

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 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, S Baker, A Effiong, J Hewitt (Chair), R Lacey, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, M Pettitt, M Scott, P Sharman, S Sutton and N Thompson.

Absent: B Blackley

In attendance Mrs. N Sewell (Clerk), Ward Cllr S Bell (left at 19:48), and R Pashby (left at 20:56).

Action

1 Apologies for Absence (207-2023/2024)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Blackley and Ward Councillor Ford.

2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (208-2023/2024)

- i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* – None
- ii) *Non-Pecuniary Interests* – Cllr Osborne declared an interest for Item 7 as President of Sandy Football Club. Cllr Pettitt declared an interest in Item 7 as Vice President of Sandy Colts and a life Member of the Cricket Club.
- iii) *Dispensations* – None

3 Public Participation Session (209-2023/2024)

No members of the public were present. Cllr Osborne reported he had received a query from one resident regarding an issue raised under Chairman's items at the previous PF&R meeting (111-2023/24). The Clerk and Mayor had been copied into the correspondence.

Cllr Osborne had informed the resident that an internal investigation would take place and that once information was available it would be shared with Town Council Members and the resident in question.

4 Minutes of Meeting of Town Council (210 – 2023/2024)

Received the Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 18th December at 6.50pm and the Minutes of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 22nd January 2024 at 7.30pm to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

Town Clerk

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RESOLVED to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein (211-2023/2024)

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 meeting held on 5th February 2024.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 19th February 2024 and agreed the following recommendation:
 - To pay £6,318.00 to CDS to undertake soil and water sampling at the site of the new cemetery extension, as required by Planning Condition 3.

Cllr Osborne added that during the PF&R meeting of 19th February, the Financial Risk Assessment (see Item 13) had been scrutinised by the Committee before recommendation to Full Council.

- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on 5th February 2024 and agree the following recommendations:
 - That the Council agrees to a further year's contract with Plantscape for its Summer Planting scheme in 2024 at the cost of £2,772.
 - That the Council supports the suggestion of the Deputy Town Clerk to investigate future planting and summer display schemes
 - that are guided by biodiversity and environmental policies as well as the views of residents and the Town Council's Outdoor Team.
 - That the proposals for future planting schemes be considered in the Autumn cycle of meetings 2024.
 - That, if possible, the Summer planting scheme for 2024 has a D-Day Commemoration theme.

6 Reports from Central Bedfordshire (212-2023/2024)

Adding to the report published on the agenda Cllr Pashby said that following comments on social media and the fact that the

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site had been severely flooded in recent weeks the planting of the Tiny Forest at The Limes had been cancelled. Work was now commencing to look at other viable options for the scheme.

Cllr Bell reported that at the recent Ward Councillor Surgery a number of Beeston residents had raised concerns about Sandy Grab Services after the deadline for the appeals panel had passed. She told Members that a lot of information had been received.

She added that she had recently visited CBC's CCTV monitoring hub and hoped that some footage from cameras installed across Sandy might help identify the person responsible for the prolific graffiti which had cropped up around the town as well as the person responsible for the damage to the planter outside of the Library. She had also contacted PC Dave Lace to see if Bedfordshire Police could take the matter forward. She reported that Julia Hobson-Cooper, from the Safer Central Team, was looking into the possibility of getting some temporary cameras in place. Ms. Hobson-Cooper had also recently visited The Mushroom following complaints from residents of antisocial behaviour and drug use, but after much observation of the area, no evidence could be found to substantiate the claims.

Cllr Hewitt updated Members by saying that she had also spoken to PC Dave Lace and Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Festus Akinbusoye, about the issues of graffiti around the town, some of which included racist content. Mr. Akinbusoye confirmed that the issue was a priority in the area.

Cllr Aldis asked the Ward Councillors about the garden bin scheme and was told that information would be communicated the following week. While neither Cllr Bell nor Pashby had any details around this, it was confirmed that a £55 annual charge for garden waste collection was being introduced by CBC, which the Council hoped would save them £1.75 million a year. Cllr Sutton asked what would happen to redundant bins, given that CBC's website suggested only 46% of residents would actually take up the scheme. Cllr Bell reported she did not have that information but that she would look at the plan and update Members accordingly.

When questioned about the progress on the adoption of Pleasant Place, Cllrs Pashby, and Bell both stated they had nothing to report on the matter. Cllr Pettitt asked about the state of the road in St Swithun's Way and for an update on assurances by

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CBC it would be dealt with urgently. Cllrs Bell and Pashby confirmed that work was planned for the first quarter or 2024/25 and that they had a highways update meeting the following week when more details would be available.

Councillor Pashby closed by reporting he had signed up 8 volunteers to the SpeedWatch scheme so far.

7 **Pitch Management at Sunderland Road Recreation Ground (213-2023/2024)**

Members received a report from the Town Clerk regarding the historic and current management of the booking of football pitches at Sunderland Road and considered recommendations.

RESOLVED to note the report and ask the Town Clerk to pursue options to recover lost income from Stevenage Leisure and Sandy FC for the historic hire of the pitches.

8 **Martyn's Law (214-2023/2024)**

Members received a report from the Town Clerk regarding Martyn's Law and the Home Affairs Committee's current consultation that ends on 18th March 2024.

RESOLVED to note the report and for STC to support the written evidence submitted to NALC to the Home Affairs Committee in June 2023.

9 **Planning Applications (215-2023/2024)**

Members considered the following application submitted for comment by Central Bedfordshire Council all planning applications are available by visiting **<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning-register>** and entering the planning application reference.

CB/24/00362/REG3	Sandy Service Station, Tower Hill House, New Road, Sandy, SG19 1NY Erection of 35 affordable dwellings with associated parking and landscaping.
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RESOLVED to agree Development Scrutiny Committee's recommendation supporting the initiative, and submitting the following comments;

- Welcome development of this brownfield site with affordable and supported living housing for local people
- Employment with 20 jobs being created
- Concerns over access to the site

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- Extension of the 20 mph speed limit past the site
- Lights controlled crossing required as no footway on station side as land not in ownership of the developer
- SIDs required with SLOW Down and flashing warning lights
- Request buildings will be completed to highest energy efficient standard with solar panels and/or communal heat pump system
- EV charging points in car park areas be available
- Heat provided from waste facility
- Adequate bin storage areas
- Triple glazing on railway fronting habitable rooms
- CBC to promote Traffic Management Orders on residents parking areas
- The number of carparking spaces be reviewed.

10 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies (216-2023/2024)

Members received the following reports from Council representatives on outside bodies;

- i) Sandy Twinning Association Cllr M Pettitt gave a verbal update reporting that a small group would be travelling to Malaunay, France on Friday 3rd May for four days. The future of visits would be reviewed following that trip. When asked about any plans to visit Skarszewy in Poland, Cllr Pettitt said that he had approached Stratton Upper School, Biggleswade, to see if there was any interest in getting the Summer Schools up and running again, but to date had not received a reply. He believed however that representatives from Skarszewy would make contact in the summer.
- ii) SSLA – Cllr M Pettitt gave a verbal update reporting that the Management Committee had met and that a draft copy of the Minutes would be circulated to Members. He added that there was one aspect of the meeting that needed to be drawn to Members' attention regarding a proposed investment of £80,000 of the Association's reserves through the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) and Shawbrook Bank which was presently offering a 4.3% return over 12 months. He asked for Members' approval to make this investment, which was granted.
- iii) Sandy Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr Hewitt gave a verbal update on matters at the Village Hall. She reported that a call for volunteers had only attracted one interested party so far and that more work was needed to publicise the need for volunteers. One action would be to

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advertise on the Greensand Country website and also other local charitable voluntary pages.

One business proposal had been submitted by the former manager of the bar, but currently it did not offer a sustainable solution for the future maintenance and management of the Village Hall and needed further review. She added that the Social Club was continuing to open the bar at weekends and that the Hall was being hired to Sandy Secondary School to help them hold mock exams and later in the year final exams, for which a fee was being paid. It was also good news that as part of its community works linked to the Jenkins Pavilion, Pentaco would be undertaking decoration of the Village Hall corridor. She added that talks are continuing with the Bowls Club over their usage.

RESOLVED to note the reports and to:

- Support SSLA's investment of £80,000 with the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) and Shawbrook Bank.
- Continue to make a call for volunteers to join the Village Hall Management Committee and Board of Trustees.

11 Report following CPRE Planning Workshop (217-2023/2024)

Members received a report from Cllr Baker following attendance of a CPRE Planning Workshop. Members thanked Cllr Baker for the report.

RESOLVED to note the report.

Town Clerk

12 Reception Area and Tourist Information (218-2023/2024)

Members received a report from the Town Clerk regarding the Town Council Office's reception area and change to its Tourist Information offering.

RESOLVED to note the report. The Town Clerk would keep Members informed of any accrued costs as the project went ahead.

Town Clerk

13 Financial Risk Assessment (219-2023/2024)

Members received the annual Financial Risk Assessment for Sandy Town Council from the Town Clerk as per audit requirements.

RESOLVED to adopt the Risk Assessment for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

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14 **Permission to Name The Limes Queen Elizabeth II Wood (220-2023/2024)**

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk outlining the need to make a formal application to the Cabinet Office for permission to name the woods at the Limes 'Queen Elizabeth II Wood.'

RESOLVED to make a formal application to the Cabinet Office to name the area Queen Elizabeth II Wood.

Deputy Clerk

15 **Mole Pest Problem at the Green Beeston Green (221-2023/2024)**

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk outlining further information regarding mole control as requested at the last meeting of Town Council in January 2024.

RESOLVED to take no further action with the issue of moles at Beeston Green but that the Outdoor Team Leader and Admin Team Leader, under their Cemetery Management duties, be allowed to continue to deal with moles as and when necessary, at this site.

Admin Team
Leader/Outdoor
Team Leader

16 **Green Infrastructure Plan (222-2023/2024)**

To receive and adopt the Green Infrastructure Plan for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

RESOLVED to endorse the Green Infrastructure Plan for inclusion in the Neighborhood Plan.

17 **Remedial Works to Boundary Fence (223-2023/2024)**

Members received quotes to undertake remedial works to secure the boundary fence between Sandy New Cemetery and Holly Lodge. Scope of works quoted for set out as per the requirements in ATP Surveyor's report.

RESOLVED to agree quote from Gilks Fencing for £967.34+ VAT.

18 **Action Plan (224-2023/2024)**

Members received the Town Council's Action Plan.

RESOLVED to note the Action Plan. Cllr Pettitt expressed his wish for East West Rail to be placed back on the agenda for discussion at the next Town Council meeting.

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19 **Correspondence (225-2023/2024)**

Members received a list of correspondence sent to the Town Council since the last meeting of Full Council and any actions arising from such items. All correspondence was circulated to Members separately.

RESOLVED to note the correspondence.

20 **COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION (226-2023/24)**

It was **proposed and agreed** that in terms of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, proposed and agreed that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

21 **Update Re Taylor Wimpey Land Transfer (227-2023/2024)**

Members received an update from the Clerk regarding the potential to adopt Taylor Wimpey Land at Berwick Way and Skipton Close.

RESOLVED to respond to Taylor Wimpey requesting to adopt the land at the front of the Scout Hut and research the possibility of adopting the small parcel of land that currently cuts through Town Council land where the Scout Hut and Air Cadets HQ are sited.

Town Clerk

22 **EV Charging Points Plan (228-2023/2024)**

Members received a report from the Clerk and verbal update from Cllr Scott regarding the EV charging points planned for the Town Council's car park and the recently received plan for the suggested EV parking bays.

Cllr Scott firstly thanked the Clerk for pulling the report together at such short notice. He then expressed his concerns regarding the latest plans from CBC which he reported would take up more space than Members had previously been told. His estimate was the latest plan would require 15 to 16 of the current spaces. He reported that every time CBC came back with an update further unexpected changes were being introduced, and he felt that to pursue the current plan would be detrimental to an already fragile town centre as it required too much of the current car park to be relinquished to accommodate the scheme. He also raised concerns regarding CBC's assertion that they would introduce parking enforcement for the charging bays.

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Cllr A Lock supported Cllr Scott's comments stating concerns about the number of parking spaces that would be lost to the scheme.

Cllr Scott asked for Members to pull out of the scheme and have a rethink.

Cllr Osborne stated that while he took on these concerns the matter had already been looked at in depth through the Community Services and Environment Committee, with Tom Price Senior Sustainable Transport Officer at CBC in attendance to answer Members's questions. He stated that STC had already signed an agreement to go ahead with the scheme and that pulling out at this stage was not an option.

RESOLVED to continue to take the project forward with CBC, as agreed previously (71-2023/24).

23 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC (229- 2023/2024)

RESOLVED that the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting.

24 Mayoral Engagements (230-2023/2024)

Members received a report showing the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Engagements since the meeting of Full Council on 22nd January 2024.

RESOLVED to note the report.

25 Press Releases (231-2023/2024)

- Make a call for volunteers to take on both Committee Management and Trustee duties at the Village Hall
- Start of turf testing for the Pitch Perfect Project
- Mayor's team win at the Sandy Garden & Crafts Show and prize donation.
- Co-option advertising.

26 Chairman's Items (232-2023/2024)

During Item 18 the Mayor reported that she had recently spoken to the Conservative MP for North East Bedfordshire Richard Fuller and invited him to address members at the Council Chamber to discuss matters concerning the A1/Black Cat Roundabout works

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and East West Rail and take Members' questions. She would update Members when a date had been confirmed.

- 27** **Date of Next Meeting (233-2023/2024)**
15th April 2024

The meeting closed at 21.54