

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Services and Environment Committee of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10, Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 14 April 2014 commencing at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllrs N Aldis (Chairman), J Ali, C Butterfield, W Jackson, M Runchman, R Smith and S Sutton

Absent: S Walsh

In attendance: Cllr K Sharp, three members of the public and the Town Clerk.

Action

1 Apologies for absence (01-14/15)

Cllr Jackson had submitted apologies for his anticipated late arrival at the meeting due to an earlier commitment.

Admin

2 Declarations of interest (02-14/15)

- i) Declarable Pecuniary Interests –None
- ii) Other Interests – None

3 Minutes of previous meeting (03-14/15)

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on Monday 10 March 2014 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.
(Cllr Smith joined the meeting.)

Admin

4 Correspondence from Sandy Cricket Club (04-14/15)

A member of the community asked questions of the committee:
Had the council only recently sent a copy of the cricket club lease to its legal advisors and why had it not been sent earlier? When had the Town Council received a realistic forecast of how much the legal work was to cost (as it had previously asked?) What was this? Had it been made known to Council? Were there unlimited funds for this legal work?

The Chairman advised that answers to the questions would be provided in writing. There was no requirement for the council to answer questions then and there.

Members noted the letter received from Sandy Cricket Club and received an oral report from the Clerk regarding recent advice received from the council's legal advisers. This was that the 2004 lease was not likely to be a valid lease as it did not grant exclusive

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possession of the premises and therefore the Cricket Club may already have been in occupation of the premises on the basis of a licence. The Pavilion the club was occupying was not the same as that which existed in 2004. The legal position was not as simple as the Cricket Club stating they were in occupation under the 2004 document as they did in their letter. The legal position was complex and in order to avoid both parties expending substantial sums on legal fees to clarify the exact position it would be better to negotiate a new agreement on the basis of the licence already sent to them. If the Club was not prepared to do this the Council should instruct its solicitors to further investigate bringing the current arrangements to an end. Members discussed the position.

RESOLVED to instruct the Town Clerk to write to the officials of the Cricket Club reiterating the Council's position that it wished to negotiate with representatives on the basis of a licence to occupy the Jenkins Pavilion and advising that any alternative course of action would cause considerable expense to both the council and the club which the council was keen to avoid.

5 **Potton Road cemetery project and redevelopment of depot at Stratford Road (05-14/15)**

A report from the Town Clerk on progress with the extension of the cemetery at Potton Road and the implications for the depot at Stratford Road and the storage of Town Council equipment, vehicles and location of mess room had been circulated prior to the meeting and this was discussed. Members considered the options of relocating the depot wholly or partly to Sunderland Road Recreation Ground, the Town Centre Car Park or to an industrial unit on Sunderland Road. The proportion of the site to be used for interment of cremated remains and the proportion to be used for interment of bodies was considered. (Cllr Jackson joined the meeting.)

It was felt that decisions about the design of the cemetery should be deferred pending a decision about the future of the depot. The future use of the chapel and tool shed were discussed.

RESOLVED to set up a working group of 5 members of council to be drawn from the whole council (not only Community Services and Environment Committee) to work on producing proposals for redevelopment of the depot facilities and report back to the next meeting of CS&E committee or PF&R committee whichever was more expedient. The terms of reference of the group would be:

- To make recommendations about the potential replacement of facilities currently provided at Stratford Road and location of these
- To consider construction of new buildings and rental of premises (on a short and long term basis)

All
Members

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- To consider the storage needs of the council and the proximity of equipment to the areas where council staff worked most frequently

The committee noted that Cllr Scott had already expressed interest in joining this group.

Discussion continued on the future use of the cemetery chapel, the introduction of electricity and its use as a place of remembrance as well as a venue for services. The use of columbaria, walls, trees, paths, plaques, planting and hedging and provision of parking were also considered.

The Clerk reported that the boundary fence between the cemetery and the landowner to the west would be clarified. Archaeological work had been authorised on the site to document any disturbance to archaeological remains in the anti-vehicular trenches, further work would take place as a condition of planning. The expense of community archaeology was noted and the clerk reported on informal conversations which had been held with CBC's archaeology team about the options for community involvement which could be considered in due course. It was noted that the last structural survey on the cemetery chapel had been conducted in the 1980s.

RESOLVED to seek a condition survey of the chapel and the tool shed within the existing cemetery.

6 **Report on Workshop with Highways Agency (06 – 14/15)**

RESOLVED to vary the order of the agenda and take the highways item next.

The Town Mayor reported on a workshop meeting held with officers of CBC and the Highways Agency minutes of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Members asked Cllr Aldis in his capacity as Ward member for Central Bedfordshire Council for clarification of the position with regard to the planned weight restriction on St Neots Road and for copies of the traffic survey conducted by CBC on St Neots Road including number and percentages of HGVs.

RESOLVED to note the minutes of a meeting held with representatives of Central Bedfordshire Council and the Highways Agency on 19 March 2014.

Admin

7 **St Swithuns Closed Churchyard (07-14/15)**

Correspondence received on behalf of St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance Property Committee regarding Sandy Rectory including a request for contribution to repairs to boundary walls has been reported to members in a written report with advice from the clerk

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which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Cllr Jackson recalled that on a previous occasion (1995) the Diocese of St Albans had paid for repairs to the wall. Members noted that the repairs might have become necessary because of the unrestricted growth of ivy on the rectory side of the wall and the eventual removal of this. Whilst accepting the Clerk's advice that the council had a statutory responsibility for repair of the boundary walls of the closed churchyard, members were inclined to be cautious in agreeing to contribute to repairs without a full understanding of the maintenance work needed.

RESOLVED to instruct the Town Clerk to ask the Diocesan surveyor for more information about the work needed.

Town Clerk

8 Play Equipment (08- 14/15)

A report on the play equipment provided at different play areas within Sandy and Beeston had been prepared by the Deputy Clerk prior to his leaving the council's employment and circulated to members. The report was discussed in some detail. Members noted the need for long term financial planning for replacement of multi-play units at Bedford Road and Sunderland Road play areas and replacement of some safety surfacing. The current revenue budget provided sufficient for essential repairs only and members agreed that an earmarked reserve should be considered for 2015/16 and the report and this proposal would be passed on to PF&R committee.

Town Clerk
PF&R

RESOLVED to note the report and to ask the Deputy Clerk to prepare a prioritised list of essential repairs including the scrambler net and rusted cylinder at Bedford Road.

Deputy Clerk

RESOLVED to seek further quotations for replacement of the gates at Fallowfield.

Deputy Clerk

9 Community Engagement (09-14/15)

The Town Mayor spoke briefly about arrangements for the Annual Town Meeting and a written report from the Town Clerk on arrangements for the annual report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Admin

RESOLVED to note these reports.

RESOLVED to approve the panel of Cllrs Sutton (Town Mayor), Jackson (Deputy Mayor) and Pettitt to decide the Mayor's Awards for 2013/14 as the immediate former Mayor who would usually act as a judge had left the council.

Cllrs
Sutton,
Jackson
and
Pettitt

The Town Mayor reminded members to make nominations for the Mayor's awards (which included a group award for the first time) and to encourage attendance at the annual town meeting.

All members

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