

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 14th November 7.30pm

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

Absent: Cllrs J Ivanciu-Wilkinson, R Lacey, C Osborne, S Sutton, and N Thompson

In attendance: Mrs N Sewell (Clerk), Ward Cllrs Ford and Maudlin, and 13 members of the public.

Action

1	Apologies for Absence from (125-2022/23)	Admin
	Apologies were also received from Cllrs J Ivanciu-Wilkinson, C Osborne, S Sutton, N Thompson and from Ward Cllr Stock.	
2	Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations number (126-2022/2023)	Admin
	<i>i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests – None</i>	
	<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>	
	<i>iii) Dispensations – none</i>	
	Cllr Scott declared an interest on Item 6 due to being the owner/proprietor of existing allotments at Seddington.	

3 Public Participation Session (126-2022/2023)

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

1. A resident asked if it were possible for HGVs and buses to turn right out of Station Road over the railway bridge would the Council ask the transport managers of major companies whose lorries pass through the Town out onto the Potton Road, to get their drivers to use the A1 south to the New Road junction to reduce the number of HGVs travelling through the town centre improving the environment and making it safer for other vulnerable road users. Members felt that it would be hard to identify the companies responsible and instead undertook to write to Central Bedfordshire to ask for better signage.

Members

2. Safety concerns were raised by one resident on behalf of the SG19 Road Group outlining problems with the proposed road crossing on the High Street including its positioning asking the Town Council to consider the issue. The Chair deferred the question to CBC Ward Councillor Simon Ford to respond (see item 7).

Cllr Ford

3. A resident spoke on behalf of several business owners about their concerns regarding the proposed new woodlands at Beeston, and the negative impact the plans would have on those farming the area or running market gardening businesses. They believed that the proposals had not properly considered these issues. They went on to say that a local 4th generation farmer would not be able to continue farming the area if the plans went ahead and listed several other concerns including Central Bedfordshire Council's track record of taking care of wooded areas and the permanent loss of land for food production.

Stephen Mooring and Darren Woodward

The Chair deferred the question for Stephen Mooring, Head of Sustainability at CBC and Darren Woodward, Forest Development Manager to response under item 6.

4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meeting (127-2022/2023)

Admin

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the previous meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 10th October 2022 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

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5 Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein - number (128-2022-2023)

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 17th October and 7th November 2022.

ii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of Policy Finance and Resources Committee held on 31st October 2022 and the EOM held on 7th November.

6 Proposed New Woodland at Beeston (129-2022-2023)

Members received a report outlining proposals from the Forest of Marston Vale and CBC regarding a new 30ha Community Woodland North of Beeston on former arable fields between the A603 and Vinegar Hill. The woodland would include an area set aside as community allotments and accommodate a section of the route of the Sandy Green wheel.

Stephen Mooring, Head of Sustainability at CBC and Darren Woodward, Forest Development Manager were present to answer questions. Following concerns raised by the Members of the Public at the session, Mr. Mooring said that he would take the concerns raised back to CBC for further discussion. Members agreed that more information was needed and asked for CBC to be better at linking up information and talking to communities about all the issues.

Members agreed that while the opportunity to access land for allotments was warmly welcomed, they should not be at the detriment of someone's livelihood.

Members were told that a revised plan would be forthcoming.

RESOLVED to note the report and respond once an updated plan has been submitted to full council on 19th December.

7 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Council (130-2022-2023)

Cllr Simon Ford spoke about the crossing on the high street. He said that they had received a notification that the crossing was due to be installed on 24th November but that works being undertaken by Cadent would not be completed in time to facilitate this start date. As such he had been liaising with Arthur Maplin, the Head of Highways to agree the best way forward. In addition,

Admin

CBC

he had liaised with local businesses situated on the high street too as well as the school to garner their thoughts. It was agreed that allowing Cadent to continue with their work and push the installation back to February half term would be the best solution.

An independent audit had been undertaken on the crossing and highlighted the planned location of the crossing would need to move partly due to the discovery of a gas main at the location. Discussions were to take place with Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Executive Member for Community Services. to look at this and an update will be given after this meeting.

Cllr Ford added that it had been agreed that the temporary traffic lights that Cadent had placed on location would remain on site until the crossing was installed to provide a safer crossing for pedestrians in the meantime.

Following requests from residents that Cadent should be penalised for the overrunning of works and the disruption to traffic going through Sandy Cllr Ford had been successful in securing a sum of £3,000 from Cadent for the community. £2,500 of which was to go to Sandy Town Council to pay towards the Christmas Lights and Cadent have stipulated that the remaining £500 will be donated to the Need Project.

Referring to item 6 Cllr Maudlin told Members that she had been liaising with the Forestry Commission and would liaise with CBC Assets to get a further picture about the agricultural land in question and would also work with the farmers and business owners to ensure that the impact on them of the project would be fully understood and considered.

She told Members that while the new car park at Sandy Station had reduced its prices to encourage more people to park there but reported that unfortunately the income was not bringing in enough money. As plans were being looked at to potentially put a building on the site and that an application for such would likely come. A Member asked if electric charging points would be installed at the site.

Once again Cllr Maudlin called for Members to join the Sandy Speedwatch team, as they needed more people to join. She had been contacted by residents of London Road who said there were real speeding issues along the road. She added that there could be some match funding to help with speed reduction solutions.

West Road had also been highlighted as a bad area with a nasty bend at the bottom prohibiting sight of oncoming traffic. A scheme there had been pulled because it was deemed any work

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undertaken there would be at the detriment of pedestrians and Cllr Maudlin said she would continue to pursue solutions for the issues there. One Member called for a proper survey to be conducted by Highways England to stop London Road being used as a rat run.

One Member mentioned issues with the new Grant Palmer bus service stating issues with overcrowding, charging for concessions, and not allowing access to one disabled commuter. Cllr Maudlin said she would take the comments back to Grant Palmer.

Members were told that the last collection for garden waste would be on 5th December.

8 **Mink Management Programme (131-2022-2023)**

Members received a request from the Wildlife Trust of Bedfordshire and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity for support with their Mink Management Programme.

It was RESOLVED to support the scheme.

9 **Office Christmas Opening Times (132-2022/2023)**

Members received a report from the Clerk and were asked to consider closing the Council Offices over the Christmas period due to staffing arrangements and agreed leave.

It was RESOLVED to agree to close the office from Friday 23rd December at 16.30 and re-open on Tuesday 3rd January 2023 at 9.00. The outdoor team would be given a similar opportunity to not work over this period although low key activity to empty bins would take place.

10 **Action List (134-2022/2023)**

Cllr Aldis left the meeting at 20.30 and returned at 20.33

East West Rail

Cllr Blaine had attended a meeting on 8th November with the group and written a report. Clerk to circulate the report to Members and include on the Action List.

A1 Local Issues

It was agreed that Members would await an update from Richard Fuller MP if anything new came from the New Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper. It was hoped that something would be forthcoming for discussion at the next Town Council meeting on 19th December.

Sandye Place Academy

Admin

No further updates to report currently.

11 Reports from Outside Bodies (135-2022/2023)

i) Members received and noted the report from the Sandy Sports and Leisure Association Committee. The next meeting was to be held on Tuesday 22nd November at 6pm.

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

iii) Members received and noted a verbal report from Cllr Hewitt on the Village Hall Management Committee. She reported the Committee were trying hard to regenerate the Village Hall and were planning lots of events. However escalating costs were proving a challenge. They had received a grant from the Co-Op which would be used to repaint the community hall where they host events. She added they had challenges with the heating system as it did not heat areas in zones but the whole building. As a result, they were trying very hard to increase levels of income.

12 Jenkins Pavilion Development (136-2022/2023)

Members received and noted a verbal report from Cllr Aldis about the Jenkins Pavilion Development. He told Members that the working group had held several meetings with CBC representatives but that the project was a complex one and there were still some unanswered questions. It was hoped the project would be complete by April 2024, the Sandy Secondary school had agreed that its facilities could be used in the meantime.

It was RESOLVED to note the report.

13 Neighbourhood Plan (137-2022/23)

Members received and noted a verbal report from Cllr Hewitt. She told Members that the group was moving forward with its Green Infrastructure Plan, looking at designating Green Spaces. They had been liaising with the BRCC who had said that some of the initial sites outlined as non-designated heritage assets such as the Onion Loft would need to be changed because although it is something the Town would like to designate they did not meet the relevant criteria.

She asserted that the NHP would not be looking at areas for housing because there was no allocation for this in CBC's Local Plan. Instead, they would focus on where they did not want housing/development.

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14 Mayoral Engagements (138-2022/23)

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

15 News/Press Releases (139 -2022/2023)

- Christmas Lights Switch on
- Remembrance Parade Round up

16 Chairman's Items (140 -2022-2023)

The Chairman spoke briefly on the following items:

- Following the receipt of a report from AOC on the recent Cemetery archeological dig the Clerk was asked to pursue a local event to share the information on the finds.
- The friends of Sandy Green Wheel met earlier in the month and the Clerk was asked to circulate the notes from that meeting to all Members
- A request for volunteers to help at the Mayor's Carol Service on 17th December was made.
- The Kings Arms project have housed a Syrian family in Sandy and had approached the Mayor for an informal meeting at the Town Hall to welcome them. This had been arranged for Tuesday 22nd November at 16.00 and all members were welcome to attend.
- CBC had contacted the Town Council to say it was to install some Public Bike Maintenance Stands, one at Sunderland Road Park by the Jenkins Pavilion and one in the Market Square. Members said that they approved of the scheme but that the proposed site at the Market Square was not suitable. Cllrs Aldis and Hewitt would take this up with Tom Price at CBC.
- The Town Council had been informed by the Pym Estate that due to vandalism, antisocial behaviour, access by off-road bikes, fly tipping and the burning of woodlands at the Sandpits the Estate had decided, for health and safety reasons, to stop public access to the area. As such a fence would be erected to deter people from entering the area. They communicated that they were sad to have to take this measure and that the other side of Sand Lane called the Pinnacle would remain open to the public and under the stewardship of the Town Council.
- The Chairman put out a plea for volunteers to help man the Council's mulled wine stand and to man the barriers at the forthcoming Christmas Lights Switch on event.

17 Date of next meeting: 19th December 2022 (141-2022/23)

Meeting closed at 21.30