

Sandy Town Council

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

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, P Blaine, J Hewitt, J Ivanciu-Wilkinson, L Ivanciu-Wilkinson, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne, M Pettitt (Chair), M Scott, P Sharman, and S Sutton.

Absent: Cllr N Thompson

In attendance: Mrs N Sewell (Clerk), Mr Robert Lacey (Co-Optee) and Ward Cllr Stock.

The Chair led Members in a minute's silence in remembrance of the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Action

1	<p>Apologies for Absence from (97-2022/2023) Members received a request for an extended leave of absence from Cllr Thompson on 8th September following his recovery from an accident.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to accept the request with an expectation that Cllr Thompson would attend the full council meeting on 23rd January 2023, if not before. Members requested Cllr Thompson keep the Clerk informed of progress.</p> <p>Apologies were also received from Ward Cllrs Ford and Maudlin.</p>	Admin
2	<p>Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations number (98-2022/2023)</p> <p><i>i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests – None</i></p> <p><i>ii) Non Pecuniary Interests – Cllr Osborne for item 16 since his wife is the Chair of Governors at St Swithun's Primary School.</i></p> <p><i>iii) Dispensations – none</i></p>	Admin

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3 Public Participation Session (99-2022/2023)

Three members of the public were present; and in addition, the following questions were raised through Members:

1. A resident presented Members with a petition requesting Stagecoach reverse a decision to cut bus routes 72 and 73 that run through Sandy. *The residents were deferred to Ward Councillor Stock who was to update those present during item 8.*
2. Cllr Pettitt read out an emailed suggestion from two residents for improvements to the Town Centre toilets. *Clerk to investigate complaint about cleanliness on site. Members agreed to add the item to a future meeting of CS&E in the new financial year.*
3. Cllr Pettitt read out an email and three questions from a resident querying the way their questions had been handled at the previous Town Council meeting in August. Cllr Pettitt updated Members on his responses and the Clerk was instructed to forward all questions and responses to all members for reference. Members agreed that they were satisfied that the questions had been handled correctly. It was suggested that the Public Participation policy be reviewed at a future meeting of PF&R.

Cllr
Stock

Town
Clerk

Town
Clerk &
PF&R

4 Co-option for Vacancy at Pinnacle and Ivel Ward (100-2022/2023)

The Chairman welcomed Mr R Lacey who had applied for co-option and was in attendance.

Members were reminded that a candidate needed a proposer and seconder to move on to a vote.

Mr R Lacey was invited to speak on why he was applying for co-option to the Council. He expanded on his application form, his interests, and his skill set, which he felt would help him in the role of Councillor.

A Member stated that Sandy Town Council puts on a lot of events and asked him if he were the sort of person to 'roll up their sleeves and get involved'. Mr Lacey confirmed that he would be willing to be involved at events and had supported the town council on events previously.

Another Member asked if he saw any conflicts with work commitments and being a Member of the Council. Mr Lacey replied that while his current commitments were set to increase in the

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future, he did not foresee any problems between those and the requirements of being a Member of the Town Council.

The Chairman asked if there were any proposers for the candidate. Mr Lacey's appointment to Council for Ivel Ward was proposed, seconded, and received a unanimous vote and he was therefore co-opted onto the Council.

Mr Lacey signed his Declaration of Acceptance and joined the meeting. The Mayor offered him his congratulations and welcomed him to the council.

5 Minutes of previous Town Council Meeting (101-2022/2023)

Admin

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the previous meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 22nd August 2022 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

6 Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein - number (102-2022-2023)

Admin

To receive and note the minutes of the meetings of the following committees and sub committees (if applicable) to approve recommendations therein which do not arise elsewhere.

i) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of meetings of Development Scrutiny Committee held on 5th September and 26th September 2022.

ii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of Policy Finance and Resources Committee held on 26th September.

iii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on 26th Sept 2022.

iv) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of Human Resources Committee held on 3rd October 2022. **RESOLVED** to discuss recommendations from this meeting during private session at the end of the meeting (see item 22.2).

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7 Robert Peel School Governors (103-2022-2023)

Members received a verbal request from Liesl Ganny, Head teacher at Robert Peel Primary School, for Members to consider joining the Board of School Governors. Ms Ganny explained the benefits of becoming a Governor including being able to shape the work of the school, ensure that decisions made were taken with best interests of the children in mind and to meet the children and hear what they had to say.

Members interested should either contact Ms Ganny directly or go through the Clerk.

8 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Council (104-2022-2023)

Ward Councillor Stock welcomed Mr Lacey as a new Member to Sandy Town Council.

She told Members and the residents present that CBC had been notified by the Transport Commissioner's Office on 16th September that Stagecoach would be withdrawing services of the 72 and 73 bus.

She said that on the Thursday prior to the meeting it had been agreed that Grant Palmer would take over the service from 31st October, but with a slight change to the service.

Grant Palmer would run hourly services from Monday through Saturday, offering an alternative service on to Pottton and Biggleswade. The Sandy to Bedford Service would also be finishing earlier in the evening. She added it was as close to a like for like service as CBC was able to agree.

A Member questioned Cllr Stock about the replacement service saying that it would create a two-hour delay for those wishing to continue to Pottton and Biggleswade adding it was very disappointing especially as more people travelled from Sandy to Biggleswade than from Sandy to Bedford.

Cllr Stock replied that it was positive news that Grant Palmer were taking up the service and understood people would be disappointed by the reduced service. She added that it was still early days but that she would feedback comments to the Transport department at CBC so they could be shared back to Grant Palmer.

Another Member added that as we move forward bus companies need to look at what works best for passengers and that the Council needed to be constructive with its feedback.

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When questioned about the Government's Bus Service Improvement plan Cllr Stock said that the grants from the scheme could not be used to subsidize commercial routes. However, she added, CBC could work towards improving those routes.

When asked how this change might affect the viability of Biggleswade's Transport hub scheme, Cllr Stock said she could not give an answer on the subject.

Questions were also asked about pre-paid tickets for the service and whether they would be honored. Cllr Stock said she would need to check what the process for refunds/transfers might be.

Cllr Stock informed Members about a new CBC initiative The Active Community Grant, where groups can apply for up to £5,000 for projects and initiatives that help to get people in Sandy between the ages of 16 and 34 or those with long term illness or disability to get more active.

Members were told that some resurfacing improvements would be taking place along Route 51 to make it better for cycling and walking.

Cllr Stock also reported that issues with The Meadows were on Tony Keaveney's (CBC Assistant Director of Housing Services) radar and that he had already secured a new contract for the site.

Cllr Stock finished by saying the next CBC Topic Session would be on Tree Planting.

A Member asked if a bus stop could be provided by The Meadows to enable the residents to journey safely to and from site. Cllr Stock said she would raise the issue with Mr Keaveney.

9 **Action List (105-2022/2023)**

Cllr Aldis left the meeting at 20.30 and returned at 20.33

East West Rail

The next meeting of the EWR Local Representative Groups is to be held on 8th November between 18.30 and 20.00. Cllrs Blaine, Hewitt and Pettitt to attend.

A1 Local Issues

A letter was sent on 23rd August to National Highways following the previous town council meeting urging them to carry out and publish a comprehensive study of traffic coming into Sandy via

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these routes, to provide a real understanding of the impact projects around the A1 would have on the town, asserting that no work should proceed until this study had been undertaken. A copy of the letter was also sent to the Secretary of State for Transport, Richard Fuller MP and Lorna Carver Director of Place and Communities at Central Bedfordshire Council. STC had received a response from National Highways which was forwarded to Members on 14.09.2022 and a response from Richard Fuller was circulated to Members on 09.09.2022 which can be viewed here: <https://www.richardfuller.co.uk/news/proposed-closure-gap-central-reservation-a1-biggleswade-road-upper-caldecote-tingeys-corner>

Sandye Place Academy

No further updates to report currently.

10 Events (106-2022/2023)

Members received a report from the Clerk about current staffing issues and the need to consider outside support for upcoming events both organised and supported by Sandy Town Council.

It was RESOLVED that any staff working at events would be given the choice between TOIL and overtime payments. Cllr Sutton agreed to manage all STC's involvement in the upcoming Christmas Tree Festival. Cllr Hewitt agreed to manage volunteers for events and requested those interested in volunteering email her direct.

11 Beeston Allotment Lease (107-2022/2023)

The Chairman deferred this item to later in the meeting to be dealt with under confidential items (see item 22.2)

12 Police Priority Setting (108-2022/23)

Members received a verbal report from Cllr Hewitt who had attended the Police Crime Commissioners Annual Parish Conference on 4th October. She gave an insight into the challenges that the Police force were facing in Bedfordshire and said she would circulate slides from the meeting to Members. She explained that Sandy was now classed under Area 4 along with other local parishes including Potton, Sutton, and Everton and that the Priority Setting was for each area. She explained that there was to be only one priority per area.

The following priorities were suggested by Members as issues for the town:

- Casual drug use and associated antisocial behaviour

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- Worrying increase in more serious incidents, such as the recent raid at McColl's in the Market Square.

Members felt a more visible presence of police within the town would also be helpful.

It was RESOLVED to invite the Police Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire to meet Members and discuss the issues prior to the next Town Council meeting.

Town Clerk

13 Recruitment Costs (109-2022/23)

Admin

Members received and noted the following expenditure for recent recruitment advertising for the Deputy Clerk and Community Engagement Officer vacancies:

- Advertising through SLCC website Deputy Clerk £240 (inc VAT)
- Advertising through Biggleswade Chronicle (online portals) – Deputy Clerk £450.00 (inc VAT)
- Advertising through Biggleswade Chronicle (online portals) – Community Engagement Officer £450.00 (inc VAT)
- Mayors Secretary (TBC)

Other free advertising has also been undertaken through the following channels:

- Gov.uk find a job website
- STC website and facebook pages
- Clerk's personal LinkedIn account
- Bedfordshire Branch of SLCC
- BATPC members

14 Cemetery Working Group (110-2022/2023)

Town Clerk

Members received and noted a report from the Cemetery Working Group. The Clerk was asked to take the following actions forward:

- Contact Odell's Skip Hire to see if a skip could be placed in the Depot Yard.
- To organise a meeting with CDS to discuss next steps and move the Cemetery Extension project forward.
- To contact the residents adjacent to the Cemetery to finalize details for installation of the boundary fence.

It was RESOLVED that the Cemetery Working Group report be deferred to PF&R.

15 Street Naming (111-2022/2023)

Town Clerk

Members received a request from CBC Planning to submit suggested names for a new development to the rear of 76 St Neots Road.

It was RESOLVED to submit the following suggestions:

- Odell Court – Odell is the surname of the grandfather of the most recent owners. Charles (Charlie) Odell was also captain of

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the Sandy Fire Brigade when it was a horse drawn vehicle. Odell is also a prominent Sandy name.

- Sharman Close or Sharman Court – in remembrance of a former Town Councillor.
- Elizabethan Court – named after and in remembrance of HM Queen Elizabeth II

16 Car Park Opening Times (112 -2022/2023)

Members received a request from the Business Operations Manager at St Swithun's Primary School to extend the Town Centre Car park opening times to help alleviate traffic issues at the School during morning drop off times.

It was RESOLVED that the car park opening time of 8.45am remain. Members felt that the Council should not promote car use in the town for school drop offs. A suggestion would be made to refer the matter to CBC as part of its transport scheme to see what assistance they might be able to give to the matter.

Admin

17 Reports from Outside Bodies (113-2022/2023)

i) Members received and noted the report from the Sandy Sports and Leisure Association.

ii) Members received and noted the report from the Sandy Twinning Association.

18 Councillor Surgery (114-2022-2023)

Members noted a report from Cllrs R Lock and M Pettitt regarding the Councillor Surgery held on Sat 24th September 2022.

A resident had raised several queries concerning The Rookery relating to traffic, parking, and verge maintenance. Cllr Stock to pursue these queries with CBC Highways.

Cllr
Stock

19 Cemetery Extension ongoing items (115-2022/2023)

Members received an update on previously agreed actions and noted the report.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk give instructions to the agreed fencing contractors to commence with the installation of a boundary fence and contact the residents of the adjacent property to inform them when work would be going ahead. No further action was required on the other items.

Town
Clerk

20 Neighbourhood Plan (116-2022-2023)

Members received and noted a verbal update from Cllr Hewitt, she advised them that the NHP Steering Group had appointed Sally Chapman as consultant for the project. Ms Chapman, a former

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CBC Planner, came with excellent credentials and lots of experience. It was hoped that Ms Chapman would provide a clear direction on the next stages for the project.

Members were informed that a traffic parking survey had also been carried out in the town centre.

The Steering Group are currently liaising with BRCC to consider its new green infrastructure plan and local green spaces, taking these into account it was hoped that the group could start creating policies that would enable the plan to start to take shape.

21 Mayoral Engagements (117-2022/23)

Members noted the engagements undertaken by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

22 Scheduling of Meetings in 2023 (118 -2022-2023)

RESOLVED that the following additions and amendments be applied to meeting dates in 2023:

- An extra Full Council Meeting to be held on 17th April 2023
- To cancel the following Committee meetings because they fall too soon after the election date of 4th May 2023:
 - CS&E on 8th May 2023
 - DS on 8th May 2023
 - PF&R on 15th May 2023

Also to note a decision by the Chair of CS&E to cancel the next Committee meeting planned for 17th October.

22.1 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 (**119-2022/2023**)

22.2 The following items were deferred due to their nature to be dealt with under private session:

Item 6 - Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein -number (102-2022-2023)

RESOLVED to agree recommendation from HR Committee to increase the Clerk's salary by one salary point following a successful completion of a six-month probationary period. It was agreed that a Minute Secretary be hired for an interim period until recruitment for the team's current vacancies had taken place. Other adjustments to the Clerk's working environment and

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structure were also agreed. The Clerk was thanked for her work and commitment over what had been a very challenging start to the role.

Item 11 - Beeston Allotment Lease (107-2022/2023)

Members reviewed a proposed lease from CBC. **It was RESOLVED** for Clerk to contact STC's solicitors with some suggested amends to the lease before responding back to CBC.

22.3 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC (120 -2022-2023)

It was **RESOLVED**: that the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and the Public be readmitted to the meeting.

22.4 Suspension of Standing Orders (121-2022/23)

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Order 3 (x) to enable the meeting to continue past 2 and a half hours.

23 News/Press Releases (122 -2022/2023)

- New Councillor
- Comment on the new bus service

24 Chairman's Items (123 -2022-2023)

Members had received a request from the organizer of the Active Sandy Day to be held on Sunday 16th October. Due to some of the participants backing out at the last minute the organiser was concerned that the event would not meet the conditions for the agreed Town Council Grant and requested permission to go ahead with the event. Members agreed that they were happy for the event to go ahead in a changed format and wished the organiser their best for a positive turn out.

25 Date of next meeting: 14th November 2022 (124-2022/23)

Meeting closed at 22.08