

# Sandy Town Council

## Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, A M Hill, W Jackson, C Osborne, M Scott (Mayor), P Sharman and J Sparrow

**Absent:** Cllrs T Cole, T Knagg, G Leach, M Pettitt (Deputy Mayor), S Sutton, N Thompson and CBC Cllr T Stock

**In attendance:** Mr C Robson (Clerk), Mrs C Baker-Smith (Admin Team Leader), CBC Cllrs C Maudlin and P Smith, twelve members of the public and three representatives from Grand Union Housing

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence (181-2018/2019)</b> Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs T Cole, T Knagg, M Pettitt (Deputy Mayor), S Sutton, N Thompson and CBC Cllr T Stock.	Admin
<b>2</b>	<b>Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (182-2018/2019)</b> i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i> - None ii) <i>Non-Pecuniary Interests</i> – Cllr Osborne declared an interest in Item 12 as he is a church warden and Vice Chairman of the Parochial Council. iii) <i>Dispensations</i> – None	
<b>3</b>	<b>Public Participation Session (183-2018/2019)</b> A Member raised a question on behalf of the residents of the St Swithun’s way area regarding parking issues. A letter signed by residents was presented asking that the Town Council support residents in getting action. They cited commuter parking, blocking their driveways, hindering emergency vehicles, and stopping those arriving for social, medical or business appointments from being able to park near their houses. The Mayor said that this was a Highways Department matter; it would be brought up with CBC councilors and could be considered by the new Council’s Community Services Committee.  Various members of the public wished to speak regarding the planning application for The Sidings, land east of Sandy Station. These questions would be taken at Item 7 which would now be heard before Item 6 on the agenda due to the number of people wishing to speak.	Town Clerk

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## 4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meetings (184-2018/2019)

### **RESOLVED** to:

Receive the Minutes of the Meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

## 5 Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (185-2018/2019)

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:

- i) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Development Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

**RESOLVED** to approve that the Town Council adopt the Removable Media Policy subject to the following amendments:

- Change the word 'Authority' to 'Council' in section 1.2
- Correction of a spelling mistake in section 1.3
- Inclusion of Council's anti-virus protection to protect against incoming data
- Inclusion of password protected memory sticks and CD's

- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

**RESOLVED** that the Council support the installation of a bus shelter on London Road and make an application to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of such a shelter.

The recommendation from the Community Services and Environment Committee that the Royal Mail be permitted to purchase 10 car park cards for use by Royal Mail employees working at the Sandy depot was not supported and it was **RESOLVED** that no cards would be sold to the Royal Mail as this would cause loss of parking spaces for shoppers in the town.

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**RESOLVED** that Heads of Terms for community land at Beeston be approved by Council subject to the following amendments/clarifications:

- The notice period be extended to 24 months.
- Rent be listed with a peppercorn amount.
- Clarification on the limit of no more than five years underlet without permission from Central Bedfordshire Council.
- Clarification be sought on what Central Bedfordshire Council define as someone who is 'not of financial standing acceptable to the landlord' and how this will be decided.

A Member said that under 5iii) Community Services and Environment Committee Minutes held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, the French Market had been cancelled and wished to record the disappointment of Members that this event was not now taking place, after all the hard work and effort of the Council officers to arrange such an event, due to public interest in having specialised markets. The Clerk also confirmed that a market to replace the cancelled event had also cancelled due to a clash with another local event.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that Members' disappointment be recorded.

A Member said that the Streat Feast held on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019 had been well attended. The Mayor congratulated the organisers on a good turnout. Another Member said that when arranging future events, other scheduled local events be taken into consideration.

- iv) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The Chair reported that the new recruits to the teams had settled in well.

## **7 CB/19/00736/FULL The Sidings, Land East of Sandy Railway Station, Stratford Road, Sandy SG19 2AA (186-2018/2019)**

Several members of the public wished to speak on the above planning application and various points were raised in objection to the application. Points raised by Members of the public speaking on the matter included;

The proposed development is outside the settlement area.

Stratford Road is a historic road which includes many historic homes. The area is close to the RSPB site and is a valued leisure area which attracts tourists, especially given the link to Biggleswade

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Common. The approval of 45 homes in this rural setting would change the feel of the whole area and negatively impact on the local character. The proposed development is suited to a more urban environment than the Stratford Road area.

The height of the properties is unsuitable for the area and will result in a loss of privacy for existing residents of Stratford Road who share a boundary with the site. The buildings proposed are taller than the highest tree and an onion barn of a neighbouring property.

Concerns were raised over the level of noise from the trainline and how this would impact the new development.

Questions were raised over how foul sewage from 45 homes will be managed without connection to the mains sewer. All houses on Stratford Road are reliant on cess pits.

A resident pointed out that British Rail needed access via the same entrance road and there were no details on how this would be managed, and the access kept free.

A resident pointed out the route of the East West Rail link was nowhere near decided and this development could impact on proposed routes.

A resident who used to own the land in question spoke to provide the meeting with some additional information. He stated that the land had been sold for commercial use in 2018 and planners had previously said that only temporary buildings would be approved on the site. There is a shared right of access with British Rail and covenants linked to the land.

Access and egress would cause problems due to the unsuitability of Stratford Road and the junction with the B1042 in taking the level of additional traffic linked to 45 new homes. The junction is already dangerous, with cars stopping to drop people off at the train station. The additional traffic movements which would result from the development would compound this danger.

The number of visitor spaces proposed as part of the development is inadequate and would lead to Stratford Road being used for parking. Stratford Road is already congested with parked cars from the cemetery.

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The Chairman of the Development Scrutiny committee informed the meeting that Members had attended a visit to the site and had spoken with a neighbour on that visit.

A Member said that it was an inappropriate development and no development should be permitted on this site until the route of the EWR line had been finalised. Another Member said that the development could impact two of the EWR route options.

Another Member said that there were three good reasons to object: the rural nature of the road, amenities for residents, and the highways aspect with potentially up to 90 cars coming out of the development creating a dangerous situation.

CBC Cllr Smith said that he could only comment as a local ward Councillor and the application would be judged under the National Planning Framework. He said that this application had some similarities to an application on the north of Sunderland Road which had been refused in part due to its conflict with CBC's Local Plan and the EWR options, and this application would be going to appeal in October 2019. He said that being outside the settlement envelope did not carry much weight but that the access and highway issues would. Another application close to a rail line within Central Bedfordshire was refused because of the overbearing height issues. It was noted that the developer had put in a full application, not an outline one, and the height and access issues would be decided at the full application meeting.

The number of parking spaces allowed for in the application falls short of Central Bedfordshire Council's policy on having one parking bay per bedroom. Cllr Smith reminded the meeting that although this was a CBC policy it was not part of the National Planning Framework.

A Member tabled a list which included 'for and against' points regarding the application. Another Member said that the archaeology was important, crossing the road was dangerous for children going to school as the site had very poor pedestrian access.

Another Member asked if EWR knew about the application, CBC Cllr Maudlin said that they were aware of it. CBC Cllr Smith said the application would be taken on its own merits, not what might happen in the future.

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It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to object to the planning application on the following grounds;

- The site is outside the settlement envelope
- The site is not in CBC's Local Plan
- Impact on East West Rail route options
- Poor access to and from the site, including issues with crossing over Stratford Road and the dangerous connection with the B1042
- Poor pedestrian access to and from the site
- Overbearing nature of development in a rural setting
- Concerns over foul sewage management
- Lack of sufficient parking spaces
- Concerns around heritage in view of previous archaeological finds at nearby sites

It was **RESOLVED** to send a copy of the Minutes to the East West Rail Company in light of the impact approval of this development could have on two of the potential East West Rail routes.

The Mayor asked that the minutes of this item be circulated to all Members to ensure points raised were sufficiently covered.

## **6 Re-development of Quince Court (187-2018/2019)**

Members received a presentation from Grand Union Housing representatives.

Grand Union Housing has been in operation for 25 years. Grand Union are proposing to carry out redevelopment work at Quince Court which would include adding 25 new flats to the existing 30 and other areas such as the lounge, laundry, dining room and garden being refurbished with new lifts also being included. The 25 new flats would be developed on the existing car park, which is under-used and joined to the main block by walkways. There would be 20 car parking spaces added along Medusa Way.

A Member asked if this would affect the present communal area which was widely used. It was explained that the present one would be demolished and a new, larger one built. The logistics of how this would work still needed to be agreed to ensure residents had leisure space during the works.

A Member asked if the bungalow on Medusa Way would be demolished to make way for the new parking. It was explained that the parking would only be on Quince Court land.

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A Member asked if the existing flat occupants would be moving to the new flat. It was explained that the existing flat occupants would stay in their present flats and this was a new scheme which would be open to over 55's.

The representatives from GUH said they would be asking for tenders from builders who had built this type of building before. The timescale for the scheme would be just over 1 year.

A CBC councillor asked if the new flats would be overlooking Balmoral Close. It was explained that the frontages of the flats would be facing the close. The property would be walled, with a gated entrance and 1.8 mtr fence for security.

The Mayor thanked Grand Union Housing for the proposed work, which Members felt would be an improvement for residents. He also thanked the three representatives for presenting the plans to the Council.

## **8 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Council (188-2018/2019)**

Cllr Maudlin said that it had been a pleasure working with the Town Council over the past four years.

Cllr Smith updated Members regarding Sandye Place Academy saying that the lease was still in the hands of DfE but the school was authorised to talk to CBC councillors about usage after the closure. A Member asked who will fund the school and Cllr Smith said the DfE would give the Trust funds until December to wind the school down. A Member asked if the Town Council could be involved in the use of the site? A committee was being set up by CBC's Tony Keavney to address this issue and they want to have a community event to discuss the site. He may wish to attend a council meeting to report to Members and he has a copy of the Town Council's Community Plan, which refers to the future use of Sandye Place.

Cllr Smith also reported that he had received a complaint about light pollution in Northcroft. The health centre had recently put new lighting in which gives out more light which is annoying the residents. He will be taking this issue up.

A Member thanked the CBC councillors for their assistance over the last four years on behalf of the Council.

## **9 Action List (189-2018/2019)**

Members noted the action list.

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A1 – Local Issues: Members noted that the latest response from Highways England on the proposed average speed camera stated that implementation was subject to funding. Councillors understood that funding had already been approved for the scheme and asked the Clerk to get confirmation of this from Highways England’s Simon Amor.

Town Clerk

## 10 **Calendar of events (190-2018/2019)**

Members considered taking a lead on creating a joined-up calendar of events happening in Sandy to avoid clashes and increase publicity.

This issue was raised at the recent Annual Town Meeting where the idea was suggested that the Town Council hold a central calendar for the town’s events. The council would write to local groups and ask them to submit their events for inclusion.

A Member said that there was no effective Chamber of Trade in the town and could the council stimulate the operation of a new Chamber of Trade group. Another Member said that there was a Town Centre Group who were at present surveying all the local businesses regarding ideas for footfall increases and other ideas and they would ask the local businesses to liaise with each other to organise events together. A Member supported the idea and asked if this could be referred to the next Community Services & Environment Committee to explore future actions. It was suggested that the council liaise with the library as they have events reported to them.

Town Clerk

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council host the calendar on the website and are notified of local events.

## 11 **Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (191-2018/2019)**

Members received the Local Plan process and noted that councillors could attend the hearings.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be brought forward to the new council year to decide who attends.

Town Clerk

## 12 **St Swithun’s Clock (192-2018/2019)**

Members received and considered the Clerk’s report.

A Member said that two more quotes should be obtained. Another Member said that the Council could loan the church the funds.

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Cllr Osborne, who had declared an interest did not speak on the item or vote.

Town Clerk

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council obtain two more quotes for the regulator to be replaced and that the quotes be brought back to the Policy, Finance and Resources committee.

## 13 Consultations (193-2018/2019)

Members received and considered a communication from NALC on the proposed new Code of Audit practice to come into force in 2020.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council support NALC's comments on the new Code of Audit practice.

## 14 Crime Statistics (194-2018/2019)

- i) Members received and noted the report of recent CCTV incidents.
- ii) Members received and noted the most recent crime statistics for Sandy.

A discussion took place regarding the information in the reports. If Members wished to elaborate on the incidents they could look at the police website where the information is taken. The Mayor asked if Members still wished to receive these reports. Members felt that the information was somewhat useful but did not provide a full picture. A Member said that it should be reviewed by a working group to pursue a strategy to make use of the figures and should be considered by the new council. It was agreed the matter would be taken forward to the new council.

Town Clerk

## 15 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies (195-2018/2019)

- i) Members received and noted a report from Cllr Hill on the Sandy Twinning Association – private visit to Skarszewy.

Cllr Hill said that there were still places available for the June visit.

- ii) Members received and noted a report from Cllr Gibson on the Youth Voice Manifesto Launch.

Members considered suggestions put forward by Cllr Gibson and it was **RESOLVED** that the Council create a link on its website to the

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Youth Parliament site. It was agreed that Sandy members of the Youth Parliament would be invited to present to future Council meetings and that the new Council would look at holding a youth meeting in Sandy as an annual event aligned with the Annual Town Meeting.

**16 Mayor's Engagements (196-2018/2019)**

Members noted a list of recent Mayor's engagements carried out in January and February 2019.

**17 News Release (197-2018/2019)**

Streat Feast event

**18 Chairman's Items (198-2018/2019)**

The Chairman thanked all Councillors and staff for their hard work and support in achieving what they had over the last four years.

**19 Date of Next Meeting (199-2018/2019)**

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Town  
Clerk