

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Services and Environment Committee of Sandy Town Council held virtually via Zoom on Monday 5th October 2020 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, A M Hill, T Knagg, C Osborne, M Scott, S Sutton (Chair)

Absent: N Thompson

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

Action

- 1 **Apologies for absence (32-2020/21)**
No apologies had been received. Admin
- 2 **Declarations of Interest (33-2020/21)**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 **Minutes of Previous Meeting (34-2020/21)**
RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on Monday 24th August 2020 as a correct record of proceedings. Admin
- 4 **Public Participation Session (35-2020/21)**
There were no members of the public present, but a Member and the Clerk had questions to raise and the Chairman agreed they may raise their questions during agenda item 12.
- 5 **Action List (36-2020/21)**
Members received the action list.

Allotments & Community Orchard, Beeston: A Member asked about the timescale for the Lease. The Clerk informed Members that different CBC staff were looking at the separate matters which made a timescale for the complete housing project difficult to obtain. The Clerk would ask the solicitors to give an estimate on the timing of the lease for the community land. The Chair reminded the Clerk that a site visit would need to be undertaken as soon as possible.

Outdoor Gym Equipment Installation: The Clerk informed Members that the equipment should be installed Tuesday or Wednesday this week and would be fenced in until the end of the week. The contractors would have an Open Day regarding the equipment use.

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He also reported that there had been positive feedback on the council's Facebook page.

The Meadow Site Visit (former Days Inn Site): The Clerk reported that several more councillors wished to participate in a site visit but that virtual visits may now be offered by CBC.

The action list was noted.

6 **SID Locations (37-2020/21)**

The Clerk reported that the response from the Police was supportive and they agreed with the council's siting suggestions and will provide some additional recommendations. CBC stated they were developing a policy on the use of such signage and would revert back to the Clerk in October.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the committee approve the locations of the sign and that the Clerk work with Central Bedfordshire Council to select appropriate posts and arrange installation and that the sign be left in each of the locations for a period of three weeks, with location data reported to the CSE committee at the earliest meeting following that three-week period.

7 **Environmental Plan (38-2020/21)**

Members received and considered the latest version of the Environmental Plan following further development by a working group of Members.

After discussion the following amendments were suggested:

- To add that the Woodland Trust supply free saplings
- The roads and avenues need replacement trees (flowering or fruit)
- Turn lights off or invest in lights that automatically turn off in the council's buildings
- Replace existing vehicles with electric or hybrid vehicles sooner
- Charging point for any future electric council vehicles would need to be included
- Work with the Wilding project in the East
- Involve the MP on matters to do with pollution on the A1
- Replacement of trees felled by CBC to be included
- Recycling of waste from litter bins
- Put solar panels on the depot building
- Review the plan regularly

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It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to accept the Environmental Plan with the suggested amendments added.

Working
Group

8 **Supporting Town Centres (39-2020/21)**

(i) Members considered section 1 of a communication received from CBC and what actions could be taken to help support the town centre.

During discussion the following suggestions were put forward:

- Landlords should reduce their rents for businesses/shops in the town centre to keep them open. Making contact with landlords has always been difficult.
- Sandye Place and its use is crucial to regenerating the town centre.
- The CBC High Street survey needs to be a shorter process.
- Town centre buildings need to be marketed properly.
- Buildings should be a mixture of retail, shared office space and residential. In the future the use of buildings may need to change from traditional retail functions.
- Market Square ideal of events and socialising i.e. more seating outside cafes and eateries. Could the square be part pedestrianised to support greater use?
- Repair shop fronts – more inviting. A scheme similar to CBC's previous High Street Regeneration Scheme.
- Free Wi-fi in the square.
- Co-op car park be utilised better, especially if parking were to be lost by trying to create more pedestrianisation.
- STC could investigate renting a vacant shop for independent traders to use as a mini-market to support smaller businesses. Could CBC support such a scheme?
- Contact Biggleswade Town Council who have a Town Centre Manager and ask for advice and perhaps a shared service or secondment.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Clerk devise a letter incorporating all suggestions ready for the point at which CBC contact the Council to discuss the matter further.

Town Clerk

(ii) Members considered a request that the council look to support the Town Centre via the purchase and display of 'Buy Local' banners.

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It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** that banners be purchased now and that an application for a grant towards the purchase be made from the Ward Councillors fund.

Admin

9 **Christmas Lights (40-2020/21)**

The Clerk gave a verbal report and informed Members that the contractor had already begun installing Christmas lights throughout the country and Sandy's would be installed on the 12th October 2020. This was due to COVID19 and making sure the lights installation was not impacted by delays or restrictions closer to Christmas. This information would be put on the council's website and Facebook page.

Admin

10 **Events Working Group (41-2020/21)**

Members received notes from a meeting of the Events Working Group.

Cllr Hill reported that The Pantaloons Theatre productions on Beeston Green had been very successful and the group were looking to attend next year.

Cllr Osborne reported that there would be a Christmas Tree Festival outside St Swithuns' church and painted pallets would be decorated as trees.

11 **Remembrance Day 2020 (42-2020/21)**

Members received and considered a report on Remembrance Day 2020. Due to COVID19, towns were having to take the decision to cancel Remembrance Day parades and services. Due to the rule of six, many Councils are also limiting the number of people attending wreath laying. Members felt that the date must still be marked, and a slimmed down version of the event should go ahead.

After discussion it was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that an alternative approach, based on guidance available at the time of writing the report, would be that the road closure of Bedford Road is not used, and that a small act of remembrance be carried out based on the below:

- Wreath Layers/Invited dignitaries to be within Bedford Road Rec.
- Limited number of wreath layers
- Rev Davies and RBL rep to be at Memorial
- Bugle player present based at Memorial
- Area of Bedford Road Rec. to be closed off to allow distancing of those present.

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- One-way system in place.
- Footpath in front of war memorial to be closed to allow for wreath layers to safely walk to memorial, lay wreath and return to the park.
- Residents be informed that a parade cannot be held this year, but that a small act of remembrance will be held and live streamed to the Council's Facebook page.
- Residents encouraged to observe an act of remembrance from their homes, with a message of staying safe at what continues to be an uncertain time.
- Residents encouraged to take part in the window poppy displays at home.
- Council to run lamppost poppies again and give residents a place to record messages of remembrance on our website.
- On 11th November 2020 representatives of the Council gather to observe the national silence.

12 **Councillor Surgeries (43-2020/21)**

Members received and noted a report on a Councillor surgery held on the 26th September 2020.

A Member raised the question on behalf of a resident regarding potholes and the public footpaths in Windsor Way being in urgent need of repair. Another Member said that a resident had reported the same in Ivel Road, outside the Fire Station, Station Road, Kings Road and Carter Street to be added to the list. The Clerk thought that CBC had intended to do repair work in the lockdown.

The Clerk raised a question on behalf of a resident regarding the gap at the junction of New Road and the A1 (turning right onto the north carriageway) to be closed, as it was dangerous. He said it would need the council's support. Another Member said that that would mean the only entrance into Sandy was via Bedford Road.

The Clerk informed Members that the question of excess litter had been reported and CBC would be talking to the contractor; the footpath problem had also been reported and Cllr Stock was chasing up a meeting with CBC regarding the Sandye Place site; the speed cameras on the A1 are now in use.

Cllr Stock

He also asked for councillors to volunteer for the next surgery in October. It was discussed that a surgery held at the Community Stand was preferable and if it was cold it could be reduced to an hour or alternatively, it could be held in the council chamber but an appointment system would need to be set up to incorporate social distancing.

Councillors

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13 Chairman's Items (44-2020/21)

There were no Chairman's items.

14 Date of next meeting (45-2020/21)

The date of the next Committee meeting is 16th November 2020.