

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee of Sandy Town Council which was held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 10 June 2019 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, P Blaine, A M Hill, W Jackson, C Osborne (Chair), M Pettitt, M Scott and P Sharman.

In attendance: Mr C Robson (Town Clerk), and two members of the public

	<i>Actions</i>
<p>1 Apologies for absence (1-2019/20) Apologies for absence had been received from Central Bedfordshire Cllrs Ford, Maudlin and Stock.</p>	Admin
<p>2 Declarations of interest (2-2019/20) Cllr M Scott declared an interest in agenda item 8 i as a member of the Sandy & District Horticultural Association. Cllr Scott also declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 ii, due to a family member having autism.</p> <p>Cllr W Jackson declared an interest in agenda item 8 i as a member of the Sandy & District Horticultural Association, who also sits on the group's committee.</p> <p>Cllr C Osborne declared an interest in agenda item 15 as a Warden at St Swithun's Church.</p>	
<p>3 Election of Vice Chairman (3-2019/20) Cllr P Blaine was nominated and seconded to act as Vice Chairman of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee for the 2019/20 year. RESOLVED to elect Cllr P Blaine as Vice Chairman.</p>	
<p>4 Public Participation Session (4-2019/20) One member of the public wished to speak in support of a grant application and it was agreed that this would be done under the relevant agenda item.</p>	
<p>5 Minutes of previous meeting (5-2019/20) RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 29 April 2019 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>6 Annual Accounts for the Year Ending 31 March 2019 (6-2019/20) Members received and considered the draft accounts for the 2018/19 financial year. Members reviewed the accounts page by page and put forward points for correction. Members discussed the list of Councillors on</p>	

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page 3 of the accounts and the Clerk explained that the Council's accountant had advised that the list of Councillors should be those who have the responsibility for approving and adopting the accounts on 24th June at the Full Council meeting. Members felt that there should also be mention in the accounts of those Members who were part of the Council during the year the accounts covered, but no longer sat on Council following the May elections.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND the Annual Accounts for the Year Ending 31 March 2019, subject to the following amendments:

Pg. 3

Amend the list of Councillors to reflect DCK advice and add note on Councillors who were in position during the 2018/19 election year but no longer sit on Council.

Pg. 8

Remove the word 'of' from section 3

Amend the list of Section 137 expenditure to show Sandy Secondary School as the recipient of the £25 grant, rather than Sandy Lower and Sandy Upper schools.

Clarify need to include £250 twinning grant under 2019 grants awarded.

Pg 10

Remove word 'Fallowfield' from final line of Freehold Land and Buildings section.

Pg. 13

Remove duplicate word 'amounts' in section 13.

7 **Financial Reports (7-2019/20)**

- i) Members considered a balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for April 2019. The Clerk and Chair clarified several of the figures for Members' information.
- ii) Members received a budget overview report for April 2019.
- iii) Members scrutinised a schedule of payments made since the previous meeting. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Schedule.
- iv) It was **RESOLVED** that the Chair check and approve the bank reconciliations and statements.

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8 Grant Applications (8-2019/20)

- i) Councillor W Jackson left the room. Members received and considered an application from Sandy & District Horticultural Association. The Chairman summarised the request and informed Members that last year the Council had awarded a grant of £600 from the Event Support budget.

Mr A Havergal spoke on the application and said that the event was one of the biggest in Sandy and it continued to be run by a small group of dedicated volunteers. Although there was some uncertainty about the future of the event after 2019 due to the closure of SPA, the group would continue to strive to put on a quality event in the town.

Members stated their support for the event, and it was **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £600 to SDHA for the Sandy Show from the 2019/20 Event Support budget. *Cllr Scott did not vote on the item.*

A Member asked that a list of all regular annual grants be drawn up and brought back to Council for consideration, as these regular grants could be factored into the annual precept and a budget set up to support them. The Chair commented that this had been looked at previously and resulted in the establishment of an event support budget.

Members discussed the impact the closure of SPA may have on the event and encouraged the organisers of the show to stay in close contact with the Town Council and that information be shared between the two on any developments in relation to future access to the site. Mr Havergal confirmed he had been in regular contact with the Town Clerk.

- ii) Members received and considered an application from Autism Bedfordshire. A Member commented that the request was modest given the scope of work they carry out. **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £300 to Autism Bedfordshire from the 2019/20 grants budget. *Cllr Scott did not vote on the item.*
- iii) Members received and considered an application from The Need Project. A Member commented that it was a worthy cause but expressed some concern that the organisation was investing more in paid employees rather than relying on volunteers and £70,000 a year seemed high for the group's running costs. It was noted that the project does support 13 families in Sandy and is a valuable resource. **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £500 to The Need Project from the 2019/20 grants budget.

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9 Action List (9-2019/20)

Members received and noted a copy of the action list. The Clerk commented that the archaeological contractor had now provided an inventory of finds but had also written expressing a need to increase post excavation cost estimates based on the number of finds made. The Clerk is taking advice from CBC's archaeological team to look at addressing this with the contractor. External work on the site has stopped this week due to the poor weather and the builders are awaiting progress by UK Power on the electricity connection for the building.

Members discussed the finds from the excavation, and it was agreed that at some point an update to the displays in the Roman Sandy exhibition should be carried out. The Clerk explained that the Council could work with Bedford Borough's Finds Officer on refreshing displays.

10 2019/20 Committee Action Plan (10-2019/20)

Members received and considered a draft action plan for the 2019/20 Council year. The Clerk informed Members that he would begin work on actions for the progression to Gold Status in Summer 2019, with a view to being in a position to consider an application by January 2020.

Work on the renewal of the lease between the SSLA and STC for land at Sunderland Road had begun and this would be added to the action list.

Members asked for a list of all policies with their renewal dates, so they could see what was coming up over the next two years.

RESOLVED to approve the one-year action plan.

11 Annual Report (11-2019/20)

Members received and considered the Council's 2018/19 Annual Report, it was agreed that the following changes be made:

- The Mayor's report would be edited and shortened to remove duplications with elements of the committee reports.
- Make reference to the late Cllr D Sharman and those Councillors who did not stand for re-election within the Mayor's report.
- Make reference to the community stand within the Mayor's report.
- Make reference in the Mayor's report to the Council's recognition on the need for town centre regeneration and addressing vacant units.
- Remove thumbnail pictures within the text body and just have

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pictures across the bottom of the page.

- Check that the 'grants awarded' page tallies with the 2018/19 accounts.
- Replace the Electoral Wards list with a map of the electoral wards.
- Have footnotes on Cllr D Sharman and Cllr A Gibson's meeting attendance on all committee lists as well as the Town Council.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Annual Report be adopted by Full Council subject to the above amendments.

12 Car Parking Access Card Request (12-2019/20)

Members received and considered a request for additional car park access cards from Shannon Court Surgery/Saffron Health Partnership. It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to approve a request for four new parking passes by Shannon Court Surgery.

13 Christmas Lights Tender (13-2019/20)

Members received and considered quotations for the next three years' Christmas lights provision. A Member commented that it had been very helpful and useful that the Clerk consulted with the FOSCL on the lights. A Member echoed this and stated that the group had expressed a definite preference for red, contemporary style lights. It was noted that Company A gave the most value for money on the number of lights provided in a suggested scheme.

RESOLVED to award the 2019/20/21 Christmas Lights contract to Company A.

14 Car Park Line Marking (14-2019/20)

Members received and considered a report from the Town Clerk on line marking work in the Council's car park. A Member commented that the village hall car park may also need line marking and the Chairman agreed that this could certainly be looked at.

RESOLVED that the committee set aside a budget of £1,000 from capital expenditure for line marking work to the car park.

RESOLVED that the Clerk look to obtain further quotes and delegated authority is given to the Clerk to schedule works for summer 2019 with a preferred provider. The PFR committee will ratify the proposed contractor and schedule of works at its meeting on 22 July 2019.

It was agreed that the Clerk should look at adding in hatch marking on

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the bays intended for Council vehicle use.

15 St Swithun's Church Clock (15-2019/20)

Members received and considered quotations for work required to St Swithun's church clock. The Clerk explained that if the Council still wished to go ahead with the work, he would recommend Company B, which provided a cheaper quotation and a possible better value alternative solution/repair to the problem. If the proposed fix did not work, the Council would not be charged and a new quote would be submitted.

Members discussed the repair work and expressed the importance and value they felt the clock offered the town. It is a community asset and must be kept in good order. A Member asked about the Council's legal power to fund the work and the Clerk confirmed that he had taken advice from BATPC on the matter and the Council could use powers given to it under the Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2 which state that '*A parish council may provide, maintain and light such public clocks within the parish they consider necessary...*'

RESOLVED to approve Company B carry out repair work to the strike hammer and check spring at a cost of £450.

RESOLVED to approve Company B attempt to re-programme the existing pendulum regulator on site at a cost of £400. If a re-programme cannot be achieved, a new quote will be provided and the matter will be brought back to committee for further consideration.

Cllr Osborne did not vote on the item.

16 Jenkins Pavilion Management Contract (16-2019/20)

Members reviewed the Jenkins Management Contract and recommendation for signing by Council. The contract had previously been reviewed and recommended by a working group but was not signed due to concerns about potential changes to CBC leisure provision in Sandy in 2017/18. Now that CBC and SLL have new management officers in place, it would be a good time to get the contract signed, especially as it set out certain activities which SLL were not currently doing.

Members raised some concerns about the responsibility the Council would have for maintenance to its building and how this would be split between the two parties. The Clerk suggested a schedule could be included but a Member commented that he knew from experience that this might be difficult to create. It was noted that the overall leisure contractor between CBC and SLL for leisure provision was due to be renewed soon and that this contract formed part of that overall agreement. There would therefore be opportunities for Council to revisit specifics of the agreement

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in the future. It was felt important to have something in place which could be used to monitor SLL and their management of the pavilion.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the contract be signed by Council subject to the following amendments:

Change 'Sandy Upper School' to 'Sandy Secondary School'.

Section 4 iii) - Insert 'of'.

Section 5 - State fees will be communicated to CBC and SLL

Section 8 – Change 'becoming' to 'become'

Section 8 – Insert 'referee/manager'

Section 9 ii – Change 'owner' to 'Council'

17 Death in Service Policy (17-2019/20)

Members read and considered the Council's Death in Service Policy. Members agreed that the policy should not be referred to as 'Death in Service' as this applied to employees, rather than the national figures the policy covers.

It was agreed that the following changes be made to the draft policy:

Change of policy name to: 'Protocol for Marking the Death of a Royal or Senior National Figure or Local Holder of High Office' and Ensure all Council references refer to STC.

Members discussed whether it was necessary for the Council to hold its own condolence book. Other organisations, such as the Church would be doing something similar and this could be a duplication of efforts. It was also felt by some Members that the Church Rooms would offer a more appropriate setting for contemplation than the Council Offices. Another Member commented that such an act would be a civic matter and as such it is correct that a book of condolence be held in a civic building. A Member agreed that not everyone may wish to attend a church to sign a book of condolence and an alternative should be available. The pages would be loose leaf and could all be put together as one book held by Bedford archives.

It was agreed that the Council would hold a book of condolence for signing by members of the public.

Members questioned laying flowers at Faynes Corner and it was agreed

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that St Swithun's churchyard would be more appropriate, subject to approval by the church.

It was **RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the Protocol for Marking the Death of a Royal or Senior National Figure or Local Holder of High Office be adopted by Council subject to the changes below.

- Amend Page 108 to reflect that parliamentary constituency boundaries may change and reference should be made to the Member of Parliament covering the Sandy ward.
- Amend page 110 to reflect that a chair will be provided for members of the public who are signing the book of condolence.
- Liaise with the church to seek permission to lay flowers in St Swithun's churchyard and amend page 111 accordingly. Amend to show action to be implemented by Head of Grounds Team.
- Amend page 113 to take out reference to Sandringham.

18 Complaints Policy (18-2019/20)

Members read and considered the Council's Complaints Policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the following changes to the Council's Complaints Policy:

- Change the external auditor details to Mazars.
- Amend section 7 of the policy to reflect the Scheme of Delegations that the Grievance and Complaints committee should exclude Members of the HR Committee.

19 Chairman's Items (19-2019/20)

There were no Chairman's Items. The Chair thanked the office for the work in putting together such a large agenda.

20 Date of next meeting (20-2019/20)

It was noted that the next Policy, Finance and Resources Committee meeting will be on 22 July 2019.