedial works to secure the boundary fence between Sandy New Cemetery and Holly Lodge. Scope of works quoted for is below and set out as per the requirements in ATP Surveyor's report:

To install 100mm x 100mm x 1500mm long concrete repair spur posts installed to each post (10 posts). The posts are to be installed on the Town Council's land side with the nuts and washers to each bolt also being on the Town Council's side.

The posts must be installed 900mm minimum below ground level and surrounded in minimum 200mm of concrete.

The timber fence post concrete also needs to be raised to the underside of the timber gravel boards. Ensure all feather edged boards are securely fixed and any protruding nails cut off.

Company A (did not complete a site visit)	£1,200
Company B (visited site)	£967.34

The Clerk also contacted the original fence contractor and a further 3 companies to undertake the work, but no further quotes had been received by the deadline of 16th February 2024.

18 Action Plan

To review and agree Full Council Action Plan for 2023/24.

Appendix IX

19 Correspondence

To note correspondence received by the Town Council since the last meeting of Full Council and any actions arising from such items. All correspondence was circulated to Members separately.
For information only:

Sandy Town Council

- NALC Events rcvd 27.02.2024
- NALC Events rcvd 19.02.2024
- Crime Stats - Interim - February 2024 rcvd 17.02.2024
- A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Project - Overnight Closure rcvd 16.02.2024
- BATPC Update - Martyn's Law Consultation and Free Government Webinar 13/2, Model Financial Regulations; Planning Training Fully Booked; Garden Party Nominations Reminder rcvd 12.02.2024
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Newsletter - January 2024 rcvd 8.02.2024
- Help Us Make Our Pavements Safer for Everyone - Sign Our E-Petition rcvd 7.02.2024
- NALC Events rcvd 6.02.2024
- January 2024 Crime Information rcvd 02.02.2024
- NALC NEWSLETTER rcvd 31.01.2024
- CPRE Bedfordshire Newsletter January 2024 rcvd 19.01.2024
- BRTA Beds Forum Notes 24-01-24 rcvd 25.01.2024
- NALC CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BULLETIN rcvd 18.01.2024

20 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION RECOMMENDED

In terms of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

21 Update Re Taylor Wimpey Land Transfer

To receive an update from the Clerk regarding the potential to adopt Taylor Wimpey Land at Berwick Way and Skipton Close.

Confidential
Appendix X

22 EV Charging Points Plan

To receive a report from the Clerk and verbal update from Cllr Scott regarding the EV charging points planned for the Town Council's car park and review the recently received plan for the suggested EV parking bays.

Confidential
Appendix XI

23 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 READMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC

To resolve that the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting.

24 Mayoral Engagements

To note a list of recent engagements undertaken by the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor since 22nd January 2024.

Sandy Town Council

Sunday 28th January - The Mayor attended a Chairty Lunch hosted by the Mayor of Dunstable

Friday 2nd February - The Mayor attended the funeral of Jim Seamer

Friday 2nd February – The Mayor visited Handley Court to meet residents and join in with a Boccia competition

Sunday 11th February - The attended Civic Service of the Mayor of Ampthill

Monday 19th February - The Mayor took part in the Community Group Interviews, part of the interview process for the appointment of the new Rector of St Swithuns Church

Sunday 25th February - The Mayor attended the Civic Service of the Mayor of Leighton Linlade

Friday 1st March - The Mayor attended, together with a team from Sandy Town Council, the quiz night hosted by Sandy Garden and Craft Show

Sunday 3rd March - The Mayor attended the Civic Service of the Mayor of Dunstable.

25 Press releases

- Call for Village Hall Committee Members

26 Chairmans Items

27 Date of Next Meeting – 15th April 2024

Sandy Town Council

Date:	4th March 2024
Title:	Sunderland Road Pitch Management and Fees
Contact Officer:	Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1.0 To highlight to Members a potential discrepancy regarding the collection of payment for pitch hire at Sunderland Road recreation Ground.

Recommendation

2.0 To note the report, and to agree that, while the management of pitch bookings is handled by the Management Company (currently Everyone Active [EA]) the pitch fees should come to Sandy Town Council and should remain separate to the Profit share agreement between STC, CBC and EA.

Background

3.0 During background work relating to the Jenkins Pavilion Development and subsequent Management Agreement between STC, CBC and Everyone Active (EA), the Clerk was not able to find any evidence of STC receiving payment for the hire of its pitches at Sunderland Road.

3.1 The Clerk has questioned the Admin Team Leader on the matter to find out if invoices have ever been raised for this hire to which the answer was no.

3.2 Sandy Football Club has also confirmed that while it has paid for the hire of pitches at Bedford Road directly to STC, hire for the pitches at Sunderland Road had historically been invoiced through the management company, Stevenage Leisure. However, for the past two seasons no invoices for the hire of pitches at Sunderland Road had been received or processed.

3.3 It would seem that fees for the hire of pitches at Sunderland Road have been handled by the Management Company as part of the Profit share Agreement between them, CBC and STC. No invoices have been received by Sandy Football Club from anyone for the past two seasons, and as such no payment has been received by STC.

3.4 The Town Council owns the land where the pitches are sited and undertakes the maintenance of the grounds, including white lining and turf care, so fees for the hire of the pitches should be paid directly to STC to go towards these maintenance costs.

3.5 The Town Council pays the Management Company a monthly management fee to manage all aspects of the Jenkins Pavilion use and hire, which should include pitch booking management. As such no further fee for booking management should be required from STC.

3.6 The annual fee hire currently includes use of two changing rooms, so if STC were to receive the pitch hire fees it would need to consider what % of that is for the use of the changing rooms and that amount would need to be paid to the Management Company. However, Sandy Football Club has reported that the changing rooms had not been made available by Stevenage Leisure for some time. Requirement for the changing rooms to be discussed with Sandy FC.

Impact on Resources of The Town Council

4.0 There would be minimal impact of administrative resources to process invoices for the hire of pitches as they would mostly be for an annual charge. For any individual pitch hire requests there may be a slightly elevated workload for the admin team, but it is not foreseen that this would be burdensome.

Financial Implications

5.0 Seasonal use of the pitch for Adults (with the use of two changing rooms) is £537.50, Sandy Colts senior teams £249 and for Sandy Colts and other junior teams it is £218.50. So potentially Town Council is missing annual income of more than £1,000.

5.1 The current seasonal fees include use of two changing rooms, so a % of the fees to cover changing room use would need to be considered and an agreement reached as to how this would be managed.

Legal Powers

6.0 The actions undertaken are covered by the Localism Act 2011, s.1 the General Power of Competence, for which Sandy Town Council is eligible and is a power of first resort, allowing the Council to do anything an individual can do.

Sandy Town Council

Date:	4th March 2024
Title:	Martyn's Law
Contact Officer:	Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1.0 To remind Members about the Government's consultation on Martyn's Law Consultation (the requirements imposed on standard tier premises under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill) and consider supporting the written evidence submitted by NALC to the Home Affairs Committee in June 2023 on the matter.

1.1 Receive a verbal briefing from Cllrs Aldis and Pettitt of the decision following a very recent Committee meeting of the Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils.

Recommendation

2.0 For STC support for the written evidence submitted by NALC to the Home Affairs Committee in June 2023.

Background

3.0 The Government [launched a consultation](#) on 5th February 2024 for organisations, including local councils, who own or operate publicly accessible premises or events that the [Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Bill](#) will potentially affect. The Bill, also known as 'Martyn's Law', in tribute to one of the victims of the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017, is intended to enhance public safety by ensuring there is better preparedness for, and protection from, terrorist attacks. It requires premises and events 'to fulfil necessary but proportionate steps according to their capacity size to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack and reduce harm.' ([Home Office Martyn's Law Factsheet](#))

3.1 To be in scope of the Bill:

- Premises and events must be accessible to the public.
- Premises must be used for a purpose listed in the Bill (including entertainment & leisure, and food & drink).
- Have a capacity of 100 or more individuals.
- Premises may be a building or outdoor locations which have a readily identifiable physical boundary and access by express permission.
- Provision is made in the Bill for temporary events such as festivals that have express permission to enter and a capacity of 800 or more individuals.

3.2 The consultation seeks views from those responsible for smaller premises which would fall within the 'standard tier,' i.e. premises with a capacity of 100-799 individuals.

3.3 The consultation runs until **18th March 2024** and [can be found here](#). You can read the Home Office's [factsheet on Martyn's Law here](#). The key requirements for standard tier premises are summarised as follows:

- They must notify the Regulator that they are, or have become, responsible for premises within scope of the Bill (and so subject to the relevant requirements).
- They must have in place procedural measures that could be expected to reduce, so far as reasonably practicable, the risk of physical harm to individuals at the premises in the event of an attack.
- As part of putting in place the procedural measures, workers will need to be sufficiently instructed or trained to carry them out effectively.

3.4 The written evidence the National Association of Local Councils gave to the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee on Martyn's Law in June 2023 can be found in the appended. While supportive of the stated aim of enhancing public safety at events, NALC has expressed concerns over the cost to local councils of meeting new requirements, the impact on village halls and community buildings, and the need for resources from government including funding, an awareness-raising communications campaign, a programme of support and guidance, and an extensive lead-in time.

3.5 Since NALC gave this written evidence last year there have been changes to the proposals in the draft bill, notably with the removal of a requirement to complete a specified form (the 'Standard Terrorism Evaluation') for Standard Tier premises nor to ensure that people working at the premises are given any specific training. If and when NALC produce any briefing material on this consultation, this will be shared with member councils.

Financial Implications

4.0 At this stage the only premises currently in scope for STC would be the Village Hall. Potential costs would be incurred for staff training and other security measures identified, but these are hard to identify at this time.

Legal Powers

5.0 The actions undertaken are covered by the Localism Act 2011, s.1 the General Power of Competence, for which Sandy Town Council is eligible and is a power of first resort, allowing the Council to do anything an individual can do.

Written evidence submitted by the National Association of Local Councils**1. About the National Association of Local Councils**

1.1 The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) is the recognised membership organisation which works with our network of 43 county associations to represent, promote and improve England's 10,000 local (parish and town) councils which are the first tier of local government.

2. Key messages/summary

2.1 We welcome the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Home Affairs Committee on the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill known as Martyn's Law.

2.2 This is because the legislation will have implications for the majority of England's 10,000 local councils as owners of premises covered by the duty, as organisers of events covered by the duty, and as local leaders for their areas.

2.3 We support the Government's aim of making the public safer at publicly accessible locations and that security measures and interventions should be reasonable, affordable, and proportionate.

2.4 Given the extent of the impact of the draft legislation on the majority of local councils, we are disappointed at the lack of effective engagement with the sector from the Government.

2.5 We are concerned that the draft bill's impact assessment overlooks local councils, for example the Government's estimates of familiarisation costs for local authorities only include the 355 principal councils and exclude the 10,000 local councils which are also a type of local authority. Using the Government's own methodology, familiarisation costs for all local councils would be at least £3million.

2.6 The two premises capacity thresholds are included on the face of the bill, and we would suggest the lower threshold level be considered further and included in regulations rather primary legislation.

2.7 We are also concerned about the detrimental impact of the legislation on community and village halls which are vital community spaces in rural areas.

2.8 To help local councils prepare for the successful and effective implementation of the new legislation, the Government must provide new resources for local councils including funding, undertake a significant communications campaign to raise awareness of the new duty, provide a dedicated programme of support and guidance, and ensure there is an extensive lead in time to prepare.

2.9 We remain keen and committed to working positively and constructively with the Government on the further development of these proposals.

3. Local councils and Martyn's Law

3.1 We support the Government's aim of making the public safer at publicly accessible locations and that security measures and interventions should be reasonable, affordable, and proportionate.

3.2 Local councils already work with a range of partners such as other tiers of local government and the Police to ensure community safety including assessing and mitigating risks at their premises and community events.

3.3 The new duty would apply to most of England's 10,000 local councils who will own, manage, or operate as a minimum at least one of a range of premises such as parks and open spaces, indoor and outdoor markets, theatres, cinemas, libraries, leisure centres, museums, sports facilities, beaches, and community/town/village halls. Local councils are also responsible for a range of outdoor community events including markets, Christmas lights switch ons, fairs, festivals, fetes, and firework displays.

3.4 However, all local councils will be impacted by the legislation as they will need to ensure they are familiar with its requirements and undertake an assessment to determine if any of their premises or events fall within scope.

3.5 While policy proposals on the new duty were published by the Government in December 2022 followed by the draft bill in May 2023, awareness and understanding of the new legislation by local councils – both councillors and clerks – is very low.

3.6 Given the extent of the impact of the draft legislation on local councils, we are extremely disappointed that the Government, either through the Home Office or the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has not in our view engaged effectively with the sector. This is despite NALC's repeated offer to work positively and constructively with the Government on the further development of these proposals and requests for meetings to discuss the draft bill in more detail.

4. A proportional approach

4.1 Local councils represent communities in rural and urban areas ranging from hamlets and small villages with just tens or hundreds of residents, to small cities and large towns with populations over a hundred thousand.

4.2 Most local councils have little or no experience of considering and mitigating terrorist threats. However, they would agree that threats from terrorism need to be treated very seriously and will want to play their part, working alongside wider partners, to keep their communities safe.

4.3 It is therefore vital that the new duty must be proportional and not burdensome for those within scope such as local council premises and events.

4.4 While it is unlikely all threats and risks can be completely removed, a balance must be struck to enable local council premises and events to be both financially viable and able to operate. And without having an adverse effect on access and

enjoyment of public spaces and the volunteers who freely give up their time to help run premises such as community/town/village halls, museums and theatres and community events such as fairs, festivals and firework displays.

4.5 We welcome the increase in the capacity thresholds from those proposed in the Government's consultation on the Protect Duty. However, the Government has a limited understanding of the local council sector in particular the number of premises and events likely to be in scope of the proposals, or the likely cost burden and resource implications of compliance by local councils.

4.6 We remain concerned that the capacity-based approach will impose a disproportionate burden on many smaller premises and events which could lead to causing them to cease and thereby handing a win to terrorists who wish to disrupt our way of life. An appropriate balance must be achieved between protecting our communities and the places they use as part of their everyday business and ensuring that the access and enjoyment of those places is not unduly restricted.

4.7 Given the majority of community/village/town halls have a capacity between 100 and 200, the threshold requirement of 100 as set out in the draft Bill can be argued as being too low for the level of risk involved. We would therefore strongly urge the Government to give further consideration of thresholds or to resolve this issue in another way.

5. Village halls

5.1 There are around 10,000 village halls and similar rural community buildings in England. Around 88% are registered charities, of the rest the majority are owned and managed by the local council.

5.2 Most village halls have a capacity of more than 100 people and will fall within scope of the legislation. We would therefore like to reiterate and echo many of the views and concerns expressed to the Committee in the written evidence submitted by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE).

5.3 Village halls and other community buildings are managed by voluntary trustees but who are not responsible for the detailed organisation of events and activities within the building as these are organised by community groups, individuals, councils, or self-employed/small businesses.

5.4 Additionally, trustees will seldom be present at events taking place in the building and the bill does not take account of this form of operation and there is ambiguity about where responsibility will lie. This is a weakness in the Bill for these kind of community buildings, irrespective of the lower size threshold. Both managing trustees and activity organisers have personal, joint and several liability, due to their unincorporated status. The likely unintended consequence will be a reluctance for

people to come forward to fulfil these responsibilities within their community. This will undermine efforts and initiatives to encourage more people to get involved in their community such the Big Help Out.

5.5 The bill is disproportionate for village halls as both the managing trustees and activity organisers are often volunteers and the former are not always 'on-site'. This includes the requirement for individuals to be trained, notification to the regulator of activities and the co-ordination between organisers of multiple, simultaneous, activities across a multi-room village hall. These provisions should be considered further and whether a requirement was instead placed on either the Home Office or the Regulator to provide, or fund, support, advice, and information.

5.6 Rural community buildings often have adjoining open spaces which may come under the governance of the managing trustees and be subject to a variety of rights of way or access. Even if these spaces are used for events jointly with the village hall it is difficult to restrict or monitor access.

5.7 Legislation which is based on an understanding of what may be possible in 'controllable' urban open space could in rural areas fall into disrepute or disrespect.

5.8 Most village halls have a capacity between 100 and 200 and were built over the last century to provide for the multiple civic, recreational and community purposes villages require. And the addition of a second meeting room, an extension for a pre-school group, and committee room for the local council or other community groups means almost all will have capacity over 100.

5.9 Given the level of risk of these types of venues and their community uses in rural areas, the capacity threshold should be considered further, and the Government should develop a much more detailed and extensive understanding of this setting by engaging more closely with organisations such as NALC and ACRE.

5.10 Additional costs to meet the requirements of the legislation will compete for limited charitable resources with other risks and requirements. Trustees will want to consider whether preparedness for an act of terrorism is responding to a greater risk to their users than many of these other risks and requirements.

5.11 The Government should therefore provide financial and other support to help village halls meet this new legislative requirement.

6. Specific issues requiring further clarity or consideration

6.1 The draft bill does not at present include in its scope those places and activities held outside at locations without a definable boundary. Examples of such events which local councils will be responsible for organising, held on their land or in some way involved in would include ceremonial processions or parades, fireworks displays and/or bonfires, markets and Christmas lights switch on.

6.2 That a small building with a capacity of just over 100 people would be in scope of the standard tier, and yet a Christmas lights switch in a town centre attracting crowds of thousands of people would be excluded from the enhanced tier, appears in our view not to be proportionate to the level of risk for either.

6.3 However, we do recognise that the type of events not covered by the legislation are already subject to a range of statutory obligations.

6.4 We would be keen to explore this issue further with the government and provide examples of large outdoor events which are run by local councils or held on their land.

6.5 Further clarification is needed on 'relevant workers' who will be required to undertake ongoing training and whether this definition will include volunteers and/or councillors.

6.6 We would like to see further clarification on 'persons responsible' for qualifying premises or events who will be required to take measures under the new duty, such as who would fulfil this role, how to ensure their competence and how to ensure a consistent approach.

6.7 We are also keen to understand whether those undertaking risk assessments will be personally liable for their advice. And where this responsibility rests when the premises owner and those operating from it are different and how co-operation notices will apply and work in practice.

6.8 The Government should draw on the experience of, and seek to learn any lessons from, the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation on local councils. We would be keen to work with the Government on this and how overall we can develop a security culture within local councils by raising awareness and minimising risks which would underpin and complement the new duty.

7. Regulation and compliance

7.1 We recognise that to ensure an effective and successful implementation of the legislation, there will need to be some kind of regulatory and enforcement function.

7.2 The role of any regulator will be important in the provision of advice and guidance. It will be vital that any regulator works closely with the local council sector on how this can be effectively delivered and to properly understand the challenges local councils face and the support it needs.

7.3 However, beyond any support provided by a regulator, as this will undoubtedly require further interpretation and explanation, there will be a need for additional sector specific support, and this should be provided through the government funding a dedicated support programme which is delivered by the sector's representative bodies such as NALC.

7.4 The regulator must also work closely with the sector's representative bodies and establish a way of working with local councils which is underpinned by principles of providing a helping, not heavy hand, and by acting as a critical friend, not criticising parent.

7.5 If local authorities such as district or unitary councils are to be given any regulatory or enforcement role including inspections, it will be important that this is sufficiently funded so as not to be detrimental to the delivery of other services and responsibilities in their areas.

8. Resource implications

8.1 We are concerned about the additional pressure this new legislation will place on local council resources and their budgets.

8.2 Local councils are primarily funded by local taxpayers through their small share of council tax and who unlike other tiers of local government, receive no ongoing government funding or a share of business rates.

8.3 Local councils are extremely diverse in terms of the areas they cover, from small villages to large towns, as well as in their skills, resources, and capacity.

8.4 There are around 100,000 local councillors in England – over four times as many councillors than in principal councils – all volunteering their time (over 14 million hours a year) and taking up civic office to make decisions about improving their area.

8.5 Around two thirds of local councils have a single employee, the clerk who is the professional officer, and a third of these are part-time. And councillors spend an average of 12 hours per month on council business. This presents a significant capacity challenge to both the familiarisation by local councils of the new legislation and then ensuring compliance with the standard or enhanced tier requirements.

8.6 We are particularly concerned that the draft bill's impact assessment overlooks local councils and only includes principal councils.

8.7 The Government's estimates of familiarisation costs for local authorities only include the 355 principal councils and exclude the 10,000 local councils which are also a type of local authority. Using the Government's own methodology in the impact assessment, familiarisation costs for all local councils would be at least £3million.

8.8 It is possible that the additional cost burden on local councils overall, beyond familiarisation costs mentioned above, could run into many millions of pounds.

8.9 Under the Government's new burdens doctrine we would expect funding to be provided to support the sector to meet any new obligations. This would include ensuring local councils have the capacity and capability to undertake risk assessments, source and provide appropriate training for staff, councillors and volunteers, access to tailored advice, guidance, and model documents, and can

invest in reasonable prevention and mitigation measures that are deemed necessary.

8.10 This should be delivered by the government funding a dedicated support programme which is delivered by the sector's representative bodies such as NALC who already have a successful track record of working with the government to support sector led support and improvement. Examples would include the establishment of the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Limited and the delivery of the Transparency Fund for Smaller Authorities.

8.11 We are also concerned about the implications for insurance premiums and the knock-on effect this may have on ensuring appropriate cover. This will add to the growing pressures on local council budgets which are already facing challenges including the cost-of-living crisis.

8.12 Given the extent of the impact of the new duty on local councils including the significant resource and financial implications, we are extremely disappointed that the Government, either through the Home Office or the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, has not effectively engaged with the sector to discuss these issues further. We have requested and are yet to receive any impact assessment of this policy and legislation on local councils including the financial implications.

8.13 However, we remain keen and committed to working positively and constructively with the Government on the further development of these proposals. We would like to reiterate our previous offer to help the Government develop a more detailed understanding of the impact of this legislation and its regulatory regime on local councils and to work together to put in place a tailored support programme.

Sandy Town Council

Date:	4th March 2024
Title:	Report following CPRE Planning Workshop
Contact:	Cllr S Baker

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members following the CPRE Planning Workshop dated Saturday 3rd February 2024 which was attended by Cllr S. Baker. This report will provide a key summary of the important information which should be circulated to members, to inform and support decisions around planning applications.

Background Information

The CPRE Planning Workshop was a four hour session in which planning legislation; planning and development within Central Bedfordshire; and case examples were explored.

The CPRE Planning volunteer/Trustee for Central Bedfordshire is John English.

More information about the CPRE team can be found here: <https://www.cprebeds.org.uk/meet-the-team/>

Key Information***The Planning System***

Planning applications form part of a wider planning system governed by legislation including Planning Law and Regulations; the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF); and Local/Neighbourhood Plans. The NPPF states that any planning applications must be decided in accordance with Local/Neighbourhood Plans. Planning applications must always be considered within the framework of favourable sustainable development (including protecting infrastructure and biodiversity).

When considering planning applications for housing/commercial development, the type of land it will be built on must be considered. Key things to consider are whether the land is rich agricultural land; whether the land is a brownfield site; whether the land/existing buildings are of archaeological/historic significance include grade listed buildings; the environmental impact e.g. removal of trees/habitats/impact on protected species; access including congestion levels; infrastructure; whether the land has drainage or flood issues; Greenbelt Land; and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

When considering a planning application, it should be identified if the site suggested was included in the Local/Neighbourhood Plan. If it was not, this is known as a Windfall Site – a development which is not included in the Local/Neighbourhood Plan.

Development within Central Bedfordshire Council

Central Bedfordshire Council are due to revise their Local Plan, which will be ready for adoption by 2028. The current Local Plan in place was adopted on 31/07/2021 and can be found here:

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/153/central_bedfordshire_local_plan_2015_to_2035/1034/adopted_local_plan

AGENDA ITEM 11

APPENDIX III

This Local Plan identified a housing target of 44,756 houses between 2015 and 2035. CPRE reports that areas identified for major development (in this instance over 1000 homes being built) include RAF Henlow; Chicksands; Biggleswade; and Tempsford. Further development is expected in Arlesey; Potton; and Houghton Conquest.

CPRE states that new housing developments are incentivised by the Government at £6,000 per new build home which is paid to the local authority (Central Bedfordshire Council).

Evaluating Planning Applications

Parish and Town Councils are statutory consultees for planning applications. This means they can make recommendations on planning applications.

Planning applications received will either be **outline applications** (made for a new building; an alteration to an existing building; an extension to an existing building), **detailed applications** (making detailed proposals for developments not covered by a householder application of permitted development rights e.g. commercial projects or new developments), or **hybrid applications** (mostly outline proposals but details in parts).

CPRE recommend there are key reasons why an objection can be raised against a planning application. It is important to note that you cannot object to a planning application at appeal stage if you did not object at the initial planning stage.

Reasons why you may object to a planning application include:

- The development is outside of the settlement envelope
- High-grade agricultural land – can be found on Land Registry (BMV grade 1-3a)
- Encroachment into countryside
- Lack of transport/public facilities/infrastructure
- Not in the Local/Neighbourhood Plan
- Backfill
- Proximity of historically significant/grade listed buildings and negative impact on character/style/settings
- Floodplane/water drainage issues – can be found on Environment Agency website or an up-to-date assessment can be requested by the council
- Safety issues e.g. proximity to roads with fast-moving traffic
- Congestion concerns/inadequate vehicular access/compromises traffic flow or safety
- Site not included in the Call for Sites 2016
- The site cannot be absorbed sympathetically within existing built areas
- Greenbelt land
- Conservation Area
- Constraints including Tree Protection Orders
- Distance from centre/core of town/village

Recommendation from CPRE

CPRE recommend that Parish and Town Councils work with Local Action Groups.

Useful Links

Responding to planning applications from CPRE

https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Planning_explained.pdf

https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/How_To_Respond_To_Planning_Applications.pdf

NPPF 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a11af7e8f5ec000f1f8c46/NPPF_December_2023.pdf

Central Bedfordshire Council Local Plan 2015-2023

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/153/central_bedfordshire_local_plan_2015_to_2035/1034/adopted_local_plan

Neighbourhood Plans – available on Central Bedfordshire Council's website

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/45/planning_policy/473/neighbourhood_planning/6

View and comment on planning applications

<https://plantech.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/PLANTECH/DCWebPages/AcolNetCGI.gov>

Sandy Town Council

Date:	4th March 2024
Title:	Reception Area and Tourist Information
Contact Officer:	Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1.0 To provide Members with an update regarding the Reception Area and Tourist Information offer.

Recommendation

2.0 To note the report.

Background

3.0 In November 2022 due to a changeover in administrative staff and a period when the Council had to employ temporary admin staff to support the Council's activities and services, it was necessary to house all staff in the back office, leaving the reception area redundant. This was only ever meant as a temporary move.

3.1 Now that Covid restrictions for premises open to the public have been lifted, and new staff have been embedded, there is a need to re-open the reception area and move staff back into that space.

3.2 A rise in abuse of Council staff and Members has been reported across the UK (highlighted in this BBC news story <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-68167190>) and as such the Clerk is uncomfortable that the council return to its previous practice of a lone worker covering the reception desk, which effectively isolates them from colleagues and makes them more vulnerable to potential attack. As such works have started to clear the area and make room for a double desk and two person workstation.

3.3 In order to facilitate this move a large range of Tourist Information leaflets and booklets have now been removed from the area. Most of these were out of date or relate to areas outside of Bedfordshire (such as Surrey and the coast). The Office will continue to hold copies of all leaflets that are relevant to Bedfordshire and its immediate surrounding area, as well as information about Sandy specifically, but will no longer stock information about the rest of the UK. Some leaflets and booklets have already been placed in the entrance hall in stands and brochure holders for visitors to browse. Most information is now available online and if a member of the public wants specific information we do not hold at the offices, a member of staff will help them locate it elsewhere.

3.4 The Town Council offices have seen a significant drop in footfall since it stopped stocking CBC waste bins and bags and receives very few Tourist Information requests generally.

Impact on Resources

4.0 Both the Outdoor Team and Administrative Team will be required to spend time to action the move; including the clearance, tidy up and redecoration of the space, and the setup of the new desks and other office equipment.

Financial Implications

5.0 A new desk will need to be purchased at a cost of £320 and some small IT charges for telephony and internet set up are likely to be incurred, although these should be minor as connections are already in place.

5.1 Painting/decorating of the reception area will be undertaken by the Outdoor Team with the cost of paint negligible.

5.2 Installation of a stable door at the entrance to the Reception Room that can be used for added security quotes to be received.

Legal Powers

6.0 The actions undertaken are covered by the Localism Act 2011, s.1 the General Power of Competence, for which Sandy Town Council is eligible and is a power of first resort, allowing the Council to do anything an individual can do.

Sandy Town Council	Council Risk Assessment	Adopted: 27 February 2017 Re-adopted: 04.03.2024 Review Due: February 2025
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Area	Subject	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L score	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise	Verified by
Finance	Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to perform its Statutory duties	L	To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget update information at every PFR committee meeting. At the Town Council meeting to discuss and agree the precept and at the PFR committees ahead of that meeting, the Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position to the end of year and indicative figures and costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information the Council considers individual budget codes and projects to ensure each is adequately budgeted for.	Existing procedure adequate	Council RFO/Clerk Accountant
	Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks Banks mistakes Loss Charges	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements. Monthly reconciliation of accounts is conducted when statements arrive by the accountant.	Existing procedure adequate. Review financial regulations when necessary. Review bank signatories, as necessary. Monitor bank statements monthly.	RFO/Clerk External Auditor Internal Auditor
	Financial controls and Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L	The Council has financial regulations in place which set out requirements. The accountant records financial transactions monthly. An independent audit	Existing procedure adequate. Review financial regulations when necessary.	RFO/Clerk External Auditor Internal Auditor

				checks the records on an annual basis to ensure the Council is compliant. Yearend accounts submitted with annual return.	Timetable annual training/refresher sessions on procedures for all new and existing staff	
	Reporting and auditing	Information Communication	L	Financial information is reported to every Policy, Finance and Resources committee meeting every 7 weeks.	Existing procedure adequate	Council RFO/Clerk External Auditor Internal Auditor
	Direct Costs	Goods not supplied but billed. Incorrect invoicing Cheque incorrect	L	The Council has financial regulations in place which set out requirements. A list of payments for each month is reviewed by Council at PF&R. Two Members' signatures required for all cheques. Two authorisations are required for any bank transactions. The Council has minimal stock, which is regularly checked by the Clerk and maintenance team.	Existing procedures adequate. Monitored by Council.	RFO/Clerk Accountant
	Best Value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly. Overspend on services.	L/M	Financial Regulations set out contract levels and tendering process. If problems are encountered with a contract, the Clerk will investigate and report to the Council.	Existing procedure is adequate and included in financial regulations. Monitored by Town Clerk Schedule of contracts held by Council. To be reported to Council annually.	Councillors RFO/Clerk

	Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly. Unpaid Tax to Inland Revenue	L	Payroll contracted out to DM Payroll Accountants. Payroll checked by admin team leader and payroll monthly. Dual authorisation required.	Adequate. Contract with Payroll Provider to be monitored by Clerk.	RFO/Clerk Accountant
	Employees	Fraud by staff Loss of key personnel Health and Safety	L	Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance adhered to with regards to fraud. All employees provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles.	Adequate. Monitored by Clerk and Human Resources Committee. Insurance cover reviewed and agreed by Town Council annually. Annual training/refresher sessions to be held for all staff to keep knowledge of procedures up to date and clear.	Councillors Clerk
	Town Clerk	Improper conduct	L	Clerk's performance and appraisal overseen by Human Resources Committee and Clerks Management Committee. Clerk to be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to professional and legal advice required to undertake the role.	Monitored by Human Resources Committee	Councillors
	Election Costs	Risk of election cost	L	Risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election as this is a democratic process and should not be stifled. A EMR budget is held for the purpose of paying for an election.	Existing procedure is adequate	Councillors Clerk/RFO

	VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. The accountant regularly checks and claims all VAT owed.	Existing procedure is adequate	Clerk/RFO Accountant
	Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing then sent to the external auditor within time limit.	Existing procedure is adequate	Clerk/RFO Accountant
	Legal Powers	Illegal activity	L	All activity and payments within the powers of Town Council to be resolved and minuted at PFR or Town Council meetings.	Existing procedure is adequate	Clerk Councillors
	Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance	L	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of policy renewal) of all insurance agreements in place.	Existing procedure is adequate. Review insurance provision annually. Review of compliance.	Clerk Councillors
Employer Liability	Complying with Employment law	Failure to comply with law	L	Membership of various national bodies and contract with PNC Human Resources provider. Town Clerk is a member of SLCC, and the Council is a member of BATPC and NALC.	Existing procedure is adequate.	Clerk Human Resources Committee
	Safety of staff and visitors	Injury	M	Employees are provided with adequate health and safety training and direction in equipment needed to undertake their roles. Health and safety policy in place. Secured doors to personnel area. Panic button in reception. Lone work policy in place.	Existing procedure is adequate. Public liability insurance reviewed and agreed annually by Town Council.	Clerk Human Resources Committee

				Public liability cover with WPS insurance to value of £15,000,000.		
	Pension requirements	Comply with statutory duties	L	Payroll and pension contributions managed by independent accountant, DM Payroll. Adequate budget allowed for employer contributions is reviewed annually. Payments made to fund by Clerk and Admin Team Leader. Dual authorisation required.	Existing procedure is adequate.	Clerk Human Resources Committee
Legal Liability	Acting within legal powers	Failure to ensure activities are within the legal powers of a council	L	All activity and payments within the powers of Town Council to be resolved and minuted at PFR or Town Council meetings.	Existing procedure is adequate	Clerk Auditors
	Proper reporting of Minutes/Agendas/Notices/Statutory Documents	Failure to meet requirements	L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk or Admin Team Leader and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council/Committee meeting. Agendas are displayed according to legal requirements.	Existing procedure is adequate	Clerk Auditors
	Computers	Loss of Council data	L	Constant back up of important data to cloud-based server (MS Azure). Virus protection renewed. IT management contract in place. All computers are included on insurance policy with adequate cover.	Existing procedure is adequate	Clerk
	Legal Documents	Loss or damage	L	Leases and legal documents kept in safe at Council officers with register of documents held. When	Existing procedure is adequate	Clerk Auditor

				transferring documents outside of the Council Offices to solicitors etc electronic and or scanned documents to be used to reduce risk of loss or damage.		
Councillors	Declarations of Interest	Interest not declared	L	Code of conduct sets down declaration of interest guidelines. Clerk to advise a Councillor when there is uncertainty. Declarations are included in each agenda before the discussion items.	Existing procedure is adequate	
Assets	Protection of Physical Assets	Damage to property	M	Buildings insured and reviewed annually. Increase in line with RPI. Annual Health and Safety inspection of all property by outside company. (PNC) Comprehensive insurance cover with Aviva. Valuation of buildings conducted in 2017 by Aviva.	Existing procedure is adequate	Clerk Councillors
	Maintenance of buildings	Lack of upkeep	M	Buildings maintained on ad hoc basis.	Reviewed by Grounds Team Leader on a bi-annual basis and recommendations made.	Grounds Team
	Security of buildings, furniture, and equipment	Theft, damage	H	Asset register recording all STC assets is updated as and when new assets are acquired and reviewed by council annually. Weekly checks by staff and all reports from public investigated. Alarm system at Council offices and depot which is monitored by ADT. <i>From May 2024 DSSL and CBC will take on live monitoring from CCTV. CBC has direct links to</i>	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Councillors

				<p><i>the Police if any criminal activity is noticed.</i></p> <p>Comprehensive building and contents insurance cover via WPS on all buildings.</p> <p>CCTV at Depot, Sunderland Road, and Bedford Road Recreation Grounds. Annual fire safety testing. Weekly fire alarm and sensor checks.</p>		
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Sandy Town Council

Date: 4th March 2024

Title: Permission to Name The Limes Queen Elizabeth II Wood

Contact: Deputy Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1.0 For Members to note that in order to get the required permission to name the wooded area at the Limes 'Queen Elizabeth II Wood,' a formal application must be made to the Cabinet Office.

Recommendation

2.0 That the Council makes a formal request to the Cabinet Office for permission to the area of The Limes 'Queen Elizabeth II Wood'.

Background

3.0 As a result of trees being planted at the Limes under the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Green Canopy initiative, the Council would like to officially name the woodland created as 'Queen Elizabeth II Wood'.

3.1 The use of the Royal Families names and titles are protected. See rules appended.

Resources

4.0 The naming will not have a financial impact on the Council.

Impact on Resources

5.0 Limited impact.

Legal Powers

6.0 The actions undertaken are covered by the Localism Act 2011, s.1 the General Power of Competence, for which Sandy Town Council is eligible and is a power of first resort, allowing the Council to do anything an individual can do.

PUBLIC ROYAL NAMES MEMORIALISATION GUIDANCE

USE OF NAMES AND TITLES OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II FOR MEMORIALISATION

Permission to use the title 'Royal', or the names and titles of members of the Royal Family, including the name of the late Queen, and other protected Royal titles is a mark of favour granted by the Sovereign, acting on the advice of his Ministers.

The protected Royal titles are sparingly granted and strict standards are applied. As a matter dealt with under the Royal Prerogative, information about any criteria which may exist and the reasons for the grant or refusal of an application are not disclosed.

Communities, organisations and individuals may wish to mark the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and commemorate her extraordinary reign through the use of her name and title, for example by naming a park, garden or street.

Requests that incorporate 'memorial' or 'remembrance' in a proposed name are likely to be looked upon favourably, where possible. The full title of Queen Elizabeth II will continue to be closely protected and only be granted for applications with strong Royal connections.

To ensure the use of Queen Elizabeth II's name continues to be undertaken in a dignified and appropriate manner, approval will be required. Requests should be directed to the relevant teams below. It is suggested that the following information be included in any request:

- *Reason(s) why the name is being sought*
- *A history of the organisation/body*
- *Details of any Royal connections or associations (where applicable)*
- *Any other information that is considered appropriate*
- *The application should be made by the senior officer of the organisation, e.g. Chairman, President, Chief Executive, or Honorary Secretary.*

Careful consideration will be given in due course to the commissioning of an official national memorial to Queen Elizabeth II.

*Anyone may create and erect or display an **unofficial** statue or portrait, subject to the usual planning regulations and approvals. Formal approval is not required unless there is a commercial element to the project. However, for any large-scale, public-facing projects, organisations may wish to write to the Private Secretary's Office at Buckingham Palace for information purposes as a courtesy.*

Contact information

England & Northern Ireland: royalnames@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Scotland: protocolandhonours@gov.scot

Wales: brandingqueries@gov.wales and royalnames@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Sandy Town Council

Date:	4th March 2024
Title:	Mole Pest Problem at the Green Beeston Green
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1.0 Further to the last meeting of the Council, to advise Members on the legal situation regarding the removal of moles on land owned by the Town Council.

Recommendation

2.0 That after considering the advice and view of the Government and the RSPCA the Committee is requested to agree to the action it wishes to take about moles on its land.

Background

3.0 At the meeting of the Council held in January 2024 Members requested more information on the legal issues relating to the removal of moles from land such as The Green, Beeston, and the cemetery.

3.1 The advice to landowners on Moles from the Government and the RSPCA is set out below;

You can control mole numbers most effectively from October to April. This is when they are most actively digging new tunnels and before the breeding season.

Catch moles with traps

You should place traps at least 150mm below ground in the main tunnel of a mole run. You should check traps at least once a day. You can use spring traps, but you must:

- **only use spring traps commonly used for catching moles**
- **kill humanely any live moles you catch**

Control moles with gas

You should use someone trained in the use of gassing products. Read the HSE information sheet: [Gassing of rabbits and vertebrate pests](#) for more information.

Control moles with repellents

There are no commercially available repellents approved for use against moles.

4.0 The view of the RSPCA is set out below;

The RSPCA is opposed to killing or taking wildlife - in circumstances where there is a proven case for controlling wild animals, we advocate the use of non-harmful methods of deterrence where possible. Wherever possible, the RSPCA would always prefer non-lethal solutions and only if there is a serious problem and non-lethal means are ineffective or impractical should killing be contemplated. In all cases, methods of control and taking should cause the minimum pain or distress to individual animals.

The RSPCA is opposed to the manufacture, sale and use of all snares and any trap which causes suffering.

The use of spring traps is regulated by the Pests Act 1954, The Spring Traps Approval (England) Order 2018 and The Spring Traps Approval (Wales) Order 2019. Under the Pests Act 1954, a person commits an offence if for the purpose of killing or taking animals they use, or permit the use of, a spring trap other than an approved trap or in circumstances which are not approved. **However, traps included in The Small Ground Vermin Traps Order 1958 which are identified as being adapted solely for the destruction of rats, mice, moles, or other small ground 'vermin' are excluded from the Pests Act or Spring Traps Approval Order. So, traps used for moles are not subject to any regulation and are not required to pass any tests to ensure they are humane.**

Currently, there are a number of methods that can legally be used to kill moles. Generally, trapping is thought to cause less suffering than gassing and, because moles are generally considered a 'pest' (we [RSPCA] do not agree with this term), efforts have not been made to make mole traps illegal or subject to any form of regulation. However, we have evidence that such traps cannot are frequently not humane because the traps may not always kill the mole outright.

The Society has funded research examining the necessity for, and efficacy and welfare implications of methods of controlling the damage caused by moles. Unfortunately, the research showed that many of the techniques currently used to control moles are not humane and that much mole control is not necessary, given that it is usually done for aesthetic reasons. The RSPCA has made representations to Government in order to try and remedy this matter but, to date, without effect. We hope that potential new legislation for wildlife, as recommended by the Law Commission in 2015, will provide an opportunity to regulate all traps used for any species, but as yet, we have no date for any proposed new legislation.

The Green, Beeston

5.0 At Beeston there is concern local residents may take action to remove the moles. The Town Council controls the Green at Beeston and has rights as lord of the manor. The public can access the green but cannot interfere with fauna or with nature. Any offence can lead to a level 3 fine.

5.1 The Outdoor Team were instructed to flatten the molehills at the Green in Beeston and monitor the recurrence of mole hills in the area. The Outdoor Team leader has reported that after flattening the hills the first time, hills soon reappeared. However, on subsequent visits the instances of molehills reappearing have significantly reduced.

The Cemetery

6.0 The Outdoor Team has historically overseen the trapping of moles at the cemetery. The Outdoor Team Leader has reported when training was given for pest control the trainer would not

cover mole trapping or extermination as no guarantee could be given that the moles would not return.

6.1 The Outdoor Team Leader and Admin Team Leader, who manages burials at the cemetery, have reported that mole damage can affect the stability of headstones, and movement of memorials has been the subject of grave owner complaints over time. As such both feel that mole control in the cemetery is a necessary action.

Impact on Resources of The Town Council

7.0 The maintenance of the Green and cemetery has a significant impact on the work of the Outdoor Team. Mole trapping at the cemetery and or the Green, Beeston takes staff away from other duties.

Financial Implications

8.0 The Council is advised that £1,400 is available in the budget from cost centre 500 budget line 4037 for the removal of moles by a contractor.

Legal Powers

9.0 The actions undertaken are covered by the Localism Act 2011, s.1 the General Power of Competence, for which Sandy Town Council is eligible and is a power of first resort, allowing the Council to do anything an individual can do.



SANDY TOWN COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2023/24

The following Action Plan summarises and prioritises the Council’s activities and projects that will continue to be worked on over the remainder of the 2023/24 financial year. The action plan is mainly project based and does not take into account the daily business of the Council, such as routine maintenance and administration, dealing with and carrying out actions resulting from public enquiries, completing training and statutory activities (e.g. internal audit).

Town Council Projects			
Project Title	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales
2023/24 Activities			
Cemetery Extension	1) Agree cemetery final design with CDS and get costs for next stage of project. 2) Tender document for landscape contractors goes out 3) Planning Conditions Application 4) Construction/Landscaping 5) Update for burial regulations to incorporate extended area 6) Practical Completion 7) Site Open	1) CWG 2) Clerk/CWG/CDS 3) CDS 4) CDS/Contractor 5) CWG/Admin Team 6) Contractor/CDS 7) STC	Complete Mar 2024 February 2024 July – Dec 2024 August 2024 January 2025 May 2025
Jenkins Pavilion Development	1) Construction Phase 2) Agree terms of lease 3) Agree management terms 4) Agree Profit Share	1) CBC/Pentaco/STC 2) STC/CBC/Solicitors 3) STC/CBC/Everyone Active 4) STC/CBC	Ongoing Complete Ongoing Complete
Sandye Place Academy	1) Ongoing liaison with parties who have decision making power over	1) STC/Clerk/CBC	Ongoing

	<p>the future of the facility and joint work with CBC Ward Councillors</p> <p>1a) Cllr Hewitt invited to join meeting with Steve Watkins, Iain Berry and Sandy Ward Councillors to present NHP Aspirations 24th November. No decisions taken.</p> <p>1b) Working Group to meet 30th January 2024</p> <p>2) Continue to communicate STC’s vision via the Neighbourhood Plan of how Sandye Place could benefit the community and help build a sustainable and well-planned town.</p> <p>3) Submit application for Sandye Place to be listed as an Asset of Community Value</p>	<p>1a) Cllr Hewitt</p> <p>1b) CBC, Mayor/NHP Representative/Clerk</p> <p>2) STC/Clerk/NHP</p> <p>3) Richard Barlow/Clerk</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Jan 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>Allotments Beeston Village site</p>	<p>1) Pursue lease with CBC regarding allotment land at Beeston (Village Site)</p> <p>2) Undertake conditions survey of land to understand it’s suitability for allotments</p> <p>3) Engage National Allotment Society to create a map/plan of the site</p> <p>4) Undertake soil assessment of site</p> <p>5) Agree lease for site</p> <p>6) Work starts on allotment development</p> <p>7) Meeting with Stephen Mooring to discuss STC requirements/specifications</p>	<p>1) Clerk/Solicitor/CBC</p> <p>2) Deputy Clerk/Andrew Havergal</p> <p>3) STC/NAA/Clerk/BWG</p> <p>4) TBC</p> <p>5) STC/CBC</p> <p>6) Contractor/STC</p> <p>7) STC/CBC</p>	<p>7th August 2023</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>On Hold</p> <p>On Hold</p> <p>On Hold</p> <p>On Hold</p> <p>15th Mar 2024</p>
<p>Provision of Allotments</p>	<p>1) Engage with 3rd parties to identify appropriate land for lease</p>	<p>1) Clerk/STC/CBC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Community Emergency Action Plan</p>	<p>1) Update the current plan and check all contacts are still relevant</p> <p>2) Undertake emergency equipment audit</p> <p>4) Translate plan into new CERT template</p>	<p>1) Clerk/Admin</p> <p>2) Outdoor Team Leader/ Deputy Clerk</p> <p>3) Clerk/Admin</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Feb 2024</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Make up emergency kit box 6) Have plan checked by BLEVEC members 7) Publish plan and keep copies in the office and depot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Clerk/Admin 5) Clerk/BLEVEC 6) Clerk/Admin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feb/Mar 2024 March 2024 March 2024
EastWest Rail, A1 and Blackcat Roundabout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Representatives to attend meetings of neighbouring parishes and with local MP to consider areas of joint concern and priority for STC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) STC Reps/Mayor 	Ongoing
Sunderland Road Recreation Ground and Bedford Road Recreation Ground Pitch Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Engage with Football Foundation regarding funding and surveys of the area 2) Apply for grant 3) Create project plan and schedule for works together with training in conjunction with contractor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Deputy Clerk/Outdoor Team Leader 2) Deputy Clerk/Clerk 3) Deputy Clerk/Clerk/Outdoor team Leader/PitchPower. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing TBD TBD
Christmas Lights Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Determine Project Plan 2) Create event plan and timetable and undertake RA 3) Apply for road closures 4) Engage with stall holders 5) Book entertainment and stage (including Father Christmas) 6) Book First Aid Cover 7) Publicity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Event Working Group 2) Clerk/Event Organiser 3) Admin 4) Admin/Event WG 5) Admin/Event WG 6) Admin 7) Admin/Event WG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Complete Complete Complete Complete Complete Complete
Sandy Green Wheel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Agree dates for Green Wheel Walks 2) Mayors Green Wheel Walk 3) Attendance at Friends of Sandy Green Wheel Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Event WG 2) Event WG 3) STC Reps/Clerk/Deputy Clerk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan 2024 Spring 2024 TBD

Office Space Re-organisation	1) Agree new office layout for Admin Team making best use of available space.	1) Clerk/Mayor/Admin Team	Feb 2024
	2) Agree any costs with PF&R	2) Clerk/PF&R	April 2024
	3) Undertake move of furniture	3) Clerk/Admin Team	April 2024

Town Council	
2023/24 Activities	
On-Going Activities/Business as usual	
Council meetings	Agendas, attendance at and minutes of, reports, administration
Council Administration	Administration, printing, stationery orders, cleaning supplies, chamber bookings
Actions	Taking forward actions as agreed in meetings including procurement of equipment and undertaking surveys
Customer/Resident Queries	Administration and response to all queries that come into the Office via post, email, telephone, web enquiries and office walk-ins.
Public Engagement	Creating stories and posts for the website and social media, sending out press releases and proactively seeking opportunities to promote the council and its services. Seasonal Newsletter. Designing and undertaking public consultations.
Cemetery Management	Undertaking all aspects of cemetery management from liaising with families, undertakers and stone masons, to the administration of legal documentation and ensuring all burial and memorial records are completed to required standards. Ongoing maintenance of the cemetery area and chapel.
Council Website	Continued maintenance and update
Civic Matters	Honorary Freeman & the Mayor's Award
IT & Office Equipment	Administration and supply
Buildings Maintenance	Maintenance of Council owned estate including 10, Cambridge Road, Public Toilets, Car Park and Depot.
Utilities	Administration and Supply
Vehicles	Administration and Maintenance
Fishing Licences	Administration and Supply
Tourist Bookings	Administration
Human Resources	Payroll, administration of staff annual leave and sick leave, staff recruitment and training, appraisals, and personal

	development
Museum	Administration of visits to the museum and conducting tours as and when required
Events	Organising and running two seasonal markets, event planning and organisation for larger national events and any other STC Annual Events including Christmas Lights Event and Remembrance Sunday Parade. Other events organised as required
Open spaces	Maintenance and upkeep of all open spaces and recreation grounds owned by STC. Administration of land use requests such as fairs, community events, Sandy 10 etc