

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 4th March 2019 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, A M Hill, W Jackson, T Knagg, M Pettitt (Deputy Mayor), M Scott (Mayor), P Sharman, S Sutton, J Sparrow and N Thompson

Absent: Cllrs T Cole, G Leach and C Osborne

In attendance: Mr C Robson (Clerk), Mrs C Baker-Smith (Admin Team Leader), CBC Cllrs C Maudlin, P Smith and T Stock and seven members of the public

	Action
<p>1 Apologies for Absence (162-2018/2019) Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr C Osborne and Cllr T Cole.</p>	Admin
<p>2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (163-2018/2019) i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i> - None ii) <i>Non-Pecuniary Interests</i> - None iii) <i>Dispensations</i> - None</p>	
<p>3 Public Participation Session (164-2018/2019) A member of the public, Mr T Pavey, spoke regarding parking violations in the Market Square, namely delivery vans and cars blocking the access road between McColls and the chemist stopping him being able to access his house. He asked for the Town Council's support and also if there was any course of action the Town Council could take. CBC Cllr Smith said that he would take the issue up with the Highways Department, but it was a private road. The Clerk said he would also speak to his contact in the Highways Department and the owner of the access road. Signage was also suggested, but this would need to be done by the owner of the road/buildings as it was not on Highways' land.</p> <p>A member of the public, Mr S Allen, welcomed the Black Cat proposal, but said that unless the A1 is moved, the air quality will not improve. A Member said the Town Council is awaiting replies to its letters from Mr Burt's office. CBC Cllr Stock stated that Mr Grayling, MP had been invited to visit this stretch of the A1 and that Central Beds Council have identified air quality as a priority and drafted an action plan.</p> <p>A member of the public, Mr G Clark, wished to know if the Town Council had a preferred route for the East West rail link and what</p>	Cllr Smith Town Clerk

Sandy Town Council

did they think about moving the station? He also said that many residents were not aware of the proposals. The Chair said that it was difficult to inform everyone but that over 500 people attended the Sandy public consultation event last Friday. This would be discussed under Item 7 on the agenda.

A Member enquired about an update on the Sandy Sports Centre but would wait until Item 9. He also asked if the Town Council would consider filling in the holes on the cut-through road in Pleasant Place. CBC Cllr Stock said that the road had been looked at under the Regeneration Scheme for the town and this work would be added to the scheme by CBC.

4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meetings (165-2018/2019)

RESOLVED to:

Receive the Minutes of the Meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 21st January 2019 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (166-2018/2019)

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 Committee meetings held on 28th January 2019 and 19th February 2019.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 28th January 2019.
- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on 18th February 2019.
- iv) **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation that the Town Council adopt the proposed Terms of Reference for the Council's Events Group.

Sandy Town Council

6 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (167-2018/2019)

- i) Members received reports from Sandy's Central Bedfordshire Councillors and noted Central Bedfordshire Council's briefing notes which had already been received.

CBC Cllrs said that they were working hard behind the scenes with regard to the future of the land at Sandye Place school and CBC were trying to arrange a public meeting.

CBC Cllr Stock said that the Great British Spring Clean was going well and several local groups would be taking part.

She also said that there would be a public meeting on Saturday 16th March at Sandy Village Hall from 11am to 1pm to find out residents' thoughts on parking as part of the work to regenerate the Winchester Road estate.

CBC Cllr Maudlin said that the 2019 Cheering for Volunteering Awards were launched on the 14th January and nomination and grant application forms are available from libraries and via the CBC website.

She reported on the Festival of Older People which was held at The Rufus Centre, Flitwick in October last year where people gathered to find out about agencies and activities available to older residents.

CBC Cllr Smith said that a site alongside the train station was for sale at £3m.

- ii) Members received the notes on the latest quarterly meeting between the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Clerk and CBC Ward Councillors.

7 East West Rail Consultation (168-2018/2019)

Members received a report from the Town Clerk on summarising Councillors' previous discussion on the East West Rail consultation.

The Clerk tabled two reports. One being the notes from the East West Rail Parish Consultation meeting held on 28th February, which summarised the meeting and questions and answers raised.

Sandy Town Council

Cllr Sutton reported on the meeting on the 1st March at Sandy Village Hall where Councillors spoke to a fifth of the people attending the event to get their feedback on the proposed routes. 98 questionnaires were completed, and this reflected the views of over 120 people as some couples gave joint answers. The results showed that 84 people supported the development of the East West Rail Link, 64 believe the development could benefit Sandy, 27 people preferred route C and 42 people ruled route A out of consideration. A common theme among respondents was retaining the current station. The Mayor explained that Councillors had met with various parish councils and Network Rail and a lot of work had been put into this consultation. A Member thanked the Clerk for his report.

Members discussed the proposed route options and ruled out Route A, which would see the current station relocated 1.3km south. Members felt this move would negatively impact the town's economy, providing limited scope for future investment and development, as well as moving the station outside of walking distance for most residents and increasing traffic congestion in the south of Sandy. It would also result in an isolated station with no connection to the town. Members also ruled out Route E, which they felt would provide little to no future benefit to the development of Sandy and its community.

Members debated the merits of Routes B, C & D. Some Members felt that while Routes C & D are attractive because they suggest the current Sandy station will be retained, they may carry a long-term risk to the viability of the station. Routes C & D proposed a new station would be built in the Tempsford area, which some Members felt will be too close to the Sandy station on an operational level. It was suggested supporting Route B with a new station in the north of the town may be a preferred route.

A majority of Members expressed support for Routes C & D which propose retaining the current Sandy station as part of the line. The importance of keeping a train station within the town and prioritising the existing station, including improving its facilities and parking was stressed. Routes C & D keep activity and footfall close to the town centre, rather than moving it away to other areas of the town.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to respond to the consultation with a preference for Route C or D, emphasising the importance of maintaining and improving Sandy's existing train station.

Town
Clerk

Sandy Town Council

8 **CB/18/01674/OUT – Appeal by Pigeon Land Ltd (169-2018/2019)**

Members received notification from CBC and supporting information from the Clerk on an appeal to be determined by public inquiry, to planning application CB/18/01674/OUT for the erection of 228 homes on land to the north of Sunderland Road, Sandy.

A Member said it was poor timing that this appeal was out at the same time as the East West Rail Link and Air Quality consultations, both big issues which this development may impact. A Member saw no reason to overturn the Town Council's decision as nothing had changed since the Council's decision.

A Member commented that if the town is to receive more leisure investment and provision and a retained station you need more residential development. He also said that the town needs another care home and allotments which are proposed as part of the development. The town needs development and this development offers facilities for the town.

A Member said that housing is needed but the first proposal for housing should not necessarily be accepted. The Town Council has previously resolved its position that future residential development should go to the east of the town. This is reflected in its Community Plan and Planning Concept Statement.

A Member said that he did not feel CBC had a strong enough case to reject the application and as such proposed that the Town Council withdraws its objection. This motion was not seconded.

A Member proposed that the Town Council's objection is kept until the East West Rail Link and the A1 issues are concluded. The Clerk emphasised that the objection would stand unless it was amended.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council's previous objection stands and that additional comments be submitted to emphasise that no decision should be made until the route of the East West Rail line is agreed.

9 **Action List (170-2018/2019)**

Members noted the action list.

Sandy Sports Centre Leisure Facilities: A Member reported that there will be a change to the management at Stevenage Leisure

Sandy Town Council

and the Manager at Biggleswade will be taking on Sandy. The Clerk will arrange a meeting between the existing manager and the new manager to discuss the merger and how it affects the Town Council. He will also be sending out the notes from the meeting with Cllr Dalgarno which took place earlier in the evening.

Town Clerk

Sandy Place Academy: A Member said that Cllr Dalgarno had mentioned that there were other interested parties in the school, perhaps a free school. A Member said that the Town Council needs to fight for the site to be handed back to CBC. CBC Cllr Stock said that there is an internal working group looking at what the school could be used for and the Regional Schools Commissioner is involved. A Member said that the site was an asset to Sandy and the Clerk reminded Members that this had been identified in the Community Plan and submitted to CBC.

10 Sandy General Practice Surgery (171-2018/2019)

Members received information on the recent merger between Shannon Court Health Centre and the Saffron Health Partnership.

A Member raised concerns that residents had not been consulted on the merger. A Member said that the Health Service do not appear to hold public consultations in the same way other organisations are required to. There will be a meeting at the surgery on Wednesday 6th March to discuss the merger and Members who were patients and were attending, were asked to report back to the Town Council on their findings. CBC Cllr Stock said that GP practices are run as businesses and merging practices will enhance services and is the way forward. The Clerk advised that he had spoken to the lead doctor recently and other local health centres were considered. The merger would offer more services to its patients and the NHS had supported the decision.

Councillors

11 A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Scheme (172-2018/2019)

Members received and noted correspondence from CBC sent on behalf of Highways England with an update on the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Scheme.

A Member said that these changes may cause more traffic build-up in Sandy and Biggleswade. CBC Cllr Stock said that she had met with Highways England and they will continue to monitor the air quality on the A1. A Member suggested that the East West Rail consultation highlights the A1 problem and this should be mentioned to Mr Burt MP.

Sandy Town Council

12 Central Bedfordshire Council Consultations (173-2018/2019)

Members received and considered information on Central Bedfordshire Council's current Air Quality Management Areas for Sandy and Ampthill.

A Member noted that the action plan concentrated on the A1, but other roads in Sandy may be equally affected by pollution, especially London Road.

A Member said that there was nothing in the report that will stop endangering residents' health along the A1 and that the actions to be taken are reliant on Highway England taking action. A Member said that Highways England should pay for the initiative and not CBC.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council responds to CBC asking that pollution on London Road is measured and that the action plan is widened to include a wider area of the town.

13 Crime and Policing (174-2018/2019)

- i) Members received and noted the recent CCTV incidents.
- ii) Members received and noted the most recent crime statistics for Sandy. Members thanked Mrs McFarlane for the Sandy Station Crime Statistics but would have liked the results to be clearer and show exactly what crimes were committed e.g. bicycle thefts, theft, assault etc. The Chairman stated that the information present was all that could be gathered.
- iii) Members received and considered a letter from the Police and Crime Commissioner which was previously circulated to all Members. Members noted that the PCC's letter asked whether Councils would consider using their funds to cover costs of recruiting more PCSOs for their areas. Members stated that the Council did not have the level of uncommitted funds available to meet such a financial requirement.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council did not wish to consider funding a PCSO at this time.

Town Clerk

Sandy Town Council

14 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies (175-2018/2019)

- i) Members received and noted a report from Cllr Hill on the Talk of the Town bus service.
- ii) Members received and noted a report from Cllr Hill on the Sandy Sports and Leisure Association.

Cllr Pettitt thanked Cllr Hill for his report. He went on to clarify the present position.

A detailed letter was sent to Claire Byles dated 30th January bringing her and CBC colleagues fully up to date with SSLA's plans to carry out a full refurbishment of the all-weather pitch (AWP) facility in 2020. The letter urged CBC to confirm a realistic timetable by which existing legal agreements might be renewed but that in the meantime a previous verbal commitment to do so be confirmed in writing which would serve to endorse and support grant funding applications. To date there has been no response.

On Monday 11 February the Clerk and Cllr Pettitt met Christopher Dorrow, Rights of Way Officer for CBC by appointment at the AWP. The plans to create a spectator area on the north side of the pitch by utilising the present player shelter recesses and realigning the existing fence between them back to the same depth, was explained to Mr Dorrow. He stated that while a precedent had been set to incorporate small areas of the bridleway when agreement was originally given for the two recesses before confirming agreement to the new plans, he would need to consult with colleagues. He emailed the Clerk the following day to confirm that having consulted with "legal" colleagues he could confirm that they were happy for work to proceed to move the fence line 1.3 metres back in order to run flush with the 2 existing bays for a total distance of 8.5 metres.

On Friday 1st March Cllr Pettitt met Mr Mick Reynolds, President of Sandy Cricket Club on the AWP. The SSLA's wish to relocate the 2 x player shelters to the south side of the pitch, to create recesses to accommodate these and the rationale behind it was explained to Mr Reynolds. The approximate position of the recesses, approximately 20-30 metres either side of the halfway line was

Sandy Town Council

discussed and in response, Mr Reynolds stated that these would not potentially interfere with or obstruct the marking of the boundary line and would in effect be outside the field of play. Therefore, he confirmed the cricket club would have no grounds to object and indeed was sure would not wish to stand in the way of the proposed changes being implemented. In early February, the Clerk contacted Sport England. They confirmed that not only does SSLA meet the outline criteria but that the refurbishment project is definitely something they would be interested to support from their Community Asset Fund. Accordingly, an outline application form was completed by Cllr Pettitt and the Clerk, submitted and acknowledged on 13th February and an initial response has been promised within 4 weeks.

Other issues raised in Cllr Hill's report will be carried forward to the next meeting of SSLA in May.

15 Regeneration Group (176-2018/2019)

- i) Cllr Pettitt was appointed as the representative from Sandy Town Council to the multi-agency group working on regeneration plans for the parking around the Winchester Road estate.
- ii) Members noted that an event to discuss improvements around parking will be held in Sandy Village Hall on Saturday 16th March from 11am to 1pm.

16 Mayor's Engagements (177-2018/2019)

Members noted a list of recent Mayor's engagements carried out in January and February 2019.

17 News Release (178-2018/2019)

- Sandy Town Council's East West Rail Link decision
- Appointment of new Administrator
- A428 Black Cat concerns on traffic impact
- Sandye Place Academy update

Town Clerk

18 Chairman's Items (179-2018/2019)

There were no Chairman's items.

19 Date of Next Meeting (180-2018/2019) Monday 15th April 2019