

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 20th September 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, J Hewitt, A M Hill, T Knagg, C Osborne, S Paterson, M Pettitt (Chair), P Sharman

Absent: Cllrs W Jackson, R Lock, M Scott, S Sutton, N Thompson and CBC Cllrs C Maudlin and S Ford

In attendance: CBC Cllr T Stock, Mr C Robson (Clerk) and Mrs C Baker-Smith (Admin Team Leader)

Action

1 Apologies for Absence (96-2021/2022)

Apologies had been received from Cllrs W Jackson, R Lock, M Scott, and CBC Cllr C Maudlin.

Admin

The Chair asked Members to stand for a minute's silence in memory of former Councillor Mrs Iris Gautier-Groom who had recently passed away. He also offered congratulations to Mrs Baker-Smith on the birth of her new granddaughter that evening.

2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (97-2021/22)

- (i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* – None.
- (ii) *Non-Pecuniary Interests* – None.
- (iii) *Dispensations* – None.

3 Public Participation Session (98-2021/22)

There were no members of the public present. The Chair informed Members of a resident's concern regarding the unsafe surface of Station Road now that it had been re-surfaced. CBC Cllr Stock said that another resident had also contacted her with concerns about skidding and that she had asked CBCs Highway technician to look at the work carried out. CBC Highways will be undertaking a survey to assess the surface of the road.

Cllr
Stock

4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meetings (99-2021/22)

Members considered the minutes of a meeting of Sandy Town Council held at held at 7.30pm on Monday 9th August 2021 and **RESOLVED** to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

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5 Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (100-2021/22)

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 Committees held on 9th August 2021 and 6th September 2021.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on the 23rd August 2021.
- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on the 6th September 2021. The Chair of the committee said that the meeting had gone well, and that Members should hold onto the papers relevant to the budget process for future meetings.

6 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (101-2021/22)

CBC Cllr Stock reported that:

The number of new COVID cases had been dropping in Sandy, but new cases among school age children remain high. Some residents are still hesitant to have the vaccination, but the 1st booster vaccinations will begin to be offered shortly alongside the annual flu vaccination programme. The local Track and Trace team will be focusing on reaching those who have not had any vaccinations yet.

Eight planters have been removed from the Winchester Road area as part of the regeneration scheme. The works are now well underway and have received a lot of positive feedback from residents. Cllr Stock asked if any Members had ideas for the Pride of Place Day to be held (date since confirmed for Saturday 6 November) that they should let her know. She will also be viewing some other areas in Sandy where residents have contacted her about their parking concerns.

The garden waste collections will be resuming for two weeks between the 18th October and the 30th October to clear the backlog, but to facilitate this, food waste collections will be temporarily stopped during this time. From Monday 27th September, you will

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also no longer need to book a slot at your local Household Waste Recycling Centres (tidy tips).

Cllr Stock said that Richard Fuller MP's surgery held at the Community Stand on Saturday 18th September was well attended by residents with local issues being discussed. The main issues raised were regarding garden waste and the future of the Sandye Place Academy site.

Cllr Stock reported that Pleasant Place would eventually be re-surfaced and made a Right of Way, if permission was granted from NHS Estates, and a CBC Rights of Way Officer was pursuing this matter. She also said that an explanatory letter had been sent to adjacent residents. Due to the need to get permissions to connect a RoW to the existing RoW on NHS land, it could take some time before CBC could formally adopt the road and carry out surfacing works.

Following the issuing of a Community Protection Notice/Order, the issues of and caused by, commercial vehicles parking in and close to Swan Lane, had improved dramatically. However, other areas of the town were now experiencing similar problems as a result. CBC's Environmental Protection Officer is investigating and looking to issue a further Order covering the town.

To date, and in response to the government's appeal, CBC has provided homes for five refugee families from Afghanistan.

Cllr Stock advised that as a result of concerns raised by local residents, she was in consultation and discussion aimed at possibly changing the number and type of glass recycling bins located in front of the supermarket at the west end of Merlin Drive and the frequency and time of the day they are emptied.

It was noted that Cllr Maudlin is working with a resident of Quince Court, the Mayor and Mr Nick Carofalo of CBC Highways to look at problems encountered by disabled residents accessing the Town Centre and other parts of the town. They would be walking routes and identifying issues to see what can be fixed. Dropped kerbs are an issue with some uneven and others too high causing unnecessary jarring for users of mobility scooters.

Cllr Maudlin asked for Members to join one of the 'watch' groups to lead by example in the community and encourage more residents to join.

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7 **Action List (102–2021/22)**

Members received and noted the action list.

A1- Local issues: Update on Agenda item 12(i). It was noted that a further matter had also been communicated to Mr Fuller. This was in relation to the inadequacy of the footbridge over the A1 at Beeston, which is not suitable for bikes.

SPA: Members noted that CBC were carrying out a public consultation on applying to have the former SPA site's educational status removed, therefore allowing CBC to take on the site from the DfE and consider other potential uses. The Chairman informed Members that a special meeting would be held on Monday 11th October 2021 where there would be an opportunity to discuss the consultation.

Councillor Street Audit: A Member said that weeds growing in footpaths in Sandy had been reported to CBC but work to clear them will not be done. Another Member said that reported weeding and clearing work on Potton Road had not been completed properly. Cllr Stock suggested emailing Ian Bond of CBC.

8 **CB/20/)4425/REG3 – The Meadows, Girtford Bridge, Sandy (103-2021/22)**

Members received a communication from Central Beds Council Planning in relation to comments submitted by the Town Council on the above application.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council withdraw the comments previously submitted on the basis that assurance is given that the measures set out in the documents will be undertaken. More clarity was also sought on how taxis would be used to help connect residents of the facility with the town.

9 **Plan to upgrade a telecoms facility on Sunderland Road Industrial Estate (104-2021/22)**

Members received a pre-application consultation letter from Clarke Telecom Ltd and proposed plans in relation to the proposed upgrade to the existing telecommunications installation at Sunderland Road Industrial Estate.

It was proposed seconded and **RESOLVED** to accept and welcome the application.

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10 Use of Remote Meeting Technology (105-2021/22)

Members considered a report on the continued use of Zoom for some working groups and informal meetings of Councillors and others.

The Chair briefed Members on the Clerk's report and the way forward, highlighting the efficiencies and opportunities video meeting technology might offer, as opposed to its use as part of a response to COVID19 or meeting restrictions. A number of other councils are currently utilising remote meetings more, trialing hybrid meetings or planning for further use of remote meetings.

Members agreed that the technology was useful, but that it was not always the best way to meet depending on what was to be achieved. A Member commented that he would not like to see every Working Group meeting to be held via remote video. Members agreed that the technology should be utilised for Working Groups and that decisions on when it is used is left to those Working Groups themselves and 'common sense'.

A Member asked if a hybrid model could be used for meetings. The Clerk stated that under legislation, Members attending via video would be able to listen and speak if the Chairman allowed, but would not be able to vote, as legislation states a Member must be physically present in the room to cast a vote. Any Members attending by remote video would also not be classed as in attendance in terms of making sure the Council was quorate. It was agreed that hybrid meetings would likely become more common and would allow people, such as contractors or other organisations, to attend a meeting and speak to Councillors more easily.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council continue to use zoom meetings for appropriate Council Working Group meetings and other meetings involving Councillors, as part of its development as opposed to a COVID19 measure. And that the decision to use zoom meetings is at the discretion of the Chair and members of the Working Groups.

It was agreed that the Council should start thinking about the technology that will be required to support hybrid meetings in the future, so that this can be factored into budget considerations.

11 Neighbourhood Development Plan (106-2021/22)

Members received and noted a report from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Members noted that a significant number of

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responses to the Group's survey had been received and that the feedback would be analysed at the next Steering Group meeting. Cllr Gibson said that a draft Business Directory had also been produced and data would be discussed at the next meeting.

Town Clerk

The Chairman thanked the Steering Group for its hard work.

12 Correspondence to Receive (107-2021/22)

- i) Members received and noted correspondence received from the Hon R Fuller MP's office in relation to the A1.
- ii) Members received and considered correspondence from CBC's Democratic Services Manager. Members held a discussion over the warding system and whether there would be benefits to removing wards. Members were unsure if the ward system formed part of CBC's query.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** not to change the number of Councillors from 15 but to query whether the review would cover electoral wards.

Town Clerk

- iii) Members received and noted correspondence from the Sandy Rail Users Group regarding the closure of the Cravin' Coffee shop at Sandy station. Members queried the rent figure quoted, which seem extremely high. Members expressed their disappointment at the closure and support for the concerns raised by the Rail User Group.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to write to Thameslink and Network Rail and enquire about the high rent and ask why other interested parties were not contacted.

Town Clerk

- iv) Members received and noted correspondence from PCC events regarding the Annual Parish Council Conference Invitation. Members were reminded that a PCC Town and Parish Cluster meeting was to take place on 21st September.

13 Consultations (108-2021/22)

- i) Members received and noted a Council response to the government's consultation on a vision for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc from Cllrs Blaine, Gibson, Hewitt and Sutton. Members congratulated the Working Group on the excellent work undertaken.

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It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Working Group's report be submitted.

It was agreed that the Working Group also consider and recommend a response to the Highways England Strategic Road Survey. The recommended response will be considered by Council on 1st November 2021.

- ii) Members received and noted that Central Bedfordshire Council are running a survey on Changing Places Toilets and potential funding for toilets in Central Bedfordshire. A Councillor said he had responded in a personal capacity and highlighted the car park toilets in Sandy.

14 Leisure Services (109-2021/22)

The Clerk reported that CBC's formal consultation had come to an end, but that CBC's Leisure Team were continuing their communication with the sports clubs who use the Jenkins, as part of the wider consultation. CBC's Leisure Team are in the process of writing a consultation report detailing the feedback received. This report, along with a report on potential management and lease options will be shared with the Council for consideration. The Chairman of the Leisure Services Working Group, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and the Clerk will be meeting with CBC Leisure next week ahead of a wider meeting between the Council and CBC leisure.

15 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies (110-2021/22)

Members received and noted the following reports:

- i) **Sandy Sports and Leisure Association (SSLA):** The Chair reported that the pitch had been handed back to the SSLA and that the testing for FIH Certification was carried out and met /exceeded all requirements and will be certificated. The Hockey Club will begin using the pitch this week and all being well, other users on Monday 4th October 2021. Fencing work will be completed later this week and repairs to the hockey and football goals next and the two new shelters will be delivered and installed week commencing 18th October ready for the formal re-opening the following weekend - the date, either Saturday 23rd or Sunday 24th still to be decided depending upon the availability of certain guests. Members extended their

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congratulations to all those who had worked on the SSLA project.

- ii) **Sandy Twinning Association:** Members noted the report.
- iii) **Sandy Carnival Committee:** Cllr Gibson reported that the committee was continuing to hold the event on the 11th June 2022 to celebrate their delayed 50th Anniversary with an "Anything Goes" theme. She said that a new date would be arranged for the judging of the new Prince and Princess competition, as the previous date fell on Remembrance Sunday. She added that the AGM would be on the 19th October 2021.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that Members receive the report and note the request from the Carnival Committee for the grounds of Sandye Place to be made available by CBC for the Carnival event on the 11th June 2022 and that the Mayor notes the dates in his event diary for judging of the Prince and Princess and the parade of floats competitions.

16 News Release (111-2021/22)

It was agreed to issue news releases on the following matters:

- Rail Users Group – Cravin' Café closure
- SSLA – all-weather pitch completion

17 Chairman's Items (112-2021/22)

The Chair said that he would be meeting in a few weeks' time with the Reverend Huw Davies, to discuss future events in light of COVID19.

18 Mayoral Engagements (113-2021/22)

Members noted a list of recent engagements undertaken by the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor. The Mayor added that he and the Deputy Mayor along with CBC Ward Members, Stock and Maudlin, had attended a meeting organised by the PCC on the 15th September at Moggerhanger House.

19 Date of Next Meeting (114-2021/22)

There will be an extraordinary meeting of the Full Council to be held at 7pm on the 11th October 2021 and the scheduled meeting of Full Council on the 1st November 2021. The extraordinary meeting would be to consider a planning application for 19 flats and the CBC Sandye Place consultation.