

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee of Sandy Town Council which was held virtually via Zoom on Monday 15 February 2021 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, P Blaine, J Hewitt, A Hill, W Jackson, R Lock, C Osborne (Chair), M Pettitt, M Scott and P Sharman.

In attendance: Cllrs A Gibson, T Knagg, CBC Cllr C Maudlin and Mr C Robson (Town Clerk).

Actions

1 Apologies for absence (76-2020/21)

There were no apologies.

2 Declarations of interest (77-2020/21)

None.

3 Minutes of previous meeting (78-2020/21)

The Clerk informed the committee that a Member of the public wished to comment that the budget recommendation from the PFR committee on 4th January 2021 should have been made clear in the minutes. The Chairman stated that the recommendation was based on proposals and documents presented to the meeting, the proposal document was included on the Full Council agenda for 18th January 2021 when the recommendation was considered. Full details of the agreed budget and precept have been included in the Full Council minutes of 18th January 2021. The Chairman asked if any Member wished to recommend an amendment to the minutes. No amendments were proposed, and it was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 4 January 2021 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

4 Public Participation Session (79-2020/21)

There were no questions from members of the public.

5 Financial Reports (80-2020/21)

i) Members considered a balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for January 2021.

It was noted that there had been a credit in respect of the Sunderland Road water bill. The Clerk commented that there was still an overspend and the bills and usage would continue to be investigated.

It was agreed to note the balance sheet and financial reports.

ii) Members received a budget overview report for January 2021.

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Members reviewed the report page by page and agreed to note the report.

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

The following queries were raised in regard to December's payments;

£806.00 to Bedford College for 'NPTC level 2 award'. The Clerk informed Members that this was for the pesticide training course Mr Chris Dainton attended. Completion of the course was a required part of his employment.

£672 to Steve Dear for tree work at Beeston, an earlier report commented that tree work at Beeston was still anticipated. The Clerk explained that this invoice was for work carried out to a damaged tree on Beeston Green. Further work on the area known as 'Willow Island' will be carried out in February 2021.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of December 2020 payments. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of January 2021 payments.

iv) It was **RESOLVED** that the Chair of Policy Finance and Resources check and approve the bank reconciliations and statements.

Cllr
Osborne

6 Internal Audit Report (81-2020/21)

Members received the interim internal auditor's report and noted recommendations within that report.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the action taken to address points raised in the Internal Auditor's report and **RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** the Internal Audit Report to the Full Council for approval.

7 Story in Stone - Community Heritage Trail (82-2020/21)

Members received and considered a request from Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillor Caroline Maudlin on funding towards a 'Story in Stone' mosaic trail map. The aim of the project is to produce an electronic trail map of the three towns, which could also be printed and used by the Councils and other organisations. It will form part of the Greensand Country Festival in May. Cllr Maudlin spoke on the matter saying that it was the 'final piece of the jigsaw' in the project.

Members spoke in favour of the request and that the mosaic project had been positive, producing some long-lasting high-quality features within the town.

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RESOLVED to grant up to £250 in match funding towards the Story in Stone mosaic trail map with the funding to come from the Community Grant budget.

8 Car Park Barrier (83-2020/21)

Members received and noted a report on damage to the car park barrier caused by a waste vehicle. It was noted that the cost of replacing the damaged barrier would be £3,368.12. The Clerk confirmed that the excess payable on the claim would be included in the insurance claim from the responsible party. A call out charge paid by the Council would also be included.

RESOLVED to note the action taken by the office and that the administration team leader progresses an insurance claim for reimbursement of £3,368.12 plus costs incurred by the Council for an emergency call out from the responsible party's insurers.

Admin
Team
Leader

9 Chipper/Shredder (84-2020/21)

Members received and considered the purchase of a chipper/shredder for use by the Council's outdoor team. The Clerk informed Members that the recommendation in the report was incorrect and that the Grounds Team Leader had recommended to him that the Chipper/Shredder be agreed as the preferred item. This would be more adaptable and of more beneficial use to the outdoor team than the shredder only.

It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a Petrol Woodchipper and Shredder at a cost of £2,303.00 to be taken from the Council's Rolling Capital Reserve.

10 Village Hall Car Park Entrance Track (85-2020/21)

Members received and considered a report on the condition and repairs for the entrance track leading to the Village Hall. Cllr Knagg was present as the Council's representative on the Village Hall Management Committee.

Members of the committee discussed the matter, and it was agreed that the condition of the track was poor, and some work must be carried out as a priority matter. It was noted that a lease with the Village Hall Trustees stated that they must pay 55% of any costs involved in maintaining the access track.

A Member commented that while the work should be done on Health and Safety grounds, the responsibility for contributing towards the work must be raised with the village hall and any resolution must reflect this.

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Members commented that a lot had changed since the lease was put in place and that the Village Hall is now not necessarily the primary user of the track. At the time the lease was agreed, there was no Jenkins Pavilion or all-weather pitch. These developments will have resulted in more use of the track and car park which is nothing to do with the Village Hall. It was suggested that a review of the lease considering these significant changes should be undertaken. Given the difficulties of the last 12 months, the Village Hall Committee may not be in a position to contribute the required funds.

A Member stated that they supported that the work should be undertaken as a matter of priority and that it be carried out with a follow-up to the Village Hall Committee regarding their obligations and payment.

It was Proposed and Seconded that the Council appoint company B to carry out patching repair work to the worst areas of the track and that the Council liaise with the Village Hall Committee regarding payment obligations.

A Member stated that they would not support the proposal as option 2, the resurface of the whole track offered better value for money. Another Councillor agreed, stating that patching work would lead to a similar problem in the next couple of years with the areas which were not patched.

The proposal was voted on and lost.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that company B be appointed to carry out resurfacing of the Village Hall entrance track at a cost of £5,500 and that the Council liaise with the Village Hall Committee over contributions to the work in line with the lease.

It was agreed a letter would be issued to the Village Hall Committee explaining the work to be undertaken, the cost, why it is required and that the Council reserve the right to request the 55% contribution from the Village Hall Committee.

Town
Clerk

11 Central Bedfordshire Council Tree Fund (86-2020/21)

Members received and considered match fund costs and resources involved in supporting the agreed application to Central Bedfordshire Council's Tree Fund. A Member commented that they were happy to support the recommendation on the level of match funding to commit to the tree fund application. The Council has long talked about investing in more trees and this fund provides a good opportunity. However, delegating the decision on the actual supplier to use to the Environmental Working Group would give them more time ahead of the

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application deadline to ensure they achieved the best mix of trees and tree sizes.

The Clerk commented that a CBC officer had been contacted for advice on tree types and locations, but a response was still awaited. A Member suggested sending over the list of trees to those officers to ask for a quick response based on the suggestions within the lists.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council agree to match fund 50% of the tree costs to a maximum of £4,000 as part of an application to Central Bedfordshire Council's Tree Fund with the funds being taken from the Council's Rolling Capital Fund.

RESOLVED that the Environmental Working Group finalises the submission of the tree fund application, including the exact number and type of trees within the budget agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Environmental Working Group be delegated authority to select the preferred supplier based on their finalisation of the tree types and numbers.

Env
Working
Group

12 Bedford Road Fencing (87-2020/21)

Members received a report and initial costs on repairs to fencing at Bedford Road Recreation Ground. A Member commented that the most urgent 6m stretch of fencing should be repaired now, but that all other fencing should be carried out in sections over the next two financial years. Another Member agreed that having looked at the fencing, the two main sections did not require immediate work. A Member commented that any work carried out should have concrete gravel boards not timber.

It was **RESOLVED** that a six-metre section of the fencing, which has a damaged concrete post should be repaired immediately.

It was **RESOLVED** that the repair of the two other sections of fencing requiring work be split over the next two financial years.

13 Berwick Way Land (88-2020/21)

Members considered solicitor costs related to adopting land from Taylor Wimpey.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree that Solicitor B be appointed to act on the Council's behalf for the transfer of Taylor Wimpey owned land to Sandy Town Council.

14 Calendar of Meetings 2021/22 (89-2020/21)

Members considered a draft calendar of meetings for 2021/22.

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It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** the 2021/22 calendar of meetings to Full Council.

15 Council Risk Assessment (90-2020/21)

Members reviewed the Council's Risk Assessment. It was noted that this was an important document which must be reviewed on an annual basis. There had been not material changes since the Risk Assessment was previously agreed. The Chairman thanked those involved in the work on the assessment, which can be time consuming.

It was **RESOLVED** to re-adopt the Council's Risk Assessment.

16 CCTV Policy (91-2020/21)

Members reviewed the Council's adopted CCTV Policy. It was agreed that the policy did not need to be reviewed on an annual basis but should be reviewed within the life span of the Council to ensure a regular review is carried out.

It was **RESOLVED** to re-adopt the CCTV Policy and that it be reviewed again at the start of the next elected Council.

17 Privacy Statement (92-2020/21)

Members reviewed the Council's adopted Privacy Statement.

It was **RESOLVED** to re-adopt the Privacy Statement.

18 Website Accessibility Statement (93-2020/21)

Members noted the Council's Website Accessibility Statement. A Member asked whether someone should be named in the policy as the responsible officer for the website. It was agreed that the following sentence could be included under the 'Feedback' section of the statement;

"Responsibility for this website lies with the Town Clerk, Mr C Robson"

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the Website Accessibility statement subject to the inclusion of the Clerk's name as responsible officer for the website.

Admin

19 Chairman's Items (94-2020/21)

There were no Chairman's Items.

20 Date of Next Meeting (95-2020/21)

It was noted that the next Policy, Finance and Resources Committee meeting will be on Monday 29th March 2021.