

# Sandy Town Council

## Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 24 October 2016 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs P N Aldis, Cllr J Ali (Part), P Blaine, T Cole, W Jackson, G Leach, C Osborne (Mayor), D Sharman, P Sharman and S Sutton

**Absent:** Cllrs M Hill, M Pettitt, M Scott (Deputy Mayor), J Sparrow, Cllr C Maudlin (CBC)

**In attendance:** Cllr P Smith (CBC), Cllr T Stock (CBC), Mr C Robson (Clerk), Mrs C Baker-Smith (Admin Team Leader) and 22 members of the public.

|   | <b>Action</b> |
|---|---------------|
| <p><b>1 Apologies for Absence (74-2016/2017)</b><br/>Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Hill, Pettitt, Scott, Sparrow and CBC Cllr C Maudlin.</p>   | Admin         |
| <p><b>2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (75-2016/2017)</b><br/>i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i> – None<br/>ii) <i>Non Pecuniary Interests</i> – None<br/>iii) <i>Dispensations</i> – None</p>   | Admin         |
| <p><b>3 Public Participation Session (76-2016/2017)</b><br/>Cllr Cole raised a question on behalf of a resident regarding worsening dog fouling in Longfield Road, College Road, West Road and Dapifer Drive in Sandy.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that an official request for more dog warden patrols and additional signage be made to Central Beds Council.</p> <p>Three residents wished to raise questions regarding Item 12. The Chair asked whether they wished to speak during the public participation or wait until the agenda item. Residents confirmed they would speak during Item 12.</p> | Town Clerk    |
| <p><b>4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meeting (77-2016/2017)</b><br/><b>RESOLVED</b> to receive the minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 12 September 2016 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings apart from a spelling error in Item 3 whereby Mr &amp; Mrs Blain's name should be without an "e".</p>   | Admin         |

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## 5 **Co-option of new Council Member for Pinnacle Ward (78-2016/2017)**

A member proposed that due to unavoidable absences of Members and in the interest of fairness, that all three candidates are considered for co-option rather than individual proposals. The proposal was seconded.

**RESOLVED** that all three co-option candidates be nominated for co-option.

The two applicants present Mr Knagg and Mr Windram, presented themselves separately and were asked questions by Members.

Following presentations by the applicants the Council moved to vote on an applicant to fill the vacant councillor seat. Voting was done by paper ballot.

The Chairman noted that an absolute majority of those present to vote was required for the winning candidate. In the event of a tie the Chairman could have a casting vote.

Following voting by Members the Chairman announced that Mr Knagg had the majority of votes and was therefore co-opted onto the Council.

**RESOLVED** to co-opt Terence Knagg as a member of Sandy Town Council.

Cllr Knagg made his declaration of acceptance of office before the Council and the Proper Officer and joined other Members at the council table.

Cllr Ali left the meeting.

## 6 **Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein (79-2016/2017)**

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 note the minutes of meeting of Human Resources Committee held on 19 September 2016 and approve the Recommendation that:

The Councillor Training Policy be approved with amendments and that this goes to Full Council for all Members' information.

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ii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meetings of the Development Scrutiny Committee held on 26 September and 17 October 2016.

iii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of Community Services and Environment Committee held on 26 September 2016 and approve the Recommendations that:

The Council holds a dog awareness event in 2017 and considers putting in force a byelaw and that adequate fencing around the Fallowfield estate park is installed.

The Council moves towards holding themed markets with an initial Continental market, incorporating themed community stalls to be held and the market's success monitored and reported back to Councillors.

A public consultation be held to explore what equipment the public would like in the play parks in Sandy and that the results of the consultation and proposals with projected costs are brought back to Council for consideration.

iv) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of Policy Finance & Resources Committee held on 10 October 2016 and approve the Recommendation that:

A grant of £500 be awarded to the Sandy Carnival out of the 2017-18 financial year budget and that this comes from the proposed new events budget line.

## 7 **Financial Matters (80-2016/2017)**

i) **RESOLVED** to note a summary statement of income and expenditure against budget for the year to date (previously circulated and scrutinised at a meeting of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee on 10 October 2016).

ii) **RESOLVED** to note a list of payments made since the last Town Council meeting (previously circulated and scrutinised at a meeting of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee on 10 October 2016).

Admin

## 8 **Action List (81-2016/2017)**

Members received the Action List and the Clerk informed Members that Cllr Pettitt would report back to the next meeting on progress

Cllr  
Pettitt

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of the Bedford Road Outdoor gym equipment and that he had received no further updates from Kings Road Surgery in regards to the proposed move to Shannon Court, or from Network Rail with regards to the East West Rail Link. The Clerk confirmed he had written to Alistair Burt regarding a meeting to discuss development of the A1.

Town  
Clerk

## **9 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (82-2016/2017)**

A report had been circulated to Members in advance of the Meeting.

Cllr Stock reminded everyone about CBC's public consultation meeting being held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November in the council chamber and the Town & Parish Conference on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November at Chicksands.

Cllr Smith stated that the possible £10m savings that CBC need to make to its budget should not affect services. The 73 bus route work should be completed by the end of October and be re-instated in November this year.

Cllr Cole wished to thank Cllr Stock for her work regarding the HGV lorries on Fallowfield estate.

## **10 Calendar of Meetings (83-2016/2017)**

i) Members received and agreed the calendar of meetings except to add in a Budget Workshop if required on the 13 November 2017.

ii) Members approved to move the Town Council meeting of 5 December 2016 to the 28 November 2016.

## **11 External Audit Report (84-2016/2017)**

Members received and noted a copy of the Town Council's 2015/16 External Audit report which had been reviewed at a meeting of the Policy, Finance & Resources Committee on 10 October 2016.

## **12 Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Plan (85-2016/2017)**

Three residents wished to speak on this item. Two residents were present and one was via Cllr Cole.

A resident stated he had not seen the Council's Concept Statement, which was presented as an attachment to the Council's agenda, only a Member's letter. The resident explained he, along with others present, were residents of Brickhill and Cambridge

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Roads and wanted no development to the East. The area to the east of Sandy had previously been ruled out as suitable for development and this should not now be ignored.

Another resident commented that he found it strange that the Town Council was deciding on a development stance prior to the Planning Event on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November. He stated that he fully supported the Council's position of no development in Sandy, but that he was opposed to any development to the east and that if development was needed it should go to the North of the town. It was stressed that any development which comes forward should include allotments and provision should be made for new affordable venues for hire by local groups, as this is something Sandy is lacking.

Cllr Cole presented Mr Carter's comment that he wished the Concept Statement to state that Sandy has seen considerable new housing in recent years, through infill and re-development, without any commensurate improvement to social infrastructure. It is essential that any new development addresses the shortfalls identified above.

The Town Clerk informed the Council and members of the public present that the Planning Event on 3<sup>rd</sup> November was a CBC event not a Town Council one and that Sandy Town Council would be feeding into that event the same way CBC are asking members of the public to do.

The Chairman briefed the meeting on the Council's activity to date and how the Concept Statement was reached. Following the publication of the Call for Sites map by CBC, Sandy Town Council has reviewed those sites and considered their impact on the town. The Council has worked to get as much information as possible, including questioning landowners/agents for those sites which have active representation.

The Chairman stated that the Council had held a public consultation day in August and that a leaflet had been distributed within the local Bulletin. The event had also been advertised on the Council's website and in the local press. There was good attendance on the day when residents came to put their views forward. These views were collated and considered by the Council's Community Plan Working Group. Approximately half of those that commented stated a preference for future development to the east, with another half stating the north.

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The Council has met with the landowner to the east of Sandy and Pigeon Management who are agents for landowners to the North of Sandy to get information on what developments may look like if the land was to be included in CBC's local plan. This included highlighting what Sandy would require from any future development, including allotments, health care facilities, and improved road infrastructure and community hubs.

The agents for the north have held a community open event with plans of what a development to the north may look like and what it may include. The landowner to the east has not done so and has not provided any detailed plans on what a development would look like. It is Council's understanding that investigations and designs are ongoing and that the landowner will be feeding into CBC as part of their site considerations. It should be noted that there is no planning application in for the east of Sandy and that the Landowner has so far only submitted the land for CBC's consideration and looked at potential housing numbers should the site be considered for development.

The resulting Concept Statement is a summary of the Council's position following considerations on Sandy's future. It does not refer to specific sites or developments but instead puts over a concept of how Sandy should develop if it is to be a well-planned and sustainable town.

The Council is strongly opposed to development in Sandy and its primary position is that the town is not in a position to take any development due to the existing pressures on its infrastructure and facilities, along with the physical constraints placed on the town by the rail line, river and the A1. The constraints placed on the town and the pressure on infrastructure mean that any development in Sandy would not be sustainable. The Town Council will be strongly stressing the risk of overdevelopment and encouraging CBC to concentrate on the creation of new settlements rather than place pressure on existing towns.

Secondly there can be no decision on Sandy's future until there is clarity on the east-west rail link corridor and possible changes to the A1. Both will seriously impact and change Sandy and it does not make sense to consider development until there is clarity on the routes of both and full consideration of their impact on the town. Additionally, any development in Sandy could have a negative impact on the potential of the east-west rail link and any route it may take in the future. CBC should resist making any

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decisions on Sandy within the Local Plan until the matters have been resolved.

While the Council is opposed to development in Sandy and will clearly lay out Sandy's inability to take development to CBC, it also recognises the pressure on CBC to find housing land for up to 33,000 houses. Although the Council's stance is that CBC should not allocate any development to Sandy within the Local Plan, it would be irresponsible for the Council not to consider a scenario where housing was allocated and steer CBC to ensure that any future development was beneficial for Sandy and its community. As such the Council favours housing development to the east and industrial development to the north as a concept for any future development.

A Member stated that development to the north would continue to expand the town from its centre, creating a long disjointed settlement with little interaction. It was also noted that the A1 access was insufficient for the number of vehicle movements that would be created by a large housing development to the north and that the impact on Sunderland Road would be extremely negative. Some industrial or commercial development to the north could however produce contributions to improve road networks while at the same time helping alleviate the issue of HGV traffic through the town.

Housing development to the east would result in a more balanced town which revolved around its town centre. There would be close links to the train station, town centre and supermarkets along with good cycle/pedestrian routes over the railway into town. A development here could also open up more green space for residents in the form of country parks. It was acknowledged that there would be a negative impact on road infrastructure and that any development to the east would need to address the Everton and Potton Roads.

The Chairman of the Working Group then addressed the meeting on the Concept Statement. He re-iterated that CBC had put forward a very short timetable to produce a Local Plan and it was the Town Council's duty to respond, highlighting a need to provide a well-planned town for the future. The Town Council had worked hard to present Sandy's views in time. There are clear constraints on development in Sandy because of the uncertainty regarding the A1 improvements and the new rail link. The Town Council want their say heard and will work hard to influence CBC. The Member then thanked the Clerk for his hard work in producing the concept

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statement.

It was proposed and seconded to accept the concept statement and a recorded vote was requested.

A Member stated that he could not support the Concept Statement. While the document was useful and provided good information he did not believe that it was viable to develop Sandy to the east. The east is an area of natural beauty and he stated concerns about the increased pressure on the road network which would be caused if housing were to be developed to the east. It was also commented that trying to keep housing around the town centre made no sense as people no longer shopped in the town centre.

A Member stated that a town centre is not just about shopping, it is about community and creating a hub and focus for a community to revolve around. The Council should do all it can to support the longevity of the High Street, its businesses and its value for all of Sandy's residents.

A Member stated that realistically they would not like to see development to the north or the east and that this was the Town Council's primary stance. However, if the Local Plan was to assign housing allocation to Sandy that east would be preferable.

**RESOLVED** to approve and accept the concept statement.

Those voting in favour of the resolution: Cllrs P Blaine, T Cole, W Jackson, G Leach, C Osborne, D Sharman, P Sharman, S Sutton.

Those against: N Aldis.

Abstention: T Knagg.

**Resolved** to include Mr Carter's comment in the Concept Statement summary.

## **13 High Street Shop vacancies and Closures (86-2016/2017)**

Members debated the item and various views were taken. A member stated that to retain the shops they have to be used by residents. Another member stated that the biggest expenses for shops were rent, council tax and refuse collection. It was suggested that shop tenants try and negotiate monthly council tax payments with Central Beds Council and ask if landlords will give



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concession on headline rent. Also ask if landlords will let out vacant shop space for indoor markets. Approach landlords and ask what businesses may move to Sandy. Raise awareness of the vacant High Street shops on the council's website.

## **14 Appointment of Councillor Representative to Outside Body (87-2016/2017)**

Cllr Leach was appointed as councillor representative to Sandy Children's Community Centre.

## **15 Reports from Representatives to Outside Bodies (88-2016/2017)**

There were no reports.

## **16 News Releases (89-2016/2017)**

To issue press releases regarding the new Councillor appointment and Planning Concept Statement approval.

## **17 Chairman's Items (90-2016/2017)**

The Chairman reported that the Deputy Mayor, Town Clerk and himself had a meeting last week with the CBC Councillors and discussed various matters. He made Members aware of a NALC/SLCC meeting on the 2 November 2016 being held at Russell Street, London between 2-4pm if anyone would like to attend. He reminded Members that CBC were holding their Local Plan meeting on 3 November 2016 at the council offices between 2.30-7.30pm and that Members were invited to speak to CBC officers at 2pm before the event.

The Chairman thanked Members who attended the event at the Fire Station last week. A Member thanked the Mayor for arranging the visit and found it very informative.

The Chairman reminded Members of the Mayor's charity meal at the Taj Mahal on 30 October 2016 and that there are a few places left and to contact the office as soon as possible. The Chairman also reminded Members of the Remembrance Parade on 13 November, the Mayor's Carol Service on 17 December at 7pm at St Swithun's Church and a diary note for the Civic Service on 2 April 2017.

## **18 Date of Next Meeting: 28 November 2016 (91-2016/2017)**