

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber, 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 13 January 2014 at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, C Butterfield, A Maycock, M Pettitt, M Runchman, D Sharman, M Scott, R Smith, S Sutton (Mayor) and S Walsh
Absent: Cllrs J Ali, A Jackson, K Lynch and C Osborne
In attendance: CBC Cllr Naomi Sheppard, one member of the public and the Town Clerk

Apologies for absence (104-13/14)

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Lynch, Osborne and Jackson. PCSO Anne Jeeves and CBC Cllr C Maudlin had also sent apologies for their absence.

Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations(105-13/15)

- i) Declarable Pecuniary Interests – None.
- ii) Personal Interests – Cllr Pettitt drew attention to his role as Vice-President of Sandy Cricket Club in connection with item 10 of the agenda. Cllrs Aldis, Sharman and Sutton drew attention to their membership of SEG.
- iii) Requests for dispensations – None.

Minutes of Previous Meeting (106-13/14)

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of a meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 2 December 2013 as a correct record of proceedings.

Public Participation Session (107-13/14)

There were no questions or representations from members of the public.

Police Matters (108-13/14)

RESOLVED to receive a report from PCSO Ann Jeeves on policing in Sandy.

Casual Vacancy (109-13/14)

RESOLVED to instruct the Clerk to make arrangements for the casual vacancy which had arisen following the resignation of Mr Geoff White to be filled by co-option on 24 February 2014 including the issue of an immediate press release.

Minutes of Committees and Sub-committees and recommendations (110-13/14)

- i) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Development Scrutiny Committee meetings on held 25 November 2013 and 16 December

Action

Chairman
Admin

Admin

Clerk

Admin

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2013.

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| i) RESOLVED to note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee meeting held on 16 December 2013. | Admin |
| ii) RESOLVED to note the minutes of the Policy Finance and Resources Committee meetings held on 25 November 2013 and 6 January 2014. | Admin |

Financial Matters (111-13/14)

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| i) RESOLVED to note the list of payments made during November 2013 and December 2013. | |
| ii) RESOLVED to note a summary report of income and expenditure against budget for the financial year to date. | |
| iii) Members discussed the draft of the budget for 2014/15 which was before them noting that it had been through several iterations and had been recommended for adoption by PF&R Committee on 6 January 2014. Members again expressed their concern that CBC had refused to pass on the government funding provided to them to mitigate the impact of changes to the tax base caused by reform of CT benefit despite clear advice from the relevant minister that he expected the funds to be passed on even if they were reduced proportionately. The Town Clerk reminded the council that the approval of the budget and setting of the precept contained within it would potentially leave the Council open to a referendum if the government decided to extend the regulations applying to principal authorities to town and parish councils. It would not be known whether town councils would be included in these arrangements until later in the year. It was thought likely that any referenda would be most likely to be applied to councils with an average band D of between £160-200.
RESOLVED to approve the recommendation of the PF&R Committee and adopt the budget without further amendment. A recorded vote was requested and all members present voted in favour of the adoption with the exception of Cllr Smith who voted against adoption of the budget. | Clerk |
| iv) RESOLVED unanimously to set the precept for the financial year 2014/15 at a total sum of £445,704. The Mayor thanked Cllr Osborne, the Town Clerk and all those who had helped in the preparation of the budget which had taken considerable work and effort. | Clerk |
| v) The Clerk noted that adoption of the budget without amendment meant that the Council had implicitly accepted the recommendation of the PF&R Committee that a decision on CCTV be deferred pending further information and negotiation about future costs and that this item should remain on the agenda of future PF&R meetings to enable a decision to be taken by 31 March 2014.
RESOLVED to approve the recommendation as described above. | Clerk |

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- vi) Item 8v of the agenda a review of charges for hire of council facilities at 10 Cambridge Road was withdrawn to be considered at a meeting of the PF&R Committee on 17 February 2014. However the Clerk noted that meeting space for community groups was at a premium following changes to availability of community rooms at Quince Court and Stonecroft.

Clerk

Open Space at Fallowfield, Sandy (112-13/14)

RESOLVED to note correspondence from the Town Council's legal advisers regarding an outstanding charge recorded at the Land Registry in respect of the bottom corner of the Council's public open space land at Fallowfield. An objection to the Town Council's application to remove the charge had been received although it was not known on whose behalf the objection had been made. It was anticipated that the charge would shortly be removed in any event and the Clerk advised that the Council would be notified in due course.

Clerk

RESOLVED to approve the recommendation of the Community Services and Environment Committee to make alterations to planting and railings at Fallowfield. The views of Maple Tree School would be communicated to the Committee when known.

Deputy
Clerk

Cricket Club License (113-13/14)

RESOLVED to note the draft licence prepared on behalf of Sandy Town Council to be agreed with Sandy Cricket Club. The Clerk advised that arrangements would now be made to discuss the draft licence with the Club. It was noted that the draft did not contain the correct details of the relevant officers for the Club as there had been changes at the AGM of the Cricket Club.

Clerk

On a previous occasion it had been noted that a regular meeting between officers of the Club and members of the Council would be advantageous and it was agreed to follow this up with the Club.

Clerk

Mayoral Communications (114-13/14)

RESOLVED to note the Mayor's engagements which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. The Mayor confirmed that the new date scheduled for the Sandy Civic Service would be 27 April 2014 and the service would be combined with a St George's Day celebration.

Reports from Representatives (115-13/14)

- i) **RESOLVED** to receive a written report from the Ward Councillors of Central Bedfordshire Council tabled at the meeting (copy in minute book). Cllr Sheppard advised that negotiations between CBC and Greene King to secure widening of the pavement outside the Bell Public House continued. Progress was also being made with the

Admin

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Business Improvement District (BID) at Sunderland Road industrial estate. Three tenders for the BID were under review and a decision would be made later in the year.

Staff Matters (116-13/14)

RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended) members of the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business on this agenda which each involved likely disclosure of confidential personal information as defined as exempt information in Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 (personal and confidential data).

- i) The Chairman of the appointed grievance panel dealing with a grievance raised by a member of staff against another member of staff had completed its investigation of the events cited in the grievance. Advice was currently being taken from Ellis Whittam the council's specialist HR advisors and it was anticipated that the matter would be concluded by the time of the next Town Council meeting. **RESOLVED** to note this progress.

Grievance Panel

The Chairman of the appointed disciplinary panel dealing with a formal complaint made by a member of the public against a member of staff reported that the panel had completed the necessary processes. The panel did not find any misconduct on the part of the staff member and the complainant and the staff member concerned had been notified accordingly. **RESOLVED** to note this outcome.

- ii) The Mayor reported on the work of a panel with delegated powers to consider a medical capability report concerning a member of staff. A final hearing date had been set for 24 January 2014 and it was expected that the outcome could be reported at the next Town Council meeting on 17 February. **RESOLVED** to note this progress.

Medical Capability Panel

- iii) The Town Clerk explained that progress with the staff restructure had been limited since the previous Town Council meeting on 2 December 2013. This was because of staff absence and the intervening holidays but this review was being treated as an urgent priority.

RESOLVED to note this information.

Staff Review Group/HR Advisory Group/ Clerk

News Release (117-13/14)

RESOLVED to ask the clerk to issue an immediate news release regarding the precept and budget setting for the financial year 2014/15 stressing that the increase to the average Band D tax payer would be 28p per week and explaining again the impact of the loss of the council tax support grant which CBC had refused to pass on to Sandy Town Council.

Clerk