

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 7th August 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, S Baker, B Blackley, A Effiong (from 7.32pm) J Hewitt (Chair), R Lacey, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, M Pettitt, P Sharman and S Sutton

Absent: Cllrs M Scott and N Thompson

In attendance: Mrs N Sewell (Clerk), Ward Cllrs S Bell, S Ford and R Pashby and two members of the public.

Action

1 Apologies for Absence (68-2023/2024)

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Scott and Thompson.

2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (69-2023/2024)

- i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* – Cllr Osborne declared an interest in items 5 & 13 as President of the ATC and item 5 (Churchyard Wall) as Church Warden and Chair of the PCC. Cllrs A Lock and R Lock also declared an interest in Item 5 as members of the PCC. Cllr Lacey declared an interest in Item 20 as an employee of Network Rail.
- ii) *Non-Pecuniary Interests* – None
- iii) *Dispensations* – None

3 Public Participation Session (69-2023/2024)

Two members of the public were present however the Chair granted permission to speak on the two items pertaining to their business. Item 21 regarding permission to dig trenches across Beeston Green and Item 16 Beeston Allotment Agreement. Both items were duly brought forward for discussion after item 5.

The Chair also offered an update on two ongoing enquires:

- Bench installation and move of a dog waste bin at the Mill triangle by the Riddy, this was still in that hands of CBC as STC awaited permission to undertake the works.
- Installation of defibrillator at Middleham Close. A site meeting had been set up between the resident, Town Clerk and Community Heartbeat Trust to determine costs.

Sandy Town Council

4 Minutes of Extra Ordinary Meeting of Town Council (70-2023/2024)

Received the minutes of the extra ordinary meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 17th July 2023 at 6.45pm and **RESOLVED** to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein (71-2023/2024)

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.

- **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Development Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26th June 2023.
- **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 24th July 2023 and agree the following recommendations:
 - to agree to a payment of £4,100 as a matter of urgency for the resurfacing of the worst affected pathways at Sunderland Road and for funds to come from rolling capital funds. For £15,000 be set aside in the next budget setting cycle to cover further repairs at Sunderland Road and Fallowfield recreations grounds.
 - *Cllr Osborne wished for it to be noted that relating to item 9 on that agenda -Insurance Renewal – that the one year term had already been agreed at the previous town council meeting and that the resolution at PF&R was to see that renewal across three years, with the attached increase in fees.*
- **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes Community Services and Environment Committee on 17th July 2023 and agree the following recommendations:
 - to defer a decision until further clarity from CBC could be obtained regarding the land and their intentions. Ward Cllr Bell and the Town Clerk would look into the matter further.
 - To defer the decision that the Full Council cease further negotiations on establishing a lease regarding the Beeston Green Allotment Site (village development) with CBC and that the Town Council seek additional sites for allotment land until more information is made available (see item 16).
 - To agree a payment of £1,312.00 to pay for repairs to a fence and consider quotes for the removal of trees on the boundary

Sandy Town Council

between Scout Hut and ATC Building to facilitate the repairs to the fence (see item 13).

- To commission a condition survey of the walls at St Swithun's Parish Church Churchyard (see item 9).
- That the Council agrees to go into partnership with CBC, namely the Sustainable Transport Team, to provide EV charging points in the Sandy Town Council carpark choosing option 1 and the Council agrees to remove the barriers at the point of installation to facilitate the installation and use of the EV charging points. The above decisions will require the Council to cease issuing carpark passes and the Council consider the impact the removal of the barriers would have as post-covid the number of commuters has reduced with working from home becoming more common. Also, CBC would issue TMOs.
 - Following approval of the above the Town Council signs the letter of acceptance to CBC and BP Pulse.
- That Sandy Town Council endorses the Green Infrastructure Plan, which has been informed by current residents of the parish through the Neighbourhood Plan process and BRCC, for this and future generations. In endorsing this Plan, the Town Council confirms its support for the concept of GI planning and the methodology used to produce the Plan. In addition, the Town Council will seek to be an active partner in the delivery of this plan, leading and assisting the implementation of those actions which fall into the remit and plans of the Council. The Town Council will annually review the Plan, reporting to the community activity undertaken and planned both by the Council and others, towards implementing the plan.

- iv) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 10th July 2023 and agree the following recommendations:
- To agree the renewal fee for HR Services with the enhanced option at a total cost of £2,300.00, which had not been provisioned for in the budget line for 2023/24.
 - to move the staff member to Scale Point 9 and back date pay to 1st April 2022.
 - to move the staff member up to scale point 20 and back date pay to 1st April 2022.
 - to move the staff member up to scale point 20 and back date pay to 1st April 2022.

Items 16 and 21 were brought forward to be discussed to allow the two members of the public present to represent their views on the items.

Sandy Town Council

6 Clerk's Report (72-2023/2024)

Members received a report from the Clerk regarding works and priorities for the Administrative team outlining the volume of queries handled by the team over the past month.

RESOLVED to note the report.

Cllr Aldis queried the need for the report and requested it be produced on an annual basis. The Chair commented that it was important Members were aware of the officers work priorities and this should continue to be communicated on a monthly basis.

7 Reports from Central Bedfordshire (73-2023/2024)

Cllr Bell reported that all three Ward Councillors had visited Sandy Youth Club on 17th July. A discussion had taken place with both youth workers and young people, which had identified short and medium term needs, which CBC are trying to address as far as possible. However, she added that in the long term, consideration as to where the club will meet going forward needed to take place as it was evident that the current building was not fit for purpose as well as the other uncertainty surrounding the future of Sandye Place. The Chair commented that part of the Neighbourhood Plan was a requirement to have a new Youth Centre.

Cllr Bell added that the planning application for Land on the North West side of the road leading from Brook End to Beeston Green, Beeston (CB/22/04957) had been refused and to date, no appeal had been lodged. The development is now subject to an Enforcement Notice, the first date of compliance being 20th August. She reported that Ward Cllrs would continue to engage with the land owner and residents to try to obtain a resolution regarding the future of the site that would be acceptable to all.

Ward Cllrs Bell and Pashby had visited Warren Villas Quarry site, planning application (CB/23/01736), regarding the inert waste recycling application which is currently awaiting the decision, expected by 23/08/23. Cllr Bell raised her concerns that the plan would destroy the water course.

Sandy Football Club had a goalpost stolen recently. They have been able to replace it with assistance from the Ward Councillor Grant Scheme.

Cllr Ford reported that the Sandy Secondary School development was now full steam ahead following some issues with Cadent and the laying of gas pipes. New windows and a roof would be installed

Sandy Town Council

over the summer holidays and it was planned for works to be completed by September 2024.

Cllr Aldis raised a number of questions for Ward members. He asked what the school would be doing to accommodate the September 2023 intake. Cllr Bell reported that this was all in hand and that provision had been made for the accommodation of the September intake, as had been reported at a meeting of school governors at which Cllr Aldis was present.

He also asked about CBC's No Idling policy and what actions were being taken to designate areas as No Idle Zones. Cllr Ford replied that CBC was looking to give officers licences that would enable them to take enforcement action against offenders.

Cllr Pettitt asked if Cllr Ford could give an update on the planned crossing by St Swithun's School. Cllr Ford said that Road Space had been booked to facilitate the works during the October half term, however he promised that he would communicate clearly with all parties to confirm when works would take place.

Cllr Sutton mentioned that the light at the library seemed to be left on outside of operating hours and asked if this could be looked into. Cllr Ford agreed to look into the matter.

Cllr Pashby reported that the planning application for the old Barclays Bank building on the High Street had been recalled. He added that the application for 400 houses outside of Biggleswade would be considered by the Development Planning Committee on 23rd August if any STC representatives wanted to attend and speak at the meeting.

8 Uncontested Election Charges (73-2023/2024)

Members received a notice of charges for the sum of £415.53 for the uncontested election in Sandy for 2023.

RESOLVED to note the charges and for them to be paid from Earmarked Reserves set up for election costs.

Town
Clerk

9 Condition Survey for St Swithuns Churchyard wall (74-2023/2024)

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk for the Town Council to commission a condition survey of the Churchyard Wall at St Swithun's Church to understand the need for essential repairs.

RESOLVED to defer the decision until a further two quotes were received. Agreed that when all quotes had come in the decision on

Deputy
Clerk

Sandy Town Council

who to commission for the works would be delegated to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk as set out in Financial Regulations.

10 **Microsoft Licence Renewal (75-2023/2024)**

Members received costs for Microsoft 365 licence renewal (August 2023 to July 2024) at the following quote from the Town Council's current IT provider.

Quote for next 12 months 365 Licenses August 2023 – July 2024
7 x Business Standard @ £10.30 per month = £72.10
1 x Business Standard @ £3.30 per month = £3.30
Total £75.40

This sees a rise in costs from Microsoft of 90p per month for the 7 x Business Standard and 30p per month for the 1 x Business Standard from August 2022 to July 2023.

To also note backdated fees for 5 months are due for the licence fees between March 2023 and July 2023, for which no invoice was previously received.

Backdated 365 licenses March -July
7 X Business Standard @ £9.40 per month for 5 months = £329.00
1 X Business Standard @ £3.00 per month for 5 months = £15.00
Total £344.00

RESOLVED to agree payment for back dated licences and for the next 12 months. Members requested further clarification on what constituted the 7 business licences against the 1 business licence. The Town Clerk would look into this and update Members accordingly.

Town
Clerk

11 **Salt/Gritter Equipment Purchase (76-2023-2024)**

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk on the proposed purchase of equipment to facilitate salting in agreed areas of the Town Centre.

RESOLVED to agree to purchase the Glasdon Turbocast at a cost of £1,315.35 plus £130 for the annual maintenance package and delivery. It was recommended that the budget line be allowed an overspend for the item as it was likely the Town Council would have underspend elsewhere across the year to even it out.

Deputy
Clerk

Sandy Town Council

12 Planning Applications (77-2023/2024)

Members considered the following application submitted for comment by Central Bedfordshire Council.

<p>CB/20/02569/FULL Land at Girtford Bridge House, London Road, Sandy, SG19 1NA</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the site to provide 2 drive-thru's (Use Class A3/A5), 3 restaurant units (Use Class A3) and 1 restaurant/gym unit (Use Class A3/D2), following demolition of the existing buildings.</p> <p>RESOLVED to object for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members believed it would encourage residents to cross the A1 on foot, there is already a serious safety risk here with residents of the Meadows crossing to get into Sandy Town Centre.• It would lead to increased pollution for the area.• It was a premature scheme bearing in mind plans by National Highways to improve the junction that had not been considered in the application.• Access to the sliproad is insufficient and already heavily used by traffic accessing the cafe, service station and car wash already sited in the area.• There were concerns that litter from the retailers on site would end up in the surrounding area including the river adjacent, causing damage and harm to wildlife habitats.
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Sandy Town Council

13 **Removal of Trees on Boundary Fence line between Scout Hut and ATC Building (78-2023/2024)**

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk regarding the costs for the partial re-siting of the fence at the boundary of the Scout Hut and ATC Building in Berwick.

RESOLVED to commission Company B for the works at a cost of £960.00 on the condition that Company B would also remove all debris/logs from the site. It was recommended that the budget line be allowed an overspend for the item as it was likely the Town Council would have underspend elsewhere across the year to even it out.

Deputy
Clerk

14 **Neighbourhood Plan (79-2023/2024)**

Members received a verbal update regarding the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group from the Chair. She informed Members the project was made up through a number of different elements including:

- A Town Centre Improvement Plan, which was currently an aspirational document and had not yet been consulted on with business owners.
- Green Infrastructure Plan which had been passed to Consultant Sally Chapman who would help the group draw up the relevant policies.
- Design Guide, which again Ms Chapman would help to draft policies for.
- Sandye Place Master Plan, which was also aspirational but that the group hoped would soon be able to discuss with CBC. This would not form part of the actual document policies.

She added that the Consultant would be at the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and would be able to update them on the timeline.

RESOLVED to note the report.

15 **Christmas Lights Timing (80-2023/2024)**

Members were asked to consider which hours the Town Council would prefer the Christmas lights display to burn and the last day for light up.

RESOLVED that the light display would be lit from 4.30pm to 10.30pm as per 2022 but that they would stay on until Twelfth Night.

Town
Clerk

16 **Legal Fees – Beeston Allotment Agreement for Lease (81-2023/2024)**

The Chair invited a member of the public to speak as they had attended on behalf of the Allotment Association. He told members that the Association were disappointed that planning and funding for

Sandy Town Council

the allotments had been withdrawn. Members questioned the source of this information as no planning or funding had been withdrawn. Cllr Ford added that there had been issues regarding the larger site across from the A1 at Beeston, and that this was still being considered by Assets. He agreed that once more information was available the member of the public would be informed.

Members received an email from Woodfines Solicitors outlining details of a draft lease to be agreed with CBC over land offered for allotment use in Beeston and enable progression of the Town Council's plan to offer allotment land to residents and considered legal fees of £1,000-£1,500 for the drawing up of that lease.

RESOLVED to defer a decision until further clarity from CBC could be obtained regarding the land and their intentions. Ward Cllr Bell and the Town Clerk would look into the matter further.

Town
Clerk/Cllr
Bell

17 Accountancy fees for Budget Setting (82-2023/2024)

Members considered the need for accounting support from DCK for the budget setting process at a cost of £570.00 for a day in the office and £80.00 per hour for any additional hours needed.

RESOLVED to agree to commission this support from DCK for the coming budget setting process.

18 Minutes of SSLA AGM (83-2023/2024)

As Trustee of the Sandy Sports and Leisure Association (SSLA) Members received the Minutes of the SSLA AGM held on 15th June 2023 along with the Everyone Active Management Report.

RESOLVED to note the Minutes and Management Report.

19 Action Plan (84-2023/2024)

Members received an updated Full Council Action Plan for 2023/24.

RESOLVED to note the reports and its updates. Also to note that £8,427.55 had been received and banked by the Town Council from the Friends of Sandy Christmas Lights.

20 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies (85-2023/2024)

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

- Cllr N Aldis – East West Rail Consultation
- Cllr N Aldis – Talk of the Town
- Cllr M Pettitt – Sandy Twinning Association

RESOLVED to note the reports.

Sandy Town Council

21 Report from Beeston Working Group (86-2023/2024)

Members received a report from the Beeston Working Group and were asked to consider granting permission for a resident to dig a trench across Beeston Green to facilitate the laying of new pipes for their development.

The resident in question was present and the Chair invited them to speak on the matter to elaborate on the works. They explained that there was a water main that runs across the green to their property and the simplest way to connect that main was for Anglia Water to dig a small trench for a maximum of 7 metres in length and a metre deep. The trench would remain open only for 2 or 3 days and then the land and grass would be reinstated.

RESOLVED to grant permission for the works to be undertaken on the condition that a safe crossing was made available for pedestrians using the green during the works. The resident was also asked to ensure that adequate communication to other residents in Beeston would alert them to the works.

22 Correspondence (87-2023/2024)

Members received a list of correspondence that had been circulated separately to Members prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED to note the list.

23 Mayoral Engagements (88-2023/2024)

Members received a report showing the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Engagements since the last meeting of Full Council on 7th August 2023.

RESOLVED to note the report.

24 Press releases (89-2023/2024)

RESOLVED to submit press releases on the following subjects:

- EV Charging Points
- Call for new Members (Co-Option in September)
- Publicise the up coming SkateJam

25 Chairman's Items (90-2023/2024)

The Chair informed Members that a schedule of costs had been received by CDS for the next phase of the Cemetery Development (landscaping and build works). The work would need to go out to tender, but given the likely cost of this the Council would need to carefully consider where funds would come from, including the possibility of taking out a Public Bodies Work Loan (PBWL). It was suggested that an EOM of Council be held asap in order to discuss this matter in some detail.

Sandy Town Council

Date of next meeting

EOM TBC

Full Council 18th September 2023

The meeting closed at 21.53