

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee of Sandy Town Council which was held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 12 June 2017 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, T Cole, M Hill, W Jackson, C Osborne, M Pettitt and P Sharman.

In attendance: Mr C Robson (Town Clerk)

Actions

1 Apologies from the Committee Chairman (1-2017/18)

Members received an apology from the Committee Chairman and noted that the Mayor would Chair the meeting until a Vice Chairman was elected.

2 Apologies for absence (2-2017/18)

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr D Sharman.

3 Declarations of interest (3-2017/18)

- i) Declarable pecuniary interests – None
- ii) Non pecuniary interests – None

4 Election of Vice Chairman (4-2017/18)

It was proposed and seconded that Cllr T Cole be appointed as the Vice Chair of the committee.

RESOLVED that Cllr Cole be appointed Vice Chair of the Policy, Finance and Resources committee for the 2017/18 municipal year.

The Mayor vacated the Chair and Cllr Cole took over as Chair of the committee meeting.

5 Public Participation Session (5-2017/18)

No members of the public were present and no questions had been received in advance of the meeting.

6 Minutes of previous meeting (6-2017/18)

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 8 May 2017 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

7 Financial Reports (7-2017/18)

- i) A balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for the year to 30th April 2017 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

It was agreed that Appendix I and II be considered together, as

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appendix II contained answers to questions which may arise during appendix I.

Members scrutinised the financial report and made the following comments:

401-4003, National Insurance contributions seem low. The Clerk was asked to look into why this was and provide an explanation.

403-4011, (General Rates) is underspent by 25%. It was confirmed that no further rates charges were expected and this represented a saving for the financial year.

500-1201, (Rent Received) shows an unidentified figure of £500 income. This is income generated from the fun fair held on The Pinnacle land.

501-4046,4047,4048 (Cricket and Bowls budgets) show a high expenditure for month one. It was queried whether the budget is sufficient. The Clerk explained that the clubs had needed to buy a lot of consumables at this time of year for pitch maintenance. The budgets are linked to agreements with the clubs and would only ever be increased in line with those agreements.

602-4042 (Democratic and Civic Costs, Equipment Maintenance). 68% of the budget has been spent in month one. The Clerk explained that this was due to the relocation of a defibrillator and the associated costs in contracting electricity and placing signage.

RESOLVED to note and approve the report.

- ii) Members received and reviewed a budget overview report in conjunction with appendix I.

RESOLVED to receive and note the report.

- iii) Members scrutinised a schedule of payments made since the previous meeting.

A Member queried the entry 'ER's Superannuation'. The Clerk explained this was the monthly salary payment, including pension payments, made by the Council.

The Clerk pointed out that there were two payments made in respect of the Story in Stone mosaic project. Reimbursement for these costs would be paid by CBC.

Town Clerk

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RESOLVED to approve the schedule of payments.

iv) Bank reconciliations and statements.

RESOLVED that Cllr Cole scrutinise the bank reconciliations and statements and sign these as approved at the end of the meeting.

Cllr T Cole

8 Action List (8-2017/18)

Members received the Action List and updates from the Clerk.

The Clerk confirmed that the office would be looking at the current phone agreement and obtaining prices for a new contract.

It was noted that the Cemetery working group would meet to consider quotes for demolition of the depot site. The Clerk confirmed he had requested a separate quote for the removal of congregate surfacing. If the archaeologist does not need to excavate that section, it could be left in place for the new depot build.

It was noted that the complaints policy could be removed from the action list as this had been completed.

Admin

A Member queried why the council needed a memorial policy. The Clerk explained there was some confusion over ownership and maintenance of memorial benches and a policy would provide clarity. It would also allow the council to consider how and where new memorials could be placed in Sandy.

9 Grant Application (9-2017/18)

Members received and considered a grant application from Magpas Air Ambulance. The application was for £500 to purchase a sofa for a community hub area to be included in the new Magpas shop in Sandy.

A Member commented that they could not see the link between the air ambulance and the proposed community hub. It was also stated that the organisation was substantial with significant funding from the lottery and national organisations.

It is proposed that the shop will have an area set aside for a community hub. Members noted that the proposed hub area was very small. It was also noted that some of the groups it was suggested may use the hub already used the library.

Members commented that £500 seemed a high amount for a sofa.

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It was proposed and seconded that a representative attend a future council meeting to give a presentation to Members on the charity and the need for the funding.

A Member spoke to say that the Council should support the charity. It will be filling a long time vacant unit in the town, providing a paid employment position and volunteer positions. A Member agreed that he would like to see the Council support the organisation and the new hub.

A Member stated that he did not feel the case had been made considering the pressure the council's grant budget is currently under.

An amendment was proposed and seconded that the Council award a grant of £150 to the charity.

RESOLVED to provide a grant of £150 to the Magpas Air Ambulance.

Admin

A Member asked that the Council be kept informed of the Charities progress.

10 Defibrillator Training (10 -2017/18)

Members received a report from the Town Clerk on holding defibrillator training sessions in Sandy.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendations within the report be resolved.

A Member queried whether the Council needed to hold two training sessions. If the Community Heartbeat Trust provide the training, up to 50 people can attend one session. It was questioned whether the Council would attract more than 50 people to a session.

Members discussed the locations proposed and agreed that the Jenkins Pavilion would be the most suitable location.

A Member commented that if the first session was successful a second could always be arranged. Members asked that the public book on to the sessions so the Council could gauge interest. Members agreed that a form should be drawn up for the public to register interest.

A Member proposed an amendment to the proposal, that the Council hold one training session and that this is at the Jenkins Pavilion.

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Members agreed that September was a suitable time to hold the session.

RESOLVED that the Council holds one training session at the Jenkins Pavilion.

Admin

RESOLVED that the Council uses the Community Heartbeat Trust to provide the training at a cost of £175 and that this is taken from the Council's revenue budget.

Town Clerk

Members asked that the session be advertised via social media as well as the paper and website. Sports clubs should also be written to.

11 Jenkins Pavilion Agreement (11 -2017/18)

Members received a copy of the draft agreement for management of the Jenkins Pavilion.

A Member asked what is covered by the £15,000 management fee paid to SLL and whether the Council got value for money. The Clerk stated that the 2016/17 running costs for the Jenkins had been approx. £19,000, however this did not include rates which may add another £2,000. The Clerk also informed members that this may not be a true reflection as utility costs during the year were low, due to higher costs incurred the previous year and possible refunds/offset.

A Member noted that the contract contained a lot of actions for SLL to carry out. To date these had not been done, including monthly usage reports and a football development plan. If the contract is to be agreed SLL must adhere to the points in the contract.

Members agreed that 10.vi would be impossible for the Council to do and that this should be a duty of SLL, not STC.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council approve the contract between STC, CBC and SLL for the management of the Jenkins Pavilion, subject to changing 10.vi of the contract. That the contract be reviewed annually.

12 Drone Policy (12 -2017/18)

It was proposed and seconded that the Council adopt the policy.

A member queried what the Council could do if someone was found

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flying a drone on Council land. The Chairman explained that without a byelaw in place there was limited action the Council could carry out.

A Member asked that UAV, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, be defined in the policy.

A Member stated that section 1.2 was unnecessary as it was repeated in 1.3.

RESOLVED to adopt the Drone Policy subject to the removal of section 1.2. The policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Admin

13 Social Media Policy (13-2017/18)

Members received and considered a draft social media policy.

The Chairman stated she had reviewed the document and pulled out some typos and spelling mistakes. Overall the policy was detailed, well researched and covered all the bases.

A Member queried the question marks against two of the points in 6.2. The Clerk stated he was looking for Members clarification on these points. Members agreed that the first point should be changed to:

'Post notices and links to minutes of meetings'

Members agreed that section 6.1 should state that 3 people will be nominated as editors and moderators. This would include one councillor and two members of staff.

A Member stated that the policy needed to be reviewed regularly. It was agreed that the policy should be reviewed annually, at least initially.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to adopt the proposed social media policy subject to amendments to section 6.2.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that one councillor and two members of staff are appointed as editors and moderators of the proposed Facebook page.

14 Freedom of Information Act 2000 model publication scheme (14-2017/18)

Members reviewed the model publication scheme.

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A member queried whether the information detailed was easy for staff to get or would it be time consuming. The Clerk said that most of the information already existed and was on the website or could be easily sought.

A Member noted page 49 needed to be changed from 'Parish Clerk' to 'Town Clerk'.

Class 7 on pages 5 & 6 had hard copies listed as FREE. It was agreed that the same charge should apply that was set against other hard copy information.

A Member stated that the Council had agreed a £5 administration fee for copying work that exceeded a certain level. This should be included in the model publication scheme.

A Member asked that the office ensure that a review date is listed on the policies for Members information. It was requested that Members be provided with a list of all policies which detailed review dates.

RESOLVED to re-adopt the Model Publication Scheme, subject to the amendments detailed above.

Admin

15 Customer Care and Service Standards Policy (15-2017/18)

A Member stated that there were some positive points within the document and that overall it was a good policy which the Council should work to. Members agreed that the policy should be reviewed every four years.

RESOLVED that the policy be readopted and that it is reviewed in June 2021.

Admin

16 Minutes Policy (16-2017/18)

Members received and reviewed the policy.

Members briefly discussed the style of minutes and considered whether these should be made shorter. Members agreed that the minutes were a good balance and provided detail which help the public understand the decisions reached.

RESOLVED to re-adopt the minutes policy.

Admin

17 Chairman's Items (17-2017/18)

There were no Chairman's Items.

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18 Date of next meeting (18-2017/18)

It was noted that the date of the next committee meeting will be 31 July 2017.