

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 22 August 2016 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, T Cole, M Hill, W Jackson, C Osborne, M Pettitt, M Scott (Chairman) D Sharman and P Sharman.

In attendance: Mr C Robson (Town Clerk)

	<i>Actions</i>
<p>1 Apologies for absence (32-2016/17) Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Blaine and CBC Cllr Stock.</p>	Admin
<p>2 Declarations of interest (33-2016/17) i) Declarable pecuniary interests – None ii) Non pecuniary interests – Cllrs Hill and Pettitt declared an interest in item 8 as Members of the Twinning Association. Cllr Pettitt declared an interest in item 13 as a member of the Cricket and Sandy Colts clubs.</p>	
<p>3 Public Participation Session (34-2016/17) There were no questions received from members of the public.</p>	
<p>4 Minutes of previous meeting (35-2016/17) RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 11 July 2016 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings with the amendment that Cllrs D Sharman and P Sharman were both present.</p>	Admin
<p>5 Financial Reports (36-2016/17) i) A balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for year to 30th June 2016 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The Town Clerk informed Members that 401 Staff costs appeared underspent at 22%, typically 3 months into the year we would expect this to be at 25%. The Clerk had compared the expenditure to the last two years and found it was at a comparable level at this time. The budget includes allowances for any potential salary increases that might be incurred during the year, which had not come into effect.</p>	Town Clerk

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The Clerk is seeking clarification from the accountants on Employers NIC which appears lower than anticipated at 16.1%.

The Clerk informed Members that overspend in 602, 4020 was due to unexpected expenditure on the Queens 90th Celebration Beacon event. A Member noted that it would be useful to have footnotes in the report explaining variances in the accounts (expenditure against budget) and queried whether the accountants could include this in their reports.

RESOLVED to note the report.

ii) Members received a budget summary report.

A Member noted that the report stated photocopying costs were overspent by £575; however this did not tally with the accounts. The Clerk will look into the discrepancy between the reports.

A Member noted that this report, when taken with Appendix I, did address some of the points in regards variances. Another Member pointed out that it did not include enough detail/explanation of the variances. The Clerk will work with the accountant to produce a further detailed report highlighting and explaining variances.

RESOLVED to note the report.

iii) A schedule of payments made since the previous meeting.

RESOLVED to approve the schedule of payments.

iv) Bank reconciliations and statements.

RESOLVED that Cllr Scott scrutinise the bank reconciliations and statements and sign these as approved at the end of the meeting.

6 Action List (37-2016/17)

The Town Clerk presented the Action List which identifies actions from previous meetings and their status.

The Clerk informed Members that the Archaeologist had now submitted their WSI, which was part of the pre-commencement requirements of any excavation work, and that CBC was currently reviewing the document. The Clerk informed Members he would bring a report on the depot building work to the committee as soon as possible.

Members noted the Action list.

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7 Internal Auditors Report (38-2016/17)

Members received and reviewed the Internal Auditors Report. There are two internal audits carried out each year. The Clerk informed Members that the Asset Register was in the process of been converted into a new format and that this would come to the committee for review.

A Member requested that reports submitted by contractors to the Town Council be in a larger font, similar to our Agenda Reports. The Clerk confirmed he would ask that this was the case for future reports.

RESOLVED to note the report from the internal auditor.

8 Grant Application (39-2016/17)

Cllrs Hill and Pettitt left the room while this item was discussed.

Members received a grant application for £250 from the Sandy Twinning Association. The application was to help meet the cost of hosting the visit of a civic delegation from Skarszewy in November. This would form part of Sandy's Remembrance Day celebrations and be the 8th consecutive year of the visit. The estimated overall costs of hosting the Skarszewy delegation will be £600.

A Member noted that the Twinning Association carry out a lot of their own fundraising to meet the cost of hosting Twinning visitors from both Skarszewy and Malaunay, and that the association arranges the entire visit and accommodates the delegation. The relationship between the Towns reflects well and the Council should help support the Twinning Association. It was noted that Twinning were running part of this on behalf of the Town Council.

RESOLVED to approve a grant of £250 to the Sandy Twinning Association.

Admin

9 Walkers are Welcome (40-2016/17)

Members received a report from the Town Clerk and noted a request from the Walkers are Welcome group to help support this year's Bedfordshire Walkers Festival, in which Sandy Town Council is running a walk, via a donation. The donation would go towards providing refreshment packs for walkers. It was Proposed and Seconded that a donation of £60 be given to the Bedfordshire Walking Festival.

A Member asked if a small budget could be set aside for the Walkers are Welcome group to help cover costs such as this in the next year's budget. The Town Clerk confirmed he would build this in to the budget

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report due to come to the next committee meeting.

RESOLVED to approve a donation of £60 to the Bedfordshire Walking Festival.

Admin

10 Ivel Sprinter, East Beds Community Bus Limited (41-2016/17)

Members received further information from the Ivel Sprinter, East Beds Community Bus Ltd, in relation to their recent grant funding application. The additional information surveyed numbers of bus users over a 4 day period in July.

The Chair reminded Members that the service had been running for 25 years and that the organisation had previously asked for a grant of £7,000.

Members discussed the passenger figures and commented that they had anticipated that they would be higher. A Member commented that the Council still did not know if the Ivel Sprinter's other grant applications had been successful and that there is still confusion as to how this service fits in with other bus services in the town. The Member stated he would like to see a joined up approach from all bus providers for the benefit of residents.

A Member noted that she was grateful for the information that had been provided but it didn't tally with the application, in which the group had said they carried 792 passengers a month. There was uncertainty as to how reliable the information provided was, however it was acknowledged that the service was a community asset and a grant should be awarded. A Member commented that it was a difficult decision as he felt there was still information missing. This was echoed by other Members.

A Member stated that the Ivel Sprinter does routes that other companies do not and fills in the gaps in those services. There is some co-operation between the services to create those links; however the Ivel Sprinter cannot operate on the same scale as larger companies. The No 73 bus is a commercial operation and does not go where the Ivel Sprinter does.

It was Proposed that a grant of £250 be approved for the Ivel Sprinter. The Proposal was not seconded.

It was Proposed and Seconded that a grant of £1,000 be given to the Ivel Sprinter towards the costs of purchasing a new bus.

RESOLVED to approve a grant of £1,000 to the Ivel Sprinter, East

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Beds Community Bus Limited, towards the cost of a replacement bus.

To ask that the grant recipient keep the Council up-to-date on their fund raising efforts.

Admin

11 Jenkins Pavilion Management Agreement (42-2016/17)

Members received a draft agreement from CBC's legal team. The Chair reminded Members this was not in a position to be signed, but the Committee should be reviewing in preparation.

A Member stated that the agreement seemed minimal and needs properly reviewing. It was Proposed and Seconded that a small working group be set up to review the document and bring back their thoughts.

RESOLVED to set up a working group to review the contract and report back to the committee. The working group shall consist of Cllrs M Hill, M Pettitt and M Scott, as Chair of the committee.

Cllrs Hill
Pettitt
Scott

12 Riddy Fencing Repair Work (43-2016/17)

Members received and discussed a report from the Town Clerk on fencing repairs required at the Riddy. The Wildlife Trust, who manages the Riddy on behalf of the Council, has recently checked the fence lines at the Riddy in preparation for the introduction of cattle. Three areas were found to be in need of replacement. Members received a map highlighting the three areas and their priority, the stretch along the A1 was of the greatest concern.

A Member stated that the Council should support the Wildlife Trusts recommendations, it was also noted that last year's maintenance budget of £1,500 had not been spent.

A Member asked whether a grazier was in place, if so the work would need to be done. The Clerk confirmed that the Wildlife Trust have an agreement with a grazier in place.

It was Proposed and Seconded that the Council support the Wildlife Trusts recommendation and fund the repair work of all three priority areas at a cost of £3,458.70, and that this come from the Nature Reserve Maintenance budget of £1,500 and the remainder from the Council's reserves.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council repair all three highlighted sections of the Riddy Fencing and that the required funds come from the Nature Reserve Maintenance budget with the remainder coming from the Council's reserves.

Admin

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13 Section 106 Funding (44-2016/17)

Members received a report from the Town Clerk on Section 106 applications. Members noted past and ongoing applications prior to looking at new applications for section 106 funding.

It was Proposed and Seconded to support all three applications.

Cllr Osborne gave his apologies and left the meeting at this point.

A Member stated that they would like to see the original report which showed all available funds, with spend by deadlines, at future meetings. The Clerk confirmed he would look to include an updated report for the next committee meeting.

RESOLVED to support applications for Sc106 funding from the Sandy Colts, Sandy Bowls Club and Sandy Cricket Club.

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14 Ear Marked Reserves (45-2016/17)

Members received a report from the Town Clerk. The Chair informed Members that the Earmarked Reserves are the result of the Council earmarking money for capital expenditure. The money has not been earmarked against any particular projects as yet. Therefore the Committee will need to consider whether the money is rolled into the Council's General Reserve at the end of the financial year, or moved into the Rolling Capital Fund, or left in Earmarked Reserves to be allocated against specific expenditure as it arises. (i.e. replacement of street lighting columns).

Members discussed the matter and it was **AGREED** that the Earmarked Reserves remain in the current budget heading for use against any specific project/expenditure that arises and that they are looked at again at the next committee meeting alongside a 2017/18 budget report from the Town Clerk.

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15 Drone Policy (46-2016/17)

Members received and discussed a report from the Town Clerk. The Clerk informed Members that the issue was becoming more prominent among local councils as private drone usage increased. Town Councils have not yet adopted policies regulating drone usage; however Cllr Cole's research had found a policy adopted by a City Council. One of the main issues facing the creation of any policy will be enforcement action.

A Member noted that the usage of drones had become a recent topic of discussion on social media, showing that the issue does exist in Sandy.

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Members agreed it was an issue which was going to continue to grow and that it represented a threat to resident's privacy. A member said that the Clerk should carry out more research into the Council's options before committing to a decision and that other parishes in the area should be liaised with. A Member noted that it could be requested as an Agenda item at the BATPC AGM.

A Member asked if model aircraft could be included within a drone policy, the Clerk confirmed it could.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk would continue to investigate the creation of a Drone Policy and the extent to which parishes in the area are effected and how CBC may be able to assist.

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16 Purchase of an additional council gazebo/marquee (47-2016/17)

Members discussed whether the Council had a need for a large (4m x 6m) gazebo/Marquee, where it would be stored and how it might be used. Members felt that the Council did not currently run any events that would justify purchasing the gazebo.

It was **AGREED** that at present the Council could not identify a use for a gazebo of this kind.

17 Chairman's Items (48-2016/17)

There were no Chairman's items.

18 Date of Next Meeting – 10 October 2016 (49-2016/17)