

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 1st November 2021 at 7.30pm

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

Absent: CBC Cllrs C Maudlin, S Ford and T Stock.

In attendance: Mr C Robson (Clerk), and two members of the public.

Action

1	<p>Apologies for Absence (122-2021/2022) Apologies had been received from Cllrs W Jackson and CBC Cllr T Stock.</p>	Admin
2	<p>Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (123-2021/22) <i>(i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests – None.</i> <i>(ii) Non-Pecuniary Interests – None.</i> <i>(iii) Dispensations – None.</i></p>	
3	<p>Public Participation Session (124-2021/22) There were two members of the public present, one of whom wanted to speak in relation to Central Bedfordshire Council’s Public Notice on proposed waiting restrictions at Medusa Way/Shannon Close. As the item was late on the agenda, the Chairman brought the item forward to be dealt with and invited the resident to speak.</p> <p>The resident, Mr Cochrane who had also sent a letter to both the Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to the proposals explained that the scheme proposed did not address the concerns of residents in Shannon Close. The main area of concern is the side of the road opposite Shannon Close, which the scheme does not mention. Mr Cochrane went on to describe the issues residents face in leaving and entering their drives and streets, along with abuse received from drivers using the road for school drop off and pick up. As well as causing issues for residents, the situation is unsafe for children attending the school.</p>	

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The Chairman thanked Mr Cochrane and opened the matter up for discussion. Members discussed the matter at length and raised the following points of note;

- A Member commented that they were happy to propose that the Council support the scheme as proposed and include the additional area highlighted by the resident but queried what result this would have on parking in the area. A Member seconded the proposal.
- It was highlighted that CBC acts as both the Education and Highway authority and should be able to find a solution. Members queried whether the developments at the school would help address parent parking.
- The expansion of the school under the two-tier system has no doubt compounded the problem.
- The Chairman commented that he was aware CBC Cllr Ford had held discussions with the head of the Secondary School, who had expressed support for residents finding a solution. The school has issued letters to parents asking them to park considerately.
- Members expressed concern that the proposal, even with a wider area of inclusion will not address residents' concerns and will potentially lead to moving the problem elsewhere.

The Chairman called for a vote on the proposal on the table. A recorded vote was requested.

For; Cllrs Lock, Osborne, Scott

Against; Cllrs Aldis, Blaine, Gibson, Hill, Knagg, Sutton, Thompson

The proposal was lost.

Members discussed the matter further and commented as follows;

A Member commented that a scheme similar to Dapifer Drive should be considered, with the road closed to all but residential traffic at key times. Concerns were raised that STC were not in a position to suggest solutions without knowing what further impact those

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<p>solutions may have. The Council should ask the experts to come up with a suitable scheme.</p> <p>It was proposed that the Council express its support for points one and two of the proposed scheme, but that points three to six of the scheme are excluded and that CBC consider closing in the road to all but residential traffic at key times.</p> <p>A Member commented that CBC should be engaging with the school again and that between them a solution to the issues should be achievable.</p> <p>RESOLVED to respond to the Public Notice stating that while the Council welcomed a scheme to address parking issues in the area identified, it does not feel that the scheme as outlined will benefit residents. The Council urges Central Bedfordshire Council to continue engaging with the school and to look at a scheme which is time limited and includes both sides of Medusa Way.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mr Cochrane and reaffirmed that the Council did wish to help residents find a solution, but that it just needed to make sure the right solution was sought.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Cllr Osborne had received the following question from residents;</p> <p>“Following the decision recently by Biggleswade Town Council – as reported in the Chronicle – will Sandy Town Council also be raising concerns over the lack of sufficient doctors in the town and the difficulty in getting face to face appointments?”</p> <p>Members considered the question and noted that the matter was a national problem, not a local one specific to Sandy or Biggleswade. A switch to triage appointments is a strategy the NHS is taking nationwide, the transition to which was accelerated by the pandemic, as well as a lack of doctors. A Member argued that as the local representatives for our community, we should be expressing residents’ views to the NHS and informing them what people need and want to see.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Council writes to the Bedfordshire CCG and expresses concern over the lack of sufficient doctors in the town and</p>	<p>Town Clerk</p> <p>Town Clerk</p>
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the difficulty residents experience in getting face to face appointments.

The Clerk informed Members that he had received three communications from the public with matters they wished to be raised with the Council under public participation;

- 1) The crossing patrol officer located on the High Street, adjacent to St Swithun's school has contacted the Council to raise concerns over cars speeding as they come out of Ivel Road. She has asked that the Town Council write something for publication, to encourage people to drive carefully around the crossing, or if any other measures could be taken.

Members considered the matter and agreed that the Council include items on its website, social media and press releases in relation to concerns over speeding at this location. The matter would also be reported to CBC's Safer Community Officers to see how they could assist.

- 2) A resident of Banks Drive contacted the Council to ask that Councillors are made aware of parking issues arising from the development of a site at this location. The vehicles linked to the building work are parking on pavements and creating congestion. The resident is asking that the Council help address their concerns with CBC or the developer.

Members commented that it was likely the planning application will have contained a condition that all work-related equipment and vehicles are kept within the work site boundary so not to cause such issues as described by the resident. The Clerk was asked to contact Central Bedfordshire Council to ask them to check the planning conditions and take appropriate action.

- 3) The Clerk informed Members that a number of questions had been received from Mr S Allen of SG19. The Chairman stated that these would be received and considered under the Action List which referred to actions related to the A1.

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4	<p>Minutes of previous Town Council Meetings (125-2021/22)</p> <p>Members considered the minutes of a meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 20th September 2021 and Monday 11th October 2021 and RESOLVED to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.</p>	
5	<p>Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (126-2021/22)</p> <p>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:</p> <p>i) RESOLVED to receive and note the minutes of the Development Scrutiny Committees held on 4th October 2021 and 18th October 2021.</p> <p>ii) RESOLVED to receive and note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on the 4th October 2021.</p> <p>iii) RESOLVED to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on the 18th October 2021.</p> <p>The Chairman reminded all Councillors that the next meeting of the committee would consider the overall 2022/23 revenue and capital budget. All Members were invited to attend.</p> <p>RESOLVED to approve the recommendation that the Council accepts the legal advice received from NALC and agree to the ongoing responsibility for maintenance of two tracks across Beeston Green and that two more quotes are obtained for maintenance required.</p> <p>iv) RESOLVED to receive and note the minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on the 20th September 2021.</p> <p>RESOLVED to approve the recommendation that two employees on minimum wage be moved to the NJC pay scales at SCP1 and that this be effective from October 2021. Associated costs are to be factored into the budget setting process.</p>	Town Clerk Town Clerk
6	<p>Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (127-2021/22)</p> <p>No CBC Ward members were present. Cllr Stock had sent the following items for information ahead of the meeting;</p>	

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	<p>Covid - new cases remain high, particularly in the 11-18 age group, we could see a slight decrease this Thursday as last week was half term. New cases are now increasing in the older age brackets, which could be attributed to household transmissions with school age children.</p> <p>'Pride of Place' Day - following completion of the highways work; removing planters, trees, creating additional parking spaces. Our Pride of Place event is this Saturday, 6th Nov, and leaflets have now been distributed to all Winchester Rd residents. (I'll send photos of the leaflets). Thank you to all STC Councillors for their help and support building up to the event and offer of help on the day.</p> <p>Health - BLMK CCG have launched a new podcast for anyone interested in the changes in health and social care. The first episode is "BLMK Health Conversations on ...".</p> <p>SPA Consultation - closed last Friday. Feedback will be reported soon.</p> <p>A Member raised a question about the installation of crossing points at Station Road and when this was due. The Chairman commented that there had been no reply on this to date and that he would follow the matter up.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Action List (128-2021/22)</p> <p>Members received and noted an action list on Full Council items.</p> <p>The Chairman invited Cllr Blaine to give a verbal update from the BATPC AGM, where a speaker from East West Rail had been in attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EWR have decided there will be two tracks with no overhead wires and that trains may operate from rechargeable batteries. • There is ill feeling from some communities to the north of Bedford who feel that the consultation was inadequate. • The point at which the new line will cross with the existing is now referred to as Tempsford/St Neots. This suggests it may be further north than the Council had thought. • The Council should scrutinise what impacts the line could have on our area (both on and off-line). • There was no feedback or real understanding of what is guiding EWR decisions. 	

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- It was noted that current consultations are only informal and the formal consultation is still to be held.
- Some concern was expressed that a formal consultation will just be to ratify a decision already reached. Members thanked Cllr Blaine and noted the information provided.

The Chairman then read out a number of questions received from the SG19 group;

"STC has minuted several issues concerning the A1, apparently without any further feedback. May I ask what further actions will be taken to progress these matters?"

In summary on the main points:

In May, joint action by Richard Fuller MP and Sir Edward Leigh MP to deliver 'The Queen's Highway' and STC's input to that action.

The Clerk commented that there had been no response to the letter issued to Sir Edward Leigh, although as it set out the Council's support for his statement rather than asked specific questions it may not have been felt that a response was needed. The Clerk can send a follow up letter asking if Sir Edward Leigh has received further support to his statement.

In June, to contact Biggleswade Town Council - and other relevant Parish Councils - with a view to working together to lobby for improvements to the A1 and, ultimately, a complete re-routing of it?

The Mayor commented that he had been in discussions with representatives from neighbouring parishes, including Biggleswade and that there was an interest in holding a meeting and discussions about shared matters. This was currently being pursued.

Has STC received the safety data from Martin Fellows as was promised at the meeting in June?

Following approval of the working group's draft consultation, response is to be submitted to Highways England and copied to Richard Fuller MP.

What progress has been made regarding the joint consultation that was to be set up regarding whether to close the gaps or keep them

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	<p>open at the A1/New Road and Beeston junction - action list 82 - 2021/2022; full council meeting on 9th August refers?</p> <p><i>The Clerk commented that this matter was with Councillor Tracey Stock and no further information had been given to the Council at this stage. The Clerk will contact Cllr Stock to ask for an update.</i></p>	
8	<p>Motion – Cllrs N Aldis & R Lock (129-2021/22) Cllr Aldis and Cllr Lock spoke on their motion put forward to Council. Members supported the motion, with the amendment that the Council state it ‘strongly believes’, rather than ‘considers’ the Sandy route to be a core service.</p> <p>RESOLVED that this Council welcomes the new Bus Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council is introduced following the Government’s initiative to encourage greater bus use which was recently approved by the Council’s Executive. That the Town Council recognises the importance of bus services to reduce reliance on car use and to cater for the mobility needs of those sections of the local community who cannot drive or do not have access to a car.</p> <p>That the Council notes that under the Strategy some Sunday services may be re-introduced on core routes. That the Council strongly believes that the Biggleswade to Bedford route via Potton, Sandy, Blunham, Moggerhanger and Cople and via the hospital in Bedford should be designated as a core service under the plan.</p> <p>That the Council instructs the Clerk to contact the Executive Member for Transportation and the Director for Sustainable Services at Central Bedfordshire Council stating that Sandy Town Council fully supports the re-introduction of Sunday bus services as outlined above in this motion. Copies of the communication be sent to the Honourable Richard Fuller MP, Central Bedfordshire Councillors for Sandy and the clerks of neighbouring parishes along the route of the service asking for their support.</p>	Town Clerk
9	<p>Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2021/21 (130-2021/22) A copy of the External Auditor’s Certificate and completed Annual Return for year-end 31st March 2021 was previously circulated to members. Auditor’s comments;</p> <p>On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and</p>	

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	<p>Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.</p> <p>A copy of the audited accounts has been published on the Council's website and Cambridge Road notice board.</p>	
10	<p>Jenkins Leisure Extension Proposal (131-2021/22)</p> <p>Members received and considered a recommendation from the Leisure Services Working Group on Central Bedfordshire Council's proposed extension to the Jenkins Pavilion. The Clerk informed the Council that CBC had been in communication with the Village Hall, who had provided a list of works needed to bring the Village Hall changing rooms back into use. CBC have confirmed that the work to the changing rooms can be accommodated within the project, thereby creating more changing spaces in the immediate area.</p> <p>It was proposed and seconded that the recommendation be amended to state that the Council welcomed the inclusion of upgrades to the Village Hall changing rooms.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Council progresses with Central Bedfordshire Council's proposed extension of the Jenkins Pavilion and welcomes confirmation of the upgrade to the Village Hall changing rooms as part of the overall project and ongoing discussions on future operational arrangements for the facility, along with continued stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Council express a preference for a lease option whereby a single lease covers the existing facility and the extension, providing a joined up operational, management and maintenance arrangement. That this is subject to seeing heads of terms and future discussions on operational arrangements.</p>	
11	<p>Street Audit (132-2021/22)</p> <p>Members received a summary report from Cllr Martin Pettitt on the Councillor Street Audit. It was RESOLVED to note the report and thank Cllr Pettitt for his hard work in reporting and monitoring the highways matters involved. Cllr Pettitt said he would continue to monitor those issues reported and would bring back a future report at a time felt appropriate.</p>	Cllr Pettitt

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<p>12</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Development Plan (133-2021/22) Members received a report from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The Chairman thanked Cllr Gibson and the Steering Group for their continued hard work and the progress they had made to date.</p>	
<p>13</p>	<p>Correspondence (134-2021/22) i) Members received and noted email correspondence about the former Cravin Coffee site at the Sandy train station. It was agreed there was no further action the Council could take in relation to this matter. ii) Members received further correspondence from Central Bedfordshire Council’s Democratic Services Manager on Councillor Numbers and Wards. Members RESOLVED that the Council did not wish to request that a review of removing town wards be considered.</p>	<p>Town Clerk</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>Consultations (135-2021/22) i) Members noted that the public notice from Central Bedfordshire Council on proposed waiting restrictions at Medusa Way and Shannon Court had been dealt with under item 3 of the agenda. ii) Members received and considered a recommended response from the appointed Working Group to the Highways England A1 Consultation. Members commented on the quality of the report and thanked the Working Group for producing a thorough response to the consultation. RESOLVED to accept and support the proposed Highways England A1 consultation response and that it be the formal response of the Council. That copies be sent to Rt Hon Mr R Fuller MP, Central Bedfordshire Council and SG19. The Working Group asked that thanks to the SG19 group be recorded for their provision of safety data and that this thanks be included in any communication to them.</p>	<p>Working Group Town Clerk</p>
<p>15</p>	<p>Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies (136-2021/22) Members received the following reports from representatives on outside bodies: i) Sandy Sports and Leisure Association (SSLA): Members received and noted a report from Cllr Hill. Cllr Hill commented</p>	

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	<p>on the vast amount of work the Mayor has undertaken in completing the refurbishment of the all-weather pitch. There has been a lot of good feedback from users regarding the surface.</p> <p>Cllr Pettitt added that all monies due to the contractor, except a small retention, had now been paid. Player shelters and a drag friction matt were due to be delivered imminently. It has not been possible to hold an official opening event, but it is still hoped this could happen in Spring 2022.</p> <p>The next SSLA Committee meeting will be held on 9th November 2021 and the next AGM during May 2022 (since provisionally set for 17 May). Volunteers to sit on the management committee would be most welcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">ii) Sandy Green Wheel Working Group: Members received and noted a report from Cllr Gibson. Cllr Gibson commented on the positive work which was ongoing on the Green Wheel.iii) Sandy Carnival Committee: Members received and noted a report from Cllr Gibson on the 2022 carnival. Cllr Gibson commented that it was hoped to use Sandye Place for the event and a meeting would be held with CBC in the coming weeks.iv) Members noted a report from Cllr Hill on Friends of Sandy Christmas Lights Committee and the Christmas light switch on event. Cllr Hill commented that he hoped to see Members at the event and that if anyone was able to volunteer to help it would be much appreciated.v) Members noted a report on the Sandy Twinning Association from Cllr Hill.vi) Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity AGM: Members received and noted a report from Cllr Hill. Cllr Hill commented that Sandy had been mentioned at the meeting as a good town to work with and that there was a lot of positive action taking place here. BRCC seems a vibrant organisation and the Council should work with it when the opportunity arises.vii) Members noted that there is no further news on the Talk of the Town (TOTT) minibus, and that the bus is still being used regularly as back-up to the Ivel Sprinter.	
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	<p>The Chairman asked that Cllr Hewitt give a verbal report on an item from the BATPC AGM. Cllr Hewitt reported that the Queen's Green Canopy would be opening for applications soon and was a scheme to see tree planting take place as part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations.</p> <p>Town and parish councils are encouraged to participate and apply for grant funding.</p>	
16	<p>Vulnerable Puffin Training Exercise (137-2021/22) Members received and considered information from Central Bedfordshire Council's Emergency Planning Manager, and also considered whether the Council wishes to appoint a representative to attend Vulnerable Puffin Training. RESOLVED not to send a representative to the training exercise.</p>	
17	<p>News Release (138-2021/22) It was agreed to issue news releases on the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1 Consultation response to be submitted • Concerns over speeding at High Street and Ivel Road Junction • Successful meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner and the issues that arose during discussion. 	Admin
18	<p>Chairman's Items (139-2021-22) The Chairman commented that he hoped to announce details of the 2021 Carol Service soon, following a meeting with the vicar of St Swithun's. The date of the service will be the Saturday 18th December and numbers will be limited due to Covid19 precautions.</p> <p>The Chairman reminded Members of this year's Remembrance Parade which will take place on 14th November.</p> <p>Members were reminded that Councillors could gather in St Swithun's churchyard at 11am on 11th November to mark the national Remembrance Day silence.</p> <p>The Chairman reminded Members that CBC's Pride of Place day was to take place on 6th November and any volunteers to help ensure the Council had a presence during the event would be welcome.</p> <p>The Chairman expressed a formal thanks to the Sandy Centre Group for the work they had done in tidying up the area in front of the town centre sorting office. The Delivery Office Manager had also indicated that he would be speaking with their estates team to get the railings painted and faulty globe lights replaced.</p>	

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19	Mayoral Engagements (140-2021-22) Members noted a list of recent engagements undertaken by the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor.	
20	Date of Next Meeting (141-2021/22) Meeting of Full Council – Monday 13 th December 2021.	