

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 15 October 2018 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs P Blaine, W Jackson, C Osborne (Chairman), M Scott, P Sharman and J Sparrow.

In attendance: Cllrs N Aldis, T Knagg and S Sutton, and Mr C Robson (Town Clerk).

	<i>Actions</i>
<p>1 Apologies for absence (49-2018/19) Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs T Cole, M Hill and M Pettitt.</p>	Admin
<p>2 Declarations of interest (50-2018/19) No declarations of interest.</p>	
<p>3 Public Participation Session (51-2018/19) No members of the public were present.</p>	
<p>4 Minutes of previous meeting (52-2018/19) RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 3 September 2018 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>5 Financial Reports (53-2018/19) <i>The Chairman asked that Members take agenda item I and II together when reviewing expenditure and budget accounts.</i></p> <p>i) A balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for the year to 30 September 2018 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>A Member asked about cricket club rent and the Clerk explained that this was received in the last financial year but had been put to 501 1201. Current financial year to be invoiced in line with lease.</p> <p>Following a review of each page of the budget document, it was RESOLVED to receive and note the report.</p> <p>ii) Members received and considered the budget overview report from the Clerk in conjunction with Appendix I. It was RESOLVED to receive and note the report.</p>	

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

The Clerk explained that a payment to the streetlight engineer for £5,889.60 was for works to 10 streetlights (replacement of failed SOX lanterns with LED lanterns).

A Member queried how far Mayors travelled to attend Council events. The Clerk stated that this was down to each individual Mayor. A more formal policy could be drawn up if required. A Member stated that it was important to meet and share ideas and contacts with similar towns and a lot could be learnt.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments.

- iv) Bank reconciliations and statements.

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

Cllr Osborne

6 Grant Applications (54-2018/19)

Members received and considered a grant application from Biggles FM for £1,850.

Members asked whether the Council was interacting with the community radio station as much as it could be. It was agreed that the Council could do more to use the resource and it was suggested that the Mayor could appear on the station to promote the Council's participation in 'A Nation's Tribute' on 11th November 2018.

A Member asked whether the station could operate remotely for local events. A representative for Biggles FM stated that this would be problematic as it was difficult to get the required signal strength and have someone operating back at the station.

Members stated that the community station is a valuable resource for residents. It was proposed and seconded that a grant of £300 be made to Biggles FM.

RESOLVED that a grant of £300 is awarded to Biggles FM.

Admin

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7 Action List (55-2018/19)

The Clerk informed Members that archaeological excavation works had now concluded. However, before CBC are able to sign off on completion of the planning condition, the archaeologist must produce an initial report for the planning authority. This is currently being worked on.

The Clerk informed Members that he was struggling to get answers from BT in regard to fibre connection points and costs for Fallowfield CCTV. BT have failed to come back to the Clerk or the CCTV company. The Clerk will continue to chase.

Town Clerk

8 External Audit Completion (56-2018/19)

Members received and considered the external auditor's report and annual return for the year ended 31st March 2018. Members noted that there was only one minor issue where the name of the Council had been left off one of the pages. The Clerk would ensure this did not happen in future returns. Members thanked all those involved in getting a clean audit.

RESOLVED to accept the external auditor's report for the year ended 31st March 2018 and enact the recommendation within that report.

9 Sandy Town Bowls Club Pump (57 -2018/19)

Members received a report and three quotes for the replacement of the water pump at the Sandy Town Bowls Club, which is property of the Town Council and is leased to the club.

It was proposed and seconded that the Council approve the recommendation within the report.

A Member asked what the purpose of the pump was and whether any watering was carried out by hand. The Clerk informed the Councillor that some watering had been carried out by hand during the hot summer, but that the green had not fared well due to the lack of enough coverage by the sprinkler system. A Member added that as well as having companies inspect the pump, the Council had discussed the potential of low water pressure affecting the performance of the pump during the hot summer with the water provider. Although water pressure was reduced over the area, the aged pump does need replacing.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that a new Caprari pump be installed at a cost of £1,594.32 and that the funds for the work are taken from the Council's capital rolling fund.

Town Clerk

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10 Sandy Calendar (58-2018/19)

Members considered a report on the potential production of Sandy calendars which could be sold by the Council. The Clerk informed Members that any sale of calendars would need to include VAT.

A Member had asked how successful calendars had been in the past. The Clerk informed Members that it was the Tourist Information Centre (TIC), rather than the Council who had produced calendars. The Clerk had been informed that these were successful. The Chairman stated that they had been quite successful when sold by the TIC along with their post cards etc.

Members felt that time was too short to produce a quality product in time for sale this year. Many calendars have started going on sale already. It was felt that this should be a project that was pursued in 2019 in preparation for a 2020 calendar. There was a lot of work to be done in a short time for this year.

A Member stated that this should be something in which local businesses could get fully involved, and the Council could support. Sale via local business as opposed to via the Council may prove far more successful.

RESOLVED that the Council does not pursue the production and sale of 2019 calendars, but that in 2019 the Council work in conjunction with local businesses and any group representing the town centre to create a 2020 calendar.

11 Car Park General Rates (59-2018/19)

Members received and considered a report from the Town Clerk on savings made in general rates for the car park. A local resident offered his expertise for free to carry out a review on the Council's behalf. As a result of his work, a new rateable level was confirmed which will see savings of £7,308.75 over a four-year period.

It was Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that a payment to the value of £100 be approved in recognition of the work carried out and the savings made.

Admin

12 2019/20 Budget Preparation (60-2018/19)

Members received and considered a report from the Town Clerk on the 2019/20 revenue budgets. Members reviewed each budget line and made the following amendments to the recommended 2019/20 revenue budget.

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401 4001 – Reduce to £113,000 as per accountant's calculations
401 4002 – Increase to £102,000 as per accountant's calculations
401 4003 – Increase to £17,300 in line with NIC figures advised by accountant.

402 4009 – Increase to £100
402 4018 – Reduce to £1,000 (allowance left for any DPO costs and ongoing training)

During a review of postage costs, the Chairman informed Members that a Member of the public had written to the Mayor and Deputy, copying in the Clerk, to express concern at the cost involved in sending 'near neighbour' planning letters on planning applications received. The matter had previously come to committee where it was reviewed and agreed that the process should continue. Members discussed the matter again and stated that the decision to continue to issue the letters was fully discussed and a decision democratically made. Members felt strongly that by issuing the letters, the Council is providing a valuable service for residents of Sandy. Not all residents are covered by CBC's letters and some have informed the Council that they appreciate the notification. Removing this aspect of community engagement would go against the Council's community engagement strategy. Members reiterated that they wished to continue with the process of sending out near neighbour letters.

402 4023 – Reduce to £2,000
402 4027 – A new contract has resulted in reduced costs allowing for a reduction in budget to £4,500. Any new computers needed should be purchased from capital not the revenue budget.
402 1201 – Reduce to £750
403 4043 – Increase to £3,500
406 4039 – Reduce to £350
406 4101 – Reduce to £5,000

A Member queried the level of rates for the chapel. It was agreed that the Clerk investigate having the rateable value reviewed for any potential saving.

408 – 4007 – Move budget to 602 4042 so all defibrillator costs come under one budget heading.
500 4036 – Reduce to £500
501 4046 – Should read £3,140. RPI to be checked in line with lease.

Members discussed the nature reserve budgets and stated that the

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costs for services from BRCC and the Wildlife Trust appear high and the level of service received for these costs should be reviewed. Representatives on the Riddy and Pinnacle Management group would raise this matter at the next meeting.

It was noted that cattle stayed on the Riddy longer than they should have done and this should be raised with the Wildlife Trust.

A Member stated that if the Council wishes to help support the town centre and possible activities in which to help generate footfall and regeneration, there is no obvious budget under which such activity could operate. Members agreed an increased events budget would give the Council more ability to support initiatives which would help bring people into Sandy's centre.

602 – 4702 Increase to £4,000

A Member queried costs of repair work to the village hall car park. The Chairman stated that this matter would come to the next meeting of the committee along with other capital expenditure considerations. The Clerk would amend the revenue budget and bring forward a budget report with capital and precept calculations for the next meeting of the committee.

13 Flag Pole (61-2018/19)

The Community Services and Environment Committee previously resolved that a new flag pole be installed at Faynes Corner, where it would be more visible during national and civic times of significance. Members reviewed a new quote obtained by the Clerk. The Clerk informed Members that a donation to cover the entire costs of purchasing and installing the flag pole had been received from the Sandy Chamber of Trade. As the Council would be purchasing and installing the flag pole it would become the Council's asset to maintain. Unfortunately, the flag pole would not be able to be installed in time for 11th November 2018.

RESOLVED to RECOMMED that the donation from the Sandy Chamber of Trade be accepted and the purchase and installation of a new flag pole at Fayne's Corner be progressed.

14 Lone Working Policy (62-2018/19)

Members reviewed the Council's Lone Working policy.

RESOLVED to re-adopt the Lone Working policy.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk/
Grounds
team Leader

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15 Health & Safety Policy (63-2018/19)

Members reviewed the Council's Health and Safety policy.

RESOLVED to re-adopt the Health and Safety policy.

16 Chairman's Items (64-2018/19)

There were no Chairman's items.

17 Date of next meeting (65-2018/19)

Noted that the next committee meeting will be 26 November 2018.