

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held virtually via Zoom on Monday 1st March 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, J Hewitt, A M Hill, W Jackson, T Knagg, R Lock, C Osborne, S Paterson, M Pettitt, P Sharman, M Scott (Chair) and S Sutton

Absent: Cllrs N Thompson and CBC Cllr S Ford

In attendance: CBC Cllrs C Maudlin and T Stock, Mr C Robson (Clerk), Mrs C Baker-Smith (Admin Team Leader), Hugh Somerleyton and Angus Hardy (Wild East)

Action

1 Apologies for Absence (112 -2020/2021)
Apologies had been received from CBC Cllr S Ford.

Admin

2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (113-2020/21)

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

3 Public Participation Session (114-2020/21)
The Clerk had received a statement from the SG19 Group regarding the A1 which would be heard at Item 8.

A Member asked if the Town Council would consider supporting a memorial garden project at Sandy Healthcare Centre in memory of Dr J Baxter and NHS Staff during the pandemic. After discussion the Member was asked to submit a formal report on the project to the Town Clerk for consideration at a future council meeting.

4 Guest Speaker (115-2020/21)
Hugh Somerleyton and Angus Hardy provided Members with a presentation on behalf of Wild East. The presentation described Wild East's mission to have organisations and individuals pledge areas of land for nature and wildlife.

The Chair thanked Wild East for their presentation and said that this presentation would be passed on to the Environmental Group to consider how Sandy Town Council may be able to get involved.

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5 Minutes of previous Town Council Meeting (116-2020/21)

RESOLVED to:

Receive the minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 18th January 2021 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

6 Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (117-2020/21)

To receive and note the minutes of the meetings of the following committees and sub-committees and (if applicable) to approve recommendations therein which do not arise elsewhere:

- i) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Community, Services and Environment Committee held on 25th January 2021.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Development Scrutiny Committee held on 4th January 2021 and 15th February 2021.
- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the Extraordinary minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on the 27th January 2021.
- (iv) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on the 15th February 2021.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Internal Audit Report be approved by Full Council.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the 2021/22 Calendar of Meeting be approved by Full Council.

7 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (118-2020/21)

Members received verbal reports from the Central Bedfordshire Councillors.

Cllr Stock reported that Sandy's COVID infections in the week ending 21.2.21 had gone down and urged residents to obey the rules.

The garden waste collections re-start this week.

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The Additional Restriction Grant was released last week and had had 200 applications.

Cllr
Stock

Central Beds Council budget was approved last week.

CCG said that groups 5 and 6 will be vaccinated.

Cllr Maudlin said that Saxon Leisure Centre is now open for walk in community COVID testing. A Member asked why people who deal with the public are not being vaccinated before the cohort groups? Cllr Stock said that the CCG is adhering to strict criteria and that groups 5 and 6 will be vaccinated next.

A Member raised a question on behalf of a resident asking will all Sandy Secondary School pupils be returning at the same time? Cllr Stock said that all pupils will be returning on Monday 8th March and will be tested twice a week at school and once at home. She said that she would have more answers after a webinar this week. A Member said that pupils were being invited for tests this week before starting school on Monday. A Member asked if the Weatherley Centre in Biggleswade was closing for vaccinations and Cllr Stock said she would check.

8 Reports from External Meetings (119–2020/21)

(i) Members received and noted a summary of a meeting between representatives of the Town Council and the Hon Richard Fuller MP.

The Chair said that a 'Meet and Greet' session was not possible at the moment, but Richard Fuller would be prepared to attend a virtual meeting with Members. Mr Fuller had suggested having such a meeting after the Chancellor's Budget announcement. The Clerk was asked to arrange this meeting.

Town
Clerk

The Clerk explained that he had previously sent the MP a list of items/issues for consideration. During the meeting with Mr Fuller, Council representatives discussed ongoing short and long-term issues related to the A1. Mr Fuller asked that Sandy Town Council let him know its top short-term priority and he would push for action.

Town
Clerk

The Clerk read out a statement from the SG19 Group and recommendations related to the New Road / A1 junction. Members concurred that SG19's statement summarised the position well and

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that if the Council had to put one short-term priority forward then it should be the New Road junction.

A Member commented that he would not want to see an opportunity lost to pursue average speed cameras for the Sandy section of the A1 and this must be followed up.

Members discussed the matter at length, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would write to the MP highlighting safety of the New Road junction as a priority and putting forward the suggestions offered by SG19.

(ii) Members received and noted a verbal report from the Clerk on a meeting with Cllr Richard Wenham the new Leader of Central Beds Council.

The Clerk will circulate a report. The Mayor wrote to the new leader and he agreed to meet with the Mayor and Deputy. The Mayor was unable to attend the meeting due to internet connection issues and Cllr Osborne stood in for him. A wide range of matters were raised with Mr Wenham including leisure services in Sandy and the future of SPA. Cllr Pettitt and Osborne commented that the meeting was productive, and Cllr Wenham had clearly looked into the issues in Sandy. One of Cllr Wenham's key points was that the Council should fully engage with Cllr Tracey Stock in her new role as portfolio holder for leisure. Cllr Stock had agreed to meet with the Mayor and Deputy later in the week.

9 Annual Meeting of Council (120-2020/21)

Members received a report from the Clerk on the Annual Town Meeting of the Town Council and considered granting authority to the Chair and Town Clerk to re-schedule the meeting if required.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to grant authority to the Chair and Town Clerk to re-schedule the meeting if required.

10 Action List (121-2020/21)

Members received and noted the action list.

11 Neighbourhood Development Plan (122-2020/21)

Members received and considered a report from the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering group.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council agree to amend the Scheme of Delegations for the Neighbourhood Plan

Town
Clerk

Admin

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Steering Group to have no upper limit for the number of people sitting on the Steering group.

12 **Street Audit (123-2020/21)**

Members received and noted a written update from Cllr Pettitt on the street audit carried out by Councillors to date.

Cllr Pettitt urged other Members to carry out their surveys as soon as possible. Cllr Stock asked Cllr Pettitt to send her an email concerning the pothole adjacent to the A1 at Beeston and she would seek to resolve the impasse between CBC Highways and HE. Cllr Maudlin agreed to meet Cllr Pettitt in Swansholme Gardens to look at the stretch of footpath causing concern.

13 **Leisure Services (124-2020/21)**

It was reported that the Mayor, Deputy and Cllr Osborne would be attending a meeting with Cllr Stock, portfolio holder for leisure this week and would report back to Members.

14 **Correspondence (125-2020/21)**

(i) Members received and noted correspondence from Central Beds Council's Environmental Protection Officer.

The Clerk said that this information would be put on our website and Facebook pages and asked Members to share the information with other groups on social media.

(ii) Members noted correspondence from Central Beds Council's Safer Communities and Partnership Team and considered a supporting report from the Clerk.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council work with Central Beds Council to co-produce a Community Safety Plan for Sandy and that Cllrs Hewitt and Lock be appointed to act as the main liaison/point of contact with the Safer Communities Involvement Officer alongside the Clerk. That these Councillors act as representatives of the Council in feeding back the Council's safety concerns to the Safer Communities Team.

15 **Consultations (126-2020/21)**

(i) Members noted that Central Beds Council have opened a consultation on Home to School and Travel Policies which closes on 22nd April 2021 and that Members can respond individually.

Town
Clerk

Cllrs
Hewitt /
Lock

Town
Clerk

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(ii) Members noted correspondence on Central Beds Council's Changes to Special Schools and Additional Resource Provisions within mainstream schools' consultation which closes on the 5th May 2021. Members commented that the vacant Sandye Place site could support a SEND education facility and would help develop a proposal for the site with education use to satisfy the DfE.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Clerk write to Central Beds Council and put forward the Sandye Place Academy site as a suggestion for SEND provision.

Town
Clerk

(iii) Members noted correspondence regarding consultation on forest management carried out by the RSPB which closes on 5th April 2021.

16 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies (127-2020/21)

(i) Members received and noted the report from Cllr Hill on the Sandy Sports and Leisure Association (SSLA) committee. A Member picked up from Cllr Hill's report that SSLA's Annual Return for the financial period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 was overdue and enquired whether as Sole Trustee, the Council should be concerned. Cllr Pettitt responded by assuring all Members that he was waiting for necessary additional information from the Association's Treasurer and was confident the report would be completed online within a fortnight.

(ii) Members received and noted the report from Cllr Hill on the Sandy Twinning Association committee.

Cllr Hill informed Members that an article may appear in the national press regarding a re-boost of town links, as this was declining as young people showed less interest in twinning. Cllr Hill commented that the town's Polish link should be able to remain strong due to Remembrance Day and the summer school.

17 News Release (128-2020/21)

There were none.

18 Chairman's Items (129-2020/21)

The Chair informed Members that he had been notified that Keith Mayhew who was for many years the council photographer, had passed away. Members expressed their sadness at the news and the Mayor said that the Town Council's condolences would be sent to his family.

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Members were informed that notice had recently been received that the Assets of Community Value status on The Queens Head and The Kings Arms public houses in Sandy had been renewed for a further 5 years.

19 **Date of Next Meeting (130-2020/21)**
Monday 12th April 2021.