

# 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 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 commencing at 7.30pm.**

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

**Absent:** Cllrs S Baker and R Lacey

**In attendance:** Mrs. Nicola Sewell (Town Clerk) and Cllr N Aldis

## *Actions*

**1 Apologies for absence (PFR 126-2024/25)**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Baker and Lacey

Admin

**2 Declarations of interest (PFR 127-2024/25)**

i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest – *none*

ii) Non-disclosable Pecuniary Interest – Cllrs R Lock and A Lock both declared an interest in item 11 as the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer to St Swithun’s Church. Cllr Sharman declared an interest in Item 8i as the Town Council’s representative on the Carnival Committee. s

iii) Dispensations – *none*

**3 Minutes of previous meeting (PFR 128-2024/25)**

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

**4 Public Participation Session (PFR 129-2024/25)**

No members of the public were present.

**5 Online and AI Management Tools (PFR 130-2024/25)**

Members received a report from the Clerk outlining current online and AI tools specifically developed to help Town and Parish Councils manage their assets and services more efficiently. An online demonstration of the GovAssist AI system was also given by Cllr Steve Walker, Chairman of Waddesdon Parish Council and Members were encouraged to view details of the GovAssist AI system using a link provided by the Clerk: <https://www.cloudyit.co.uk/govassist/>

The item was deferred to later in the meeting to allow the presentation to take place and was dealt with between item 8ii and 8iii.

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**RESOLVED** to note the report and agree the recommendation to consider the adoption of these online management tools during the next budget setting phase.

## 6 Financial Reports (PFR 131-2024/25)

i) Members considered the balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget ending 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. It was agreed as the reports for March 2025 included the figures from February 2025 the Chairman would only take Members through the reports for March 2025 page by page.

**RESOLVED** to note the reports and that consideration of the use of the Anglian Water EMR be considered at the next meeting.

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 February 2025 and March 2025.

**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.

## 7 Cemetery Extension Update (PFR 132-2024/25)

i. Members received the Minutes of the Cemetery Working Group meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025. **RESOLVED** to note the Minutes.

ii. Members considered an increase in CDS's fees to continue work on the project through RIBA stages 4, 5 and 6 to take the extension to completion. The increase amounts to a total of £4,576.88 above what was quoted for in 2023 and is due to significantly increased costs that CDS has seen from its design consultants over the past two years. **RESOLVED** to agree the increase in costs and to continue to commission CDS to complete the project work through RIBA Stages 4, 5 and 6 with no further delay. Any project costs for this phase of the project to be paid from the Rolling Capital Funds and be re-imbursed to that budget line from the Public Works Loan Board loan once funds are drawn down.

iii. Members considered the only quotes received by the Clerk to undertake the installation of brick piers in the cemetery and re-hang the cemetery entrance gates. The Clerk explained she had contacted 10 companies about the works. **RESOLVED** to accept

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the quote for £8,480 to complete the works and that the work be commissioned with no further delay.

## 8 Grant Applications (PFR 133-2024/25)

Members considered the following grant applications:

- i. An application from The Sandy Carnival Association for its 2025 event. **RESOLVED** to agree to award The Sandy Carnival Association a grant of £888 to cover the costs of portable toilets during the event and the cost of skip hire for the removal of rubbish from the site following the event.
- ii. An application from Sandy Library. **RESOLVED** to agree to award Sandy Library a grant of £400 to provide free special activities and crafts for children during the school holidays and pay towards authors' travel costs and that a press release publicising this be issued.
- iii. An application from Respite at Home Volunteers West Mid Beds and Ivel Valley for £1,000 to cover recruitment, training and onboarding costs for 4 new volunteers (£250 per new volunteer costs). **RESOLVED** to agree to award £250 to cover the recruitment, training and onboarding costs for one new volunteer and to invite the charity to present at a future meeting of the Committee with the view to making a further application for more volunteers.

## 9 Internal Auditor Appointment (PFR 134-2024/25)

Members were asked to confirm the intention to continue to engage Haines Watts as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for financial year 2025/2026 at a cost of £1,500 which includes two audits.

**RESOLVED** to continue to contract Haines Watts as the Town Council's auditors for the financial year 2025/26 at a cost of £1,500 for the year.

## 10 Bowls Club Lease (PFR 135-2024/25)

Members received a report from the Clerk providing options for the renewal of the Bowls Club Lease.

**RESOLVED** to agree the criteria set out in the report and to start formal work to get the draft lease drawn up and then checked by a solicitor to be presented to the Bowls Club for consideration.

## 11 Funding application Report (PFR 136-2024/25)

Members received a report from the Clerk outlining Funding Applications sought and feedback received.

**RESOLVED** to note the report

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## **12 Riddy Agreement with BRCC (PFR 137-2024/25)**

Members reviewed terms for an agreement between the Town Council and BRCC in respect of Wardening Services at the Riddy Nature Reserve.

**RESOLVED** to agree the reviewed terms with the following change that a report should be produced in May in readiness for the Working Group meeting in June.

## **13 Spending under delegated authority (PFR 138-2024/25)**

Members noted no spending under delegated authority has taken place since the last meeting of PF&R.

## **14 2024/25 Year End Underspend (PFR 139-2024/25)**

Members were asked to resolve that any year end underspend be allocated to the rolling capital fund.

**RESOLVED** to agree that any year end underspend from 2024/2025 be allocated to the Rolling Capital Fund.

## **15 Action Plan (PFR 140-2024/25)**

Members received the PF&R Action Plan for 2025/26.

**RESOLVED** agreed the Action Plan with the following amendments:

- Add an action to the Cemetery Extension project that the Working group make any proposals for the update to the Burial Regulations no later than the end of December 2025 and update the Cemetery Fees in the schedule of charges by the end of October 2025.
- Remove items 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9 from the Allotments at Beeston and add these to the CS&E Action Plan.
- Remove items 2-5 from the Onion Loft Community Garden and add these to the CS&E Action Plan.
- To remove the Sandye Place Academy Site from the plan and add it to the CS&E Action Plan.

## **16 Community Engagement Policy (PFR 141-2024/25)**

Members reviewed the Community Engagement Policy

**RESOLVED** to agree to continue with the Community Engagement Policy with no amendments and review in April 2027

## **17 Chairman's Items (PFR 14-2024/25)**

There were none.

## **18 Date of Next Meeting**

16<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Meeting ended at:21:18