

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Sandy Town Council held virtually via Zoom on Monday 14th June 2021 at 6.45pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, J Hewitt, A M Hill, W Jackson, T Knagg (joined the meeting midway through Item 4), C Osborne, M Pettitt (Chair), M Scott, P Sharman and S Sutton

Absent: Cllrs R Lock, S Paterson, N Thompson

In attendance: CBC Cllrs C Maudlin and T Stock, Mr C Robson (Clerk), Anne Elliott-Flockhart (Administrator) and one member of the public.

Before opening the meeting Cllr M Pettitt, Chairman of Sandy Town Council informed members of the sad passing a week earlier of Paul Fuller, Bedfordshire's Chief Fire Officer. Paul Fuller was a Fire Officer all his working life, joining the service in 1978 and becoming Chief Fire Officer here in Bedfordshire in 2002. The Chairman reminded members that Paul Fuller came to Sandy often – he was a passionate advocate for our Fire Cadet Scheme and by his hard work and commitment, made a positive contribution to the communities he served and he would be sadly missed. Cllr Pettitt invited those present to observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect and in Paul Fuller's memory.

Action

1 Apologies for Absence (41 -2021/2022)

Apologies had been received from Cllrs R Lock, S Paterson and N Thompson.

Admin

2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (42-2021/22)

There were none.

3 Public Participation Session (43-2021/22)

There was one member of the public present.

4 Planning Applications (44-2021/22)

The Council considered the following planning applications which were for 6 or more dwellings;

28.05.21	CB/19/04298/OUT Land at 91 London Road, Sandy, SG19 1DH	Outline application: for the erection of 9 dwellings following demolition of existing house. All matters reserved except access. Near neighbours 67,91,93,94,98,100, 102,104,106,108 London Road. 36 Carter Street, Sandy notified.
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The agent for this application, Mr David Levett gave some background on the application and addressed a number of anticipated concerns. He informed the Council that the applicant had worked with Highways England to address concerns of site access and egress. As a result of changes made to the application, Highways England have removed their objection to the site. The Highways England report has not yet been received by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and is not yet on their website. The applicant has asked CBC to try and speed the matter up. The Chairman of the meeting commented that sight of this report would have helped Members of STC in their deliberations.

Members discussed the application at length and raised a number of concerns around the traffic speed and flow of the A1 making the site unsuitable and access unsafe. Further concerns were raised around connectivity to the town and noise and pollution resulting from the A1. A Councillor commented that the report submitted by the applicant had many errors in it. Members acknowledged that Highways England may have changed their view on the application but that the Council still felt access and egress to be unsafe and should voice that concern.

RESOLVED to object to this application on the grounds of highway safety, with the deceleration and acceleration lanes for access to this site too short and unsafe. The council maintains its concern regarding noise and pollution on this site as a result of its proximity to the A1.

Mr Levett left the meeting.

Cllr T Knagg joined the meeting.

28.05.21	CB/21/02363/FULL 13-16A Market Square, Sandy, SG19 1HU	Erection of an additional storey at second floor to create 9 dwellings & external alterations. Near neighbours 1,2,3,4,10,14,15 Pleasant Place. 10,11 Downing Court. 12a, 13,14,15,16,17,23,24,26,27,28,31 Market Square, Sandy notified.
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Members discussed the application and commented that whilst they did not object to the overall application they were deeply concerned regarding the lack of parking. It is likely that there could be at least one vehicle per flat, possibly more if flats are occupied by couples.

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This will have a large impact on town centre parking, which should be kept available for visitors using town centre services.

Councillors also expressed concern over the lack of amenity space available to residents of the proposed flats. The events over the last year have emphasised how important amenity space is.

A Member raised concern over the proposed height of the building and said it was not in keeping with the town centre. It was suggested that it should not be permitted to be higher than Magnolia House. Some members spoke critically about the look of the proposed adapted building, commenting that it was not in keeping with the street scene or appropriate for the town centre.

A Member had queried fire safety management to be included within the building. A Member stated that this fell under building regulation control, not planning.

RESOLVED to not object to the application, but that the Council would like to see a planning condition ensuring that the applicants establish a solution to a parking plan before any building work takes place. That the Council is concerned about the lack of amenity space for residents, especially after what the country has experienced during lockdown. That the Council feels that the building will be out of keeping with the street scene and an alternative design should be considered.

5 Date of next meeting (45-2021/22)

The Chairman informed Members that the date of the next Full Council meeting was scheduled for 28th June 2021. The Council will need to meet in person to ensure a legal meeting is held to approve the 2020/21 accounts and external audit documents. The Chamber is not big enough for the Council to hold a face-to-face meeting and observe social distancing. Alternative venues are being sought.