

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 12th June 2023 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs J Hewitt, A Lock, R Lock, C Osborne (Chair), M Pettitt and M Scott

Absent: Cllr Sharman

In attendance: Mrs N Sewell (Clerk), Cllr N Aldis

1 Apologies for absence (1-2023/24)

Cllr Sharman

Actions

Admin

2 Election of Policy, Finance & Resources Committee Deputy Chairman for the Council Year 2023/24 (2-2023/24)

Cllr R Lock was nominated, seconded, and duly elected as the Deputy Chairman of the Policy, Finance & Resources Committee for the forthcoming year. There were no other nominations.

3 Declarations of interest (3-2023/24)

i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest – *none*

ii) Non-disclosable Pecuniary Interest:

- Cllr Scott declared a personal interest in Item 7.1 as President of the Sandy Horticultural Society and would not vote on the item but would be happy to answer questions.
- Cllr Osborne declared a personal interest in Item 12 as the Honorary President of the 22 (Sandy) Squadron Air Training Corps and asked that Cllr R Lock take the item as the newly appointed Deputy Chair. He would not vote on the matter.

iii) Dispensations – *none*

4 Minutes of previous meeting (4-2023/24)

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the meeting of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on Monday 3rd April 2023 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

Town Clerk

5 Public Participation Session (5-2023/24)

No members of the public were present.

6 Financial Reports (6-2023/24)

i) Members considered the balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget ending 30th April 2023. The Chairman took Members through the report page by page.

RESOLVED to note the report.

Sandy Town Council

ii) Members received and considered a budget report from the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED to note the report.

iii) Members scrutinised a schedule of payments for April 2023.

RESOLVED to approve the list of payments

iv) Bank reconciliations and statements.

RESOLVED that the Chair of Policy, Finance and Resources check and approve the bank reconciliations and statements.

Chair

7 Grant Applications (7-2023/24)

7.1 Members received a grant application from the Sandy Horticultural Society for £500 to pay towards hall hire for the Sandy Garden and Craft Show (previously the Sandy Show) to be held on Saturday 3rd September 2023.

RESOLVED to agree a grant payment of £500

Admin
Team
Leader

7.2 Members received a grant application from the Sandy Carnival for £285 to pay towards toilet hire at the 2023 event held at Sandye Place on Saturday 10th June 2023.

RESOLVED to agree a grant payment of £285

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Team
Leader

8 Action Plan (8-2023/24)

Members reviewed the PF&R Action Plan for 2023/24.

RESOLVED to agree the plan with the following amendments:

- To remove the Allotments at Beeston Green (village site) as this was being dealt with through the Community, Services & Environment Committee.
- To change item 4 in the Adoption of Berwick Way Amenity Land to read 'Ongoing'
- To remove the Beeston Green Working Group item regarding issues of parking on the green.
- To add an item relating to the review of S106 money.
- To add an item relating to a schedule of maintenance works for Council buildings.

Town
Clerk

It was also agreed that the Cemetery Working Group would provide an update report for the next meeting.

Sandy Town Council

9 Year End Financial Statements (9-2023/24)

Members received the 2022/23 Statement of Annual Accounts and considered a recommendation to the Full Council that the statement of accounts be adopted. The Chairman took Members through the financial statements page by page.

Proposed, seconded, and **RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the Full Council adopt the 2022/23 Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2023.

Town Clerk

10 Internal Auditor Report (10-2023/24)

Members received the Internal Auditors Reports and its recommendations.

While the Clerk had previously verbally explained what measures had been put in place following the theft of cash from the council offices, as commented on in the report, the Chair requested the Clerk write to the Internal Auditors to outline those changes as set out below and this was agreed by Members:

Town Clerk

- The installation of a lockable safe for the retention of any cash deposits and petty cash separate to the safe which had previously been used which also held important documents.
- Update of the Financial procedures as per those agreed at the PF&R meeting on 20th February 2023 (114-2022/23).

RESOLVED to note the Report.

11 Preliminary AGAR (11-2023/24)

Members received the preliminary Annual Governance and Accountability Return in advance of the required sign off at Full Council on 26th June 2023. The Chair went through the report page by page.

RESOLVED to agree to recommend that boxes 1-9 in Section 1 should all be ticked 'yes'. To agree the figures as set out in Section 2 as an accurate record.

Town Clerk

12 Donation to voluntary groups (12-2023/24)

Members considered a request to pay a £50 donation to the Air Cadets for their support at the Big Lunch Event in May and the creation of a policy to consider donations to other voluntary groups that also help at Council-run events.

The Deputy Chair took the item, and it was **RESOLVED** that a payment for £50 should be made to the Air Cadets and that a policy setting out the Council's intentions for donations to other voluntary

Town Clerk

Sandy Town Council

groups helping at events be drafted for consideration at the next PF&R meeting in July.

13 Riddy & Pinnacle Wardenship/Maintenance cost increase (13-2023/24)

Members received a report imparting that the cost of employing a BRCC part time warden under the Wardenship/Maintenance agreement increased from £5,570.03 in 2021/22 to £5,737.14 in 2022/23 and the costs for the supervision and support of by the Wildlife Trust staff had increased from £1,857.35 to £1,913.08 across the same period.

RESOLVED to note the report and factor in a 3% increase for the 2023/24 payment.

14 Burial Regulations – grave size review (14-2023/24)

Members received a report regarding burial plot sizes and the options for updating the Council's current Burial Regulations.

RESOLVED to continue current practice at present but defer the report to the Cemetery Working Group for them to come back to PF&R with a proposal for the required changes.

Cemetery Working Group

15 Vehicle replacement/repair (15-2023/24)

Members received a report regarding the current condition of the Council's diesel vehicles with cost options for replacement and repairs. A verbal update from the Clerk confirmed that the vehicle ignition repairs had been completed and that a quote had been received for the repair and replacement of the deteriorating flatbed and bulkhead for the same vehicle. A further quote was being pursued.

RESOLVED that the Clerk request a further quote from the same company for the replacement of the deteriorating flatbed and bulkhead on the second vehicle. If the quote came back for both repairs at under the £5,000 budget for set aside for vehicle/equipment maintenance then the Clerk, Chair of PF&R and Mayor would have the delegated authority to commission the repair work.

Town Clerk

16 Defibrillator donation (16-2023/24)

To receive a report from Cllr Aldis regarding a resident's offer to donate funds towards the installation of a defibrillator.

RESOLVED to defer the item to full council on 26th June to allow for further research to be conducted.

Town Clerk

Sandy Town Council

17 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC (17-2023/24)

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the Meeting.

18 Cemetery Extension Boundary and Land Transfer (18-2023/24)

i) Members received a report from the Clerk outlining a resident's complaint regarding the installation of a boundary fence on land West of Potton Road. On a recent visit to the site again a Member noticed that some of the fence panels had come away from the posts and considered that it was an easy fix.

ii) Members considered a recommendation from the Council's solicitors regarding the terms of transfer for a parcel of land at the same site.

RESOLVED that

i) The Council endorsed its original position and response to the resident's complaint and that the resident be informed that any further comments the resident had would need to be in the form of a formal written complaint as per the Council's Complaints Policy, which would trigger the need for the issues to be dealt with by the Complaints Committee. The following actions were also agreed:

- The contractor be asked to undertake any necessary repairs to the fence under the terms of its 12-month guarantee.
- The outstanding payment to the contractor of £480 for the fence, originally due to be paid by the resident, be honoured by STC and the spend be noted at Full Council on 26th June 2023.

ii) The Clerk to ask the solicitor to write to the resident with the recommended terms for the land transfer. In addition, the following works would be undertaken with no further delay:

- A new slab be procured to replace a broken slab on the resident's septic tank.
- A new cover be procured and fitted for the top of the resident's soakaway.
- To request a survey from Environmental Health to check the area is safe for STC staff to continue work in the area.

19 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC (19 2023/24)

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

Sandy Town Council

20 Chairmans Items (20-2023/24)

There were none.

21 Date of Next Meeting

24th July 2023 - *It was noted that the date of the next meeting as Monday 8th August 2022 which was published in the agenda was incorrect.*

The meeting closed at 21.41