

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Services and Environment Committee of Sandy Town Council held virtually via Zoom on Monday 16th November 2020 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, A M Hill, T Knagg, C Osborne, M Scott, S Sutton (Chair) and N Thompson.

In Attendance: Cllrs J Hewitt and Mr C Robson (Clerk).

Action

- 1 **Apologies for absence (46-2020/21)**
Apologies were received from Cllr Martin Pettitt. All committee members were in attendance. Admin
- 2 **Declarations of Interest (47-2020/21)**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 **Minutes of Previous Meeting (48-2020/21)**
RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on Monday 5th October 2020 as a correct record of proceedings. Admin
- 4 **Public Participation Session (49-2020/21)**
There were no members of the public present. The Clerk had received one question from a member of the public prior to the meeting which related to agenda item 7. The question would be raised during the relevant agenda item.
- 5 **Action List (50-2020/21)**
Members received the action list.

Allotments & Community Orchard, Beeston: The Clerk informed Members that he had received further communication from the Central Bedfordshire Council officer dealing with the lease for the community land. The officer was discussing finer points of what would be provided as part of the lease with the development manager. It appears CBC's development company would be progressing the project. LGSS law have been instructed to contact STC's solicitor to move things forward. The Clerk will continue to chase.

SID Sign Locations and Installation: The Clerk informed Members that the Council office had sought permission from CBC Highways department to place the proposed SID signs at the locations previously agreed by the committee. CBC Highways have informed

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the Council that due to the number of requests received for SID signs, they are not going to approve the siting of any more signs until a guidance document on the locating of signs has been completed; it is envisioned this will be in January 2021. CBC stated that the purpose of this document is to ensure the most appropriate solution is sought should there be issues of speeding. Members expressed some frustration, as neighbouring parish councils already had numerous SIDs in operation. The Clerk agreed to contact neighbouring parishes to enquire how many had signs and the process they had gone through to have them installed.

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The action list was noted.

6 **Changes to Luton Airport (51-2020/21)**

Members received a request from a member of the public and considered whether Sandy Town Council should respond to the consultation on changes to Luton Airport. The deadline for consultation was not until February 2021 so there was time to consider the matter if required.

A Member suggested that the Council should leave the response to the consultation to BATPC. Another Member indicated that they felt a more local response was needed, as the proposals in the consultation were not temporary emergency proposals but were intended to be permanent.

A Member indicated that there were two options in the consultation and that option 2 was better for Sandy as it kept the flight path of the planes further away from the airspace over the town. It was noted that the changes would have to take place, and Members agreed that option 2 was preferable if this was the case.

The Chairman asked if there were any further comments the Council would like to provide to the consultation. A Member stated that the information within the consultation was very hard for a layman to understand and that the document had not been that helpful in that sense.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council respond to the consultation stating a preference for option 2 and highlighting the difficulty in understanding the consultation due to the technical way in which the options are presented.

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7 **Town Centre Parking (52-2020/21)**

Members received and further considered a report and request from a member of the public raised at the Councillor surgery held on 31st October 2020 in relation to parking limits in the town centre.

The Clerk informed Members he had also received a question from a Member of the public regarding having yellow lines and two parking bays near Doctors Close, Sandy. Members noted that the area suggested for the parking bays was actually a turning circle which may be required. It was agreed that the matter should be referred to CBC Highways as the Town Council were not in a position to advise on the query.

Members considered the report and the matter of parking times in the Market Square. Members noted that when the Council last reviewed the issue of parking, it had not suggested that the one-hour parking limit in the Market Square be changed. It was felt that a rapid turnover in the Market Square was beneficial for the town and its shops. Anyone wishing to stay longer could use the free car park in the town centre.

Members did however comment that the one hour was not sufficient in the parking bays outside St Swithun's Church and the Council should request CBC look at extending this to two hours.

It was noted that the matter had first been brought to the attention of Central Bedfordshire Council in 2016, but that there did not appear to have been any progress with the parking strategy.

It was Proposed and Seconded that the Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council Parking Management to request that the bays outside of St Swithun's Church be extended to a two-hour parking limit.

A Member commented that free parking in the town centre was a positive factor that many towns no longer had. They queried if some signage could be put up at short stay parking bays in the town to advertise that long-term free parking was available.

RESOLVED that the Clerk write to Central Bedfordshire Council's Parking Management Team to request that the parking time for the bays outside St Swithun's Church be increased to two hours.

It was requested that the Clerk contact St Swithun's Church and ask if they would put a letter of support in for an increased parking time in the bays outside the church.

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8 **Emergency Plan (53-2020/21)**

Members received an updated version of the Council's adopted Community Emergency Plan. A Member commented that it was a comprehensive document, but the contract list required some updating. The Clerk confirmed that the office had written to the organisations listed within the plan to ask for updated details. The contacts will continue to be updated as responses are received.

A Member noted that there were some issues with continuity around the naming of schools (such as lower/primary and secondary/upper). This would need to be picked up on.

A Member queried when some organisations were not included where others were. The Clerk informed the committee that this may be due to replies received or not received from the relevant organisations. It was noted that Shannon Court surgery was not included in the medical assistance section of the plan. The Clerk stated that this was due to the response received from the surgery which said they could not offer medical assistance in an emergency but could provide details of potentially vulnerable people. Councillors questioned this and the Clerk agreed to look into the matter further.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the document be re-adopted subject to the updating of contact details for all organisations.

The office would share the document with the Chair and Vice Chair of the CSE committee for a final review.

The Clerk noted that the plan and the contacts within it had proved useful in instances of flooding. It had now been updated to include reference to pandemics.

9 **Greensand Country Festival (54-2020/21)**

Members received and considered communication on the 2021 Greensand Country Festival. The festival is due to take place in May 2021 and Members acknowledged that it would be difficult to plan any large events for then given the current uncertainties as a result of COVID19. However, Members did feel the festival was positive for our area and the Council should respond showing its support, even if this was just to include a Green Wheel walk within the festival programme.

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Last year the Council planned to hold its VE Day street party as part of the festival, this was cancelled due to the first national lockdown. COVID19 permitting, the Council might want to look at holding this event in May 2021.

RESOLVED that Cllr Gibson and the Clerk would respond to the Greensand Country Festival expressing the Council's support and its hope that it may be able to hold some form of event as part of the festival.

Cllr
Gibson/
Town
Clerk

10 **Christmas Lights (55-2020/21)**

Members heard from the Clerk on the switch on of the Christmas lights. The Clerk informed Members that the delivery of the town tree had been delayed due to COVID19 and lack of drivers for the delivery company. The tree would be delivered and decorated the week of 16th November. The lights would then be switched on in a quiet switch-on by the Mayor and Mayoress. The turning on of the lights would be filmed and displayed on the Council's social media page. Press releases have been drafted in preparation.

Admin

11 **Events Working Group (56-2020/21)**

- i) Members received notes from a meeting of the Events Working Group. A Councillor expressed his thanks to the Clerk and administrative officer, K Barker for their work in preparing the event. It went well considering the restrictions in place and had received positive comments from those in attendance.
- ii) Members received a review of events held since the last meeting of the committee. The Clerk commented that there may need to be some further thought on how the car park is managed, and cars are cleared if more regular markets are to be held. There had been some difficulties with parked cars during the French market in October. Members noted the Clerk's comments and the report.
- iii) Members noted the Council's involvement in the St Swithun's Christmas Tree Festival and agreed the donation of £50 entry fee from the Community Events Budget. Cllr Osborne declared an interest and did not vote on the item due to his position as a Church Warden.

Members discussed the theme for the tree, which would be the 12 Days of Christmas but with a link back to Sandy and its community. The Events group will work with the office to prepare the tree.

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12 Chairman's Items (57-2020/21)

There were no Chairman's items, but the Chairman asked that a news release is issued on the efforts the Council were making to get a SID sign installed Admin

13 Date of next meeting (58 -2020/21)

The date of the next Committee meeting is 21st December 2020.