

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held virtually via Zoom on Monday 14th December 2020 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A Gibson, J Hewitt, A M Hill, W Jackson, T Knagg, R Lock, C Osborne, S Paterson (part), M Pettitt, M Scott (Chair), P Sharman and S Sutton

Absent: Cllrs N Thompson

In attendance: CBC Cllrs S Ford (part meeting), C Maudlin, T Stock, Mr C Robson (Clerk), Mrs C Baker-Smith (Admin Team Leader), Mrs A Elliott-Flockhart (Administrator) (part meeting), one member of the public and one co-option candidate

Action

- 1 Apologies for Absence (75-2020/2021)**
Apologies had been received from Cllr Thompson.
- 2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (76-2020/21)**
 - i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* – None
 - ii) *Non-Pecuniary Interests* – Cllr Aldis declared an interest on agenda Item 14 as he is a governor of Sandy Secondary School.
 - iii) *Dispensations* – None
- 3 Public Participation Session (77-2020/21)**

A Resident present at the meeting raised the subject of potholes in various roads in Sandy. The same resident had previously reported these to a Member of Town Council which had resulted in the defects being reported by the Council on the Central Bedfordshire Council website.

A second Member informed the meeting that a different resident had recently contacted him about what he, the resident considered to be the poor state of pavements and roads across Sandy generally. The Member had responded by telling the resident that two of the lengths of footpaths which the resident had referred to had been flagged up by him with CBC Cllr Stock in August as well as having been reported direct using the CBC on-line tool but despite a reminder, neither had so far been resolved. Cllr Stock told the meeting that delays were in part

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due to a senior Highways Officer having been on sick leave, but she expected the defects would soon be re-marked for attention. She reminded those present of the new reporting system on the CBC website called 'Fix my Street' where these matters can be reported direct by the public.

Following on from a suggestion put forward by the same resident, Members agreed that an audit of pavements and roads across the town was a reasonable and practical idea. Cllr Pettitt volunteered to coordinate the audit and told the meeting he would loosely allocate areas to fellow members across Sandy, including Beeston, and would hope to have that out by email to everyone before Christmas. He would ask colleagues to submit their findings by a deadline which might enable collation and feedback to the next full meeting of STC on 18 January 2021. Cllr Pettitt urged all members to not delay but to report anything considered especially urgent direct to CBC using their website and to make a note of having done so when making their email return to him in early January.

All Cllrs

A Member said that he had been asked by a member of the public if a bus stop would be provided at The Meadows site. Cllr Stock said that she would put it to Highways but the people in The Meadows will have cars and travel will be arranged for them if required. She also said that a crossing will be made from The Meadows site to the garage/Co-op as part of a second phase in the project.

A Member raised the question of the road closure on Dapifer Drive which had started today and would be closed until February 2021. The Clerk said it was a government scheme which encourages Highways Authorities to take action in making school entrances safer, but that the Town Council had not been informed of this closure. CBC Cllr Ford said that it was a road safety national scheme and Dapifer Drive had been identified as a problem area and that other schools may also be looked at. The Member said that he had had a letter three weeks ago and had contacted the CBC Highways. This closure would cause pressure on the surrounding roads and Churchill Way had visibly suffered today. He would be monitoring the trial and would report back to the Council.

A Member asked about the Tree Scheme and would the town council be applying? The Clerk said that this item would be put

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on the next CS&E agenda for next week and the Environment Group would be looking at the proposal.

The Clerk raised a question he had received from a member of the public about the speed at which cars travel along Sand Lane and the dangers this presents. CBC Ward Councillors had also received the question and the Clerk would liaise with them to raise the concerns expressed with CBC and request additional signage.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk

4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meeting (78-2020/21) RESOLVED to:

Receive the minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 9th November 2020 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (79-2020/21)

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 Community, Services and Environment Committee held on 16th November 2020.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Development Scrutiny Committee held on the 16th November and the 7th December 2020.
- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 7th December 2020.

Cllr. S Ford left the meeting due to another meeting commitment.

6 Co-option of Town Councillor (80-2020/21)

The Chairman welcomed Mr S Paterson who had applied for co-option and was in attendance.

The Clerk confirmed that two applications had been received for co-option. Unfortunately, one candidate had not joined the meeting, but in line with the Council's Co-option Policy the process would continue, and Members would need to base their decision on the candidate's application form. Members were

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reminded that a candidate needed a proposer and seconder to move on to a vote. Voting would be done by show of hands as per the recently amended Co-option Policy.

Mr S Paterson was invited to speak on why he was applying for Co-option to the Council. Mr Paterson expanded on his application form, his interests and his skill set, which he felt would help him in the role of Councillor.

A Member asked Mr Paterson if he could change one thing about Sandy what would it be? Mr Paterson said that he would like to see more use and promotion of Sandy's Green Spaces.

A Member commented on Mr Paterson's application, which was very good. He asked Mr Paterson how he had found Sandy since moving here. Mr Paterson commented that he had developed a lot of good relationships, including with organisations within the Town.

Mr S Paterson left the meeting as per the procedure set out in the Co-option Policy. The Chairman asked if there were any proposers for either or both of the candidates. Mr S Paterson was proposed and seconded.

Members moved to vote on the proposed candidate by show of hands. Mr S Paterson received a majority of votes and was therefore co-opted to the Council.

Mr Paterson rejoined the meeting and the Chairman announced the result. Mr Paterson signed his Declaration of Acceptance.

Planning Application (81-2020/21)

7

CB/20/04425/REG3 - The Meadows, Girtford Bridge, Sandy SG19 1NA

Resolved: to make no objections and were supportive of the overall scheme of this application.

Whilst members understand the need to keep the site safe for residents and children, they find the fence overbearing in nature and are concerned that it gives the impression to residents of being isolated and excluded from the wider area of Sandy.

Members suggested that the fence runs in line with the building from either side rather than being in front of the building.

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Members are also concerned regarding the materials to be used for the fencing. The materials currently proposed for the site give the impression of a temporary camp which would be detrimental to the wellbeing of the residents. This site is also a gateway to the town, and they would like to see materials used that are more aesthetically pleasing.

Members would also like to see bus stops, in both directions, put in place to ensure residents can get to and from the town safely and to stop residents from feeling isolated from the wider community.

8

Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (82-2020/21)

Members received verbal reports from the Central Bedfordshire Councillors.

Cllr Stock offered Cllr Paterson her congratulations.

She gave a Covid-19 update. She said that Sandy was highlighted again and there were 25 cases and rising and it was higher than in the first lockdown. She did say that Central Beds area may go up a tier.

CBC's senior Highways officer had said there would not now need to be a consultation regarding the proposed zebra crossing outside St Swithun's School and this would go to the Traffic Management Meeting on the 26th January 2021 and the Town Council may attend.

She reported that the Winchester Road garages and planters would be demolished this week, making another 85 parking spaces.

DCI Nick Bellingham would be holding a Community Safety Partnership meeting in January and Members should let her know of any issues.

The Tree Planting Scheme bids (which includes shrubs) should be submitted by the 28th February 2021.

The application for Business Grants was going well with 695 applications so far, with £1.1m awarded. The closing date is in

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January 2021. The Town & Parish Bulletin would be sent out this week.

A Member said that crime was on the up with catalytic converters being stolen, drugs issues, an assault on a student at the secondary school and there were serious crime gangs in Sandy.

A Member asked if a crossing outside St Swithun's School would be approved now that a consultation would not be held. Cllr Stock believed that it would.

A Member asked if Central Beds Council would be widening COVID testing? Cllr Stock said that the figures were changing daily and at present Bedfordshire did not warrant testing. CBC did have funding from central government for home kits for schools and these tests would be carried out by adults with a three-day turnaround.

A Member said that the crossing for Station Road had been delayed.

Cllr Maudlin said that the two officers running The Meadows would like to be involved with the Sandy community and she would send their details to the Clerk.

She raised the matter of the slip road off of the A1 being untidy and said that CBC had cut the trees back, but the hedges were overgrown and the ditch full of rubbish. Cllr Gibson thanked her for raising this and said that Highways should maintain the verge and that the ditch running alongside The Riddy is not the responsibility of BRCC, so no-one takes responsibility. The Chair suggested joint funding was needed with CBC. It was suggested contacting the Internal Drainage Board also.

Cllr Maudlin thanked Members for a great working relationship this year and welcomed Cllr Paterson and wished everyone a Merry Christmas. The Chair also wished the CBC Councillors a Happy Christmas and thanked them for their assistance this year.

9

External Audit 2019/20 (83-2020/21)

Members received, considered and accepted the external auditors report for the 2019/20 financial year audit. Members noted that an accompanying letter stated that the Council

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should also completed the receipts and payments section of the Bank Reconciliation submitted with the AGAR. The Clerk commented that the Council's account had advised that as the Council operates on Income and Expenditure this would not be required.

- 10 Neighbourhood Development Plan (84-2020/21)**
Members noted the Council's submission for the approval of a designated Neighbourhood Plan area and agreed that the Mayor sign the document and submit it to Central Beds Council.

Mayor/
Office

- 11 Action List (85-2020/21)**
Members received and noted the action list and raised concerns over the lack of communication with our MP, Richard Fuller, over the last year. If no further feedback, the Clerk would write to Mr Fuller inviting him to meet with the Council in the New Year. This would provide Members with the opportunity to raise a number of matters and receive feedback from Mr Fuller.

Town
Clerk

- 12 Leisure Services (86-2020/21)**
The Clerk informed Members that he had held further discussions with CBC's Leisure Policy Manager and work was being undertaken at CBC to review all the potential options for leisure in Sandy. The Council had previously submitted a response to CBC in which it asked that all options be looked at when considering the future of Sandy and its leisure provision. The Clerk informed Members that CBC wanted to meet with the Council again in the New Year to update further.

Members commented that it did not feel as though progress was being made. Members also raised the now vacant former Travis Perkins site, which they thought could potentially be used as a site for some form of leisure provision. Members raised the importance of Sandye Place and how it might fit in to any future arrangements.

After a lengthy discussion about leisure services and Sandye Place, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would work with CBC Councillors to push for a follow-up meeting with CBC's Ian Dalgarno and ensure that the suggestion of considering the former Travis Perkins site was put forward to CBC.

CBC
Cllrs/
Town
Clerk

- 13 Correspondence (87-2020/21)**
(i) Members received and noted the correspondence from CBC's Director of Children's Services in response to communication

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issued from Sandy Town Council. The content of the letter had been discussed as part of agenda item 12.

(ii) Members received and noted the correspondence from CBC's Assistant Director for Business and Investment in response to communication issued from Sandy Town Council.

A Cllr commented that the communication was positive, and they looked forward to CBC coming back to the Council in the New Year to develop ideas and opportunities further. A Meanwhile spaces project would be particularly beneficial to Sandy.

(iii) Members received and noted the correspondence from CBC's Partnerships and Community Engagement Team regarding an Asset of Community Value. Members felt that the Kings Arms and Queens Head public houses should both be re-registered as Assets of Community Value. The office to contact CAMRA who originally submitted the application to see if they would be re-submitting a new application and if not submit an application from the Council.

(iv) Members received and considered a response from Tilco in regards to a land transfer. Members continued to be disappointed with Taylor Wimpey's refusal to help with the costs of maintaining the land if it is transferred to the Town Council.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the land should be adopted and solicitor details provided but a site meeting should be insisted on and that the Town Clerk write to Tilco.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk

14

Consultations (88–2020/21)

(i) Members received and considered if the Council wishes to submit a formal response to the CBC's 'Schools for the future – Sandy area' consultation.

Members supported the work at the school which needs to be undertaken and has done for some time. The consultation does not make any mention of community use of facilities or public access, which is critical given the impact the developments may have on leisure provisions. Some Members indicated that they had already responded individually but agreed a response should be issued from the Council.

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It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Clerk responds to the consultation on behalf of the Town Council, highlighting the lack of community use facilities within the proposals.

Town Clerk

(ii) Members received and agreed a Council response to the Police and Crime Commissioner's survey on policing priorities for 2021. Members identified a number of concerns for Sandy, but stressed that tackling drug dealing/use was one of the highest priorities, as this often leads to other crimes. Vehicle damage and theft was also highlighted. The Clerk would complete the survey on behalf of the Town Council and submit it.

Town Clerk

CB Cllr Stock commented that the Sandy Community Safety Group had now been set up and had a live Facebook page.

15 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies (89-2020/21)

There were no reports.

16 News Release (90-2020/21)

It was agreed to issue news releases on the following matters:

- New councillor
- Council's response to consultations

Admin

17 Chairman's Items (91-2020/21)

The Chair did not have any items but thanked everyone for their assistance and commitment this year and the challenges it had presented.

18 Date of Next Meeting (92-2020/21)

Monday 18th January 2021