

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 24th July 2023 commencing at 7.30pm.

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

Absent: None

In attendance: Mrs N Sewell (Clerk), Cllr Aldis

The Chair welcomed the new Members of the Committee and encouraged them to ask questions as we went through the agenda.

	<i>Actions</i>
1 Apologies for absence (21-2023/24) None	Admin
2 Declarations of interest (22-2023/24) i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest - None ii) Non-disclosable Pecuniary Interest - None iii) Dispensations – None	
3 Minutes of previous meeting (23-2023/24) RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the meeting of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on Monday 12 th June 2023 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.	
4 Public Participation Session (24-2023/24) No members of the public were present.	
5 Financial Reports (25-2023/24) i) Members considered the balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget ending 31 st May 2023 and 30 th June 2023. The Chairman took Members through the report page by page. RESOLVED to note the report. ii) Members received and considered a budget report from the Town Clerk. RESOLVED to note the report. <i>The Chair requested that it be noted that the spend showing under the Mayor's allowance had rolled over from the previous Civic Year and</i>	

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none of the spend was attributed to the current Mayor Cllr Hewitt.

iii) Members scrutinised a schedule of payments for May and June 2023.

RESOLVED to approve the list of payments. *Councillor Pettitt requested that the following be noted: A £264.64 under the Mayor's allowance had not just been put towards the Civic Service Refreshments as noted in the report but also covered costs for mileage and parking across the year. Due to space restraints a full description is not possible here. Also a payment to First Response Fire Protection of £1,130.75 covered costs of replacement lights and pipework at both Bedford Road and Sunderland Road recreation grounds.*

iv) Bank reconciliations and statements.

RESOLVED that the Chair of Policy, Finance and Resources check and approve the bank reconciliations and statements.

6 Cemetery Working Group Minutes (26-2023/24)

Members received the minutes of the Cemetery Working Group meeting on 3rd July along with notes of an onsite meeting between the Mayor, Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk, resident of Holly Lodge and Mr Alan Caddy from Higham Ferrars Environmental Ltd.

The site visit was to establish the safety of the ground around the area where a septic tank and soakaway for the neighbouring property Holly Lodge are sited. Members also received Mr Caddy's subsequent report on the condition of the septic tank and soakaway.

Cllr Scott talked through the discussions of the Cemetery Working Group meeting and stated that although a new layout had been produced there were further amendments to the designs that were required, including the need to accommodate multifaith burials, which may require different burial orientation.

He added that timescales were concerning and hoped that CDS would meet their promise to get costs and a new plan to the Working Group within two weeks of the meeting. Cllr Scott added he was keen for the Working Group to meet again in the next week but this would not be possible until the new designs and costs were made available.

He added that the group had looked into the need to accommodate larger graves, such as would be needed for larger interns of the American-style caskets. CDS has been asked to look into a suitable

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area for this.

He went on to report that it was estimated that the current cemetery had around 3 years' worth of burials left, but even if works started on time this Autumn it could take up to 18 months for the new cemetery to be ready to start accommodating graves.

Cllr Aldis asked if the new cemetery would be funded from reserves or if the Council would get a loan. Cllr Osborne stated that his question couldn't be answered until the costs were made available.

Cllr Pettitt asked for an update on the onsite meeting and a further meeting at the same site that had taken place on the previous Friday. The Town Clerk gave a verbal report to support the written notes circulated to members as part of the agenda.

The Town Clerk added that the meeting on Friday 21st July at the same spot was to facilitate an external surveyor that the residents of Holly Lodge had commissioned to survey the council's boundary fence and the top of the soakaway to the resident's septic tank, which sits under Town Council land. The Clerk also spoke about the soakaway and the surveyor's recommendation for repairing the soakaway and its lid. A surveyor's report would be forthcoming after which time members could decide if any further action was necessary.

RESOLVED to note the minutes of the Cemetery Working group, the Report from Higham Ferrars Environmental Ltd and notes of the meeting held on 3rd July. The following amendment was made to the Working Group notes to state Cllr Sharman had sent his apologies and was not present as stated.

7 **Recommendation from CS&E Committee (27-2023/24)**

Members received the following recommendation from the Community, Services & Environment Committee on Monday 17th July 2023.

- **Repair of Footways at Sunderland Road and Fallowfield Recreation Grounds** – PF&R to approve the resurfacing of the worst areas of the footpaths in Sunderland Road as a matter of urgency at a cost of £4,100. The funding of resurfacing of Fallowfield to be included in the budget review for 2024/25 quoted costs come in at £15,000.

RESOLVED to Recommend to Full Council as a matter of urgency to agree the payment and to come from rolling capital funds.

8 **Action Plan (28-2023/24)**

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Members received updates to the PF&R Action Plan.

RESOLVED to note the plan with the following updates:

- Mark the item for insurance number 3 as complete.
- Update the year under Scale of Charges to 2024.
- Mark the last item under the HR Contract as complete
- Remove the Beeston Green Working Group parking item from the list.

Town Clerk

9 Insurance Renewal (29-2023/24)

Members received insurance renewal costs for 2024 and 2025 following an agreed renewal fee of £22,711.64 at the Town Council meeting on 26th June. To continue the same insurance over the 2nd and third year would see the costs rise to £23,847.22 in year two and £25,039.58 in year three.

RESOLVED to agree to take the insurance renewal over the three years as quoted.

Town Clerk

10 Cheque from Sandy Chamber of Trade (30-2023/24)

Members received a report from the Clerk acknowledging the receipt of a cheque from Sandy Chamber of Trade for £1,480.61 and consider the best use for the funds.

RESOLVED to put the funds towards the refurbishment of the Sandy Town Centre sign and that a plaque thanking the Sandy Chamber of Trade for their donation should be commissioned to be placed with the sign.

11 Signatories for CCLA (31-2023/24)

To agree four signatories for the Town Council's CCLA account.

Current signatories are:

- Town Clerk
- Cllr Scott

RESOLVED to take Cllr Scott off as a signatory and for Cllrs Osborne, Aldis and Pettitt be added.

Town Clerk

12 Bowls Club Lease Query (32-2023/24)

Members received an email regarding the Bowls Club lease and agree to the next steps.

RESOLVED that a small working group be set up to review the current lease and bring back recommendations to Committee in six months' time. The Working Group to be made up of Cllrs Effiong and Pettitt.

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13 Office Blind Quote (33-2023/24)

Members received a quote for blinds to be installed in the Clerk's Office and repairs for other office blinds at a cost of £899.96 + VAT
RESOLVED agreed to go ahead with the work.

14 IT support renewal (34-2023/24)

RESOLVED to defer the item to Full Council on 7th August as not all quotes had been received at this time.

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15 Legal Fees – Beeston Allotment Agreement for Lease (35-2023/24)

Members received an email from Woodfines Solicitors regarding a draft lease agreement between CBC and STC for the land at Beeston Green for allotment sites.

RESOLVED to defer discussions to the Full Council meeting on 7th August as per the recommendation made at the Community, Services & Environment Committee on 17th July 2023.

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16 Chairman's Items (36-2023/24)

Members received a verbal report on an urgent item regarding a dead Willow tree at Willow Island which needed to be removed before it caused any health and safety issues. A quote had been received to remove the tree at a cost of £768.00 including VAT.

RESOLVED to agree the quote for the works to be carried out.

Date of next meeting

Monday 4th September 2023.

Meeting ended at 21.08