

# Sandy Town Council

## Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, J Hewitt (Chair), A M Hill, T Knagg, R Lock, M Scott and P Sharman. CBC Ward Cllrs Maudlin and Stock.

**Absent:** Cllrs W Jackson, C Osborne, M Pettitt, S Sutton and N Thompson.

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

### Action

#### 1 Apologies for Absence (142-2021/2022)

Apologies had been received from Cllrs W Jackson, C Osborne, M Pettitt, S Sutton and CBC Cllr S Ford.

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#### 2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (143-2021/22)

(i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* – None.

(ii) *Non-Pecuniary Interests* – None.

(iii) *Dispensations* – None.

#### 3 Public Participation Session (144-2021/22)

There were three members of the public present and one item of correspondence had been received by Cllr Stock which was also addressed to the Town Council.

Cllr Stock explained that she had received a communication from a young resident of Beeston. As part of their schoolwork, they had been considering what actions could be taken to help make Sandy a greener place. Suggestions sent to the Council included;

- Plastic bag recycle bins on Beeston Green
- Dog waste bag dispensers on Beeston Green
- A poster campaign encouraging people to recycle waste and explaining how this could be done
- Rubbish clean-up with local volunteers

Members applauded the communication and suggestions from the resident and asked that the Clerk arrange a meeting between the resident and the mayor to discuss what the Council had already done and how her suggestions might also be implemented.

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The Clerk read out a communication received about flood risks and what authorities were doing to mitigate these.

Members commented that there were a lot of good points and suggested actions within the correspondence which should be looked at. It was agreed that planting more trees does help and that this was underway by both STC and CBC.

Some Members felt that the risk of flooding was sometimes exaggerated, and that recent flooding had not put houses in danger, including in areas where letters were received about potential evacuations. Water meadows, such as The Riddy are doing a good job at preventing flooding of other areas.

Mr Shaikh who had submitted the communication was present and commented that his concern was also for water pollution. He thanked Members for their comments.

The Chairman thanked Mr Shaikh for his attendance.

Two members of the public wished to speak on matters related to the Public Notice on Kings Road, which was under item 12 of the agenda. The Chairman therefore brought part (i) of item 12 of the agenda up for discussion.

## **4 Public Notices (145-2021/22)**

- i) As members of the public were present to speak on the Public Notice relating to parking restrictions on Kings Road, the Chairman brought the matter forward for discussion earlier in the agenda. The Chairman invited residents to address the Council.

A Mr Rooke raised a number of concerns about the proposals within the Public Notice for Kings Road, including;

- A petition of objection to the proposals has been started.
- The proposed restrictions are not needed.
- The pavements in this area are sufficiently wide to allow for vehicles to part park on the pavement.
- This has been the situation for over 30 years.
- The proposals will result in a lot of animosity, forcing some residents to park the other side of the road and leading to confrontation.

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- There is little provision for off-road parking in the area and the proposals will worsen the parking situation.
- There are a number of first-time buyers in the area. The proposals will put obstacles in place for them buying suitable and affordable homes.
- A 'residents only' parking scheme would help.
- Proposed double yellow lines will result in abuse of parking rules, especially as traffic wardens don't work after certain hours. Non-residents using local amenities would just park on the double yellow lines.

In summary Mr Rooke asked that the Town Council support residents in asking that the proposed yellow lines be abandoned.

Mrs N Curin informed Councillors she wished to speak in support of the proposed additional parking bays to be created along the road and that this was urgently needed. She supported Mr Rooke's objection to additional double yellow lines, which will not help residents. Residents need as many additional spaces as might be able to be created.

The Chairman thanked both residents and opened the matter up for debate.

Proposed and seconded that the Council support residents wishes and support the additional spaces to be created, but object to proposed additional double yellow lines.

A Member queried if it was possible to have markings on the pavement to show where vehicles could park up to, without causing an obstacle. It was agreed that this would be added to the proposal.

**RESOLVED** that the Council object to the proposed addition of double yellow lines at Kings Road, Sandy. That the Council support the proposed addition of parking bays at Kings Road and that it requests Central Bedfordshire Council consider inclusion of markings on the pavement to show where vehicles can park without causing an obstruction.

CBC Cllrs Stock and Maudlin will be attending the CBC Traffic Management meeting at which the matter will be considered. Cllr Maudlin asked for residents to send any pictures showing the parking problems to her.

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- ii) **RESOLVED** to support the proposed restrictions for Swan Lane set out in Central Bedfordshire Council's Public Notices.
- iii) **RESOLVED** to support the proposed restrictions for Laburnum Road and Robert Hunt Gardens as set out in Central Bedfordshire Council's Public Notice.

## 5 Minutes of previous Town Council Meetings (146-2021/22)

Members considered the minutes of a meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 and **RESOLVED** to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

## 6 Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (147-2021/22)

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 Committees held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021.
- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

**RESOLVED** to approve in principle the purchase of the Etesia electric truck at the best price that can be negotiated. That this is subject to Councillors having further demonstrations of the truck and agreeing a timescale.

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## 7 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (148-2021/22)

i) Members received reports or points of information from Sandy's Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillors.

Cllr Stock reported;

- Covid rates continue to be high and the new variant is causing concern, however there is not enough information on the variant

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as yet. It is particularly high in the 0-5 and 11-17 year old categories. This is expected as they are not vaccinated. Focus will be on speeding up the vaccine booster program.

- Waste collection dates for Christmas have been published on CBC's website.
- The next Town and Parish Conference on 15<sup>th</sup> December will be virtual. It will focus on the planning design guide and two representatives from each Council will be able to attend. Cllr Hewitt and Administrator Anne Elliott-Flockhart will be attending from Sandy Town Council.
- More information and publicity will be coming out from CBC on reporting flood risks and dangers.
- Bottle banks at the Co-op in Fallowfield have been moved following noise complaints by residents. These will be replaced elsewhere at a location to be agreed.

Cllr Maudlin commented that there was an arts and culture questionnaire she would be forwarding to the Clerk. If all Councillors could fill the survey in, it would be greatly appreciated. She also commented that the Neighbourhood Street Watch Scheme was now live, of which she was one of the volunteers. If other volunteers are able to come forward, CBC's Community Safety officers can provide training.

Members of the Council commented that it was a shame that bottle banks had been moved from Fallowfield. Those in the town centre are already under pressure and this would make the problem worse, especially with Christmas coming up. Cllr Stock confirmed that the bottle banks would be relocated, rather than removed.

A Member also commented that vegetation and paving in the Winchester Road area needed attention. The Waste Amnesty Day was good, but highlighted the need for more work in the area. Cllr Stock confirmed that this would be discussed at a meeting of the Regeneration Board.

ii) Members received notes from a meeting of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillors.

A Member commented that the situation with vehicles on London Road was worsening and it needed to be monitored. There was also

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some concern raised over use of the road as a 'rat run'. A formal study is needed to consider what could be done to stop such use.

A Member commented that works vehicles parked on London Road belonging to one particular person had now been moved. There are still other vehicles which are not subject to an Order.

Cllr Maudlin offered to send an initial contact to CBC's Highways Officer to see what might be done about addressing the issue of use of the road as a 'rat run'.

## **8 Action List (149-2021/22)**

Members received and noted an action list on Full Council items.

## **9 Leisure Services Jenkins Pavillion Proposal (150-2021/22)**

Members received and noted an update report on Central Bedfordshire Council's Jenkins Pavillion Leisure Proposal.

## **10 Planning Applications (151-2021/22)**

The Clerk informed Members that the planning application from Central Bedfordshire Council for the Jenkins Pavilion extension was not available on their website. This had been reported to CBC. However, as the Council had not been able to view the application, it was not possible to deal with the application and as such the matter will be deferred to a future extraordinary meeting of Council.

## **11 Neighbourhood Development Plan (152-2021/22)**

Members received a report from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Cllr Gibson spoke on the report and informed Members that a successful grant application had been made for £1,500 towards the costs of a green infrastructure study. An application on funding for technical support on studies for the High Street was underway and some more work was needed on that.

A Member asked if work to date had included any discussion or consultation on East West Rail. Cllr Gibson said it had not and this would be part of future stages and policies were developed and residents further engaged with.

## **12 Correspondence (153-2021/22)**

i) Members received correspondence from Central Bedfordshire Council's Environmental Services in relation to glass recycling banks.

As the matter had already been discussed under agenda item 6, Members agreed to note the communication.

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ii) Members received and noted correspondence received in regards to a Temporary Road Closure for Station Road/New Road.

Members commented that it was good that work was to be undertaken on the speed humps and raised crossing, but that it is important to make sure diversional signage is clear and correct. CBC Cllr Maudlin has raised this with Highways and will keep putting pressure on to ask that clear routes and closures are signposted.

A Member asked if the temporary closure could be used as a way of gathering evidence on the impact of closing the New Road/A1 gap. As vehicles would not be able to use that route during the closure, traffic monitoring and counts during this period around the town would help gather some data on what the effect of closing the gap on safety grounds might be on the rest of the town's roads.

Members agreed this was a good idea and CBC Cllr Stock would pursue this.

## **13 Consultations (154-2021/22)**

- i) Members noted public notices from Central Bedfordshire Council which had already been discussed and responses resolved earlier in the agenda.
- ii) Members received and **RESOLVED** to submit the Clerk's proposed response to the DEFRA Environmental Permitting Regulation amendments.
- iii) Members noted the following live consultations or surveys currently on CBC's website;
  - Town Centre Benchmarking Surveys
  - Consultation on Community Buildings and Village Halls
  - Consultation on Adult Carers strategy 2022 to 2027
  - Consultation on Housing Allocation
  - Consultation on Pharmaceutical Needs

## **14 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies (155-2021/22)**

Members received the following reports from representatives on outside bodies:

- i) AGM of the ATC: Members received and noted a report from Cllr S Sutton.

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- ii) SSLA: Members received and noted a report from Cllr Hill. Cllr Hill commented that the refurbishment project had gone very well overall.
- iii) FoSCL: Members received and noted a report from Cllr Hill on the recent switch on event. Everyone agreed the event had been a success and thanked the FOSCL and all those involved in its organisation and running.
- iv) Sandy Twinning Association: Members received and noted a report from Cllr Hill.

## **15 News Release (156-2021/22)**

No items to note or issue releases arising from the meeting.

## **16 Chairman's Items (157-2021-22)**

The Deputy Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the meeting read out a number of updates from the Chairman of the Council;

It is hoped to hold the proposed meeting with neighbouring parishes via zoom on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

The Chairman of Sandy Cricket Club has paid tribute and offered his and the club's thanks to the Mayor for Sandy Town Council's help and support. The Chairman of the Club wished to have the club's thanks passed to all Members.

The Chairman wished to have his thanks recorded to the Clerk and staff team for all their work in recent events, particularly the Remembrance Parade and the Christmas Lights Switch on.

Members were reminded that the Town Carol Service would be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December commencing at 6:30pm. Members could book through the church website if they had not already done so.

Members were asked to note the following dates for Mayoral events next year;

- Charity Fund raising dinners to be held in China Express on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022.
- A charity quiz night to be held at the Conservative Club on a date to be confirmed.
- The Town Civic Service will take place on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

## **17 Mayoral Engagements (158-2021/22)**

Members noted a list of recent engagements undertaken by the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor.



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## **18 Date of Next Meeting (159-2021/22)**

Members noted that the next meeting of Full Council would be Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

## **19 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION (160-2021/22)**

Exclusion of the Public and Press

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.

## **20 Motion to Council, Cllr A Gibson and J Hewitt**

Members considered a motion from Cllrs Gibson and Hewitt that involved discussion of employees' performance.

We would like to seek the agreement of the Full Council in looking to reward Council staff collectively for their hard work and commitment throughout the unprecedented period of the Covid 19 pandemic. We have experienced two extraordinary years and whilst the workings of the Town Council are returning to relatively normal now, the pandemic is not over and we may again face further restrictions that affect how we work. The pandemic has generated additional demands on all our lives, and town councils have had to face uncharted territory. In Sandy we can be hugely thankful that our clerk has given an exemplary performance in relation to the effective management of the Council and its affairs throughout the pandemic enabling Sandy Town Council to continue to function successfully and productively. The pandemic has necessitated a complete change of work patterns for all of our staff. The admin team embraced working from home and use of new technology while the outdoor team have taken additional duties and managed work schedules while operating under-strength. New areas of responsibility have been assimilated readily, a high degree of all-round efficiency has been maintained and feedback from councillors and members of the public has remained consistently positive and appreciative. It is our firm belief that we could not have expected more from our employees during these stressful and difficult times, and it would be appropriate for us to express our thanks in a tangible and meaningful way by a one-off bonus of gift.

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**RESOLVED** that the Council make a one off award to employees for additional work and responsibilities undertaken over the last 21 months as a result of the COVID19 pandemic. That the Human Resources committee consider how this will be implemented and actioned.