

# 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 26 November 2018 commencing at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs P Blaine, T Cole, A Gibson, A M Hill, W Jackson, C Osborne (Chairman), M Pettitt, M Scott and P Sharman.

**In attendance:** Cllrs N Aldis and Mr C Robson (Town Clerk).

	<i>Actions</i>
<p><b>1 Apologies for absence (66-2018/19)</b> Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Sparrow.</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed newly co-opted Councillor A. Gibson to her first meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee.</p>	Admin
<p><b>2 Declarations of interest (67-2018/19)</b> No declarations of interest.</p>	
<p><b>3 Public Participation Session (68-2018/19)</b> No members of the public were present.</p>	
<p><b>4 Minutes of previous meeting (69-2018/19)</b> <b>RESOLVED</b> to receive the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 15 October 2018 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.</p>	
<p><b>5 Financial Reports (70-2018/19)</b> <i>The Chairman asked that Members take agenda item I and II together when reviewing expenditure and budget accounts.</i></p> <p>i) A balance sheet and detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for the year to 31 October 2018 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman explained the summary page of the document, which showed the Council's current financial position.</p> <p>A member queried income from photocopier use and whether income was generated from public use of the photocopier. The Clerk replied that Council can make copies for members of the public upon request and the cost of copies is included within STC's scale of charges. However, the majority of the income was from Councillors and staff who had made copies for something other than Council business.</p>	

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The Clerk explained that 402 4039 had been wrongly coded and had now been moved to 403 4039. The expenditure incurred was for winter bedding plants and compost.

A Member noted that the WW1 talks had generated a good level of income and the reintroduction of a talk series is something the Council should concentrate on. A series of archaeological talks has been agreed for 2019.

Following a review of each page of the budget document, it was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the report.

- ii) Members received and considered the budget overview report from the Clerk in conjunction with Appendix I. It was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the report.

A Member asked whether information on the frequency of which street light lanterns were failing could be provided. The Clerk will gather the information and bring it back to the meeting to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

Town Clerk

- iii) Members scrutinised a schedule of payments made since the previous meeting.

The Clerk explained the three payments of £25 to 'Sandy Lower School'. The first cheque (31503) was generated by the system. Unfortunately, this was made out in the wrong name and was therefore cancelled (CNXL031503). A new cheque was then manually issued for Sandy Secondary School (111306). The payment is in relation to the Audrey Boothby Prize.

A Member stated that the transaction detail didn't always give relevant details and sometimes just repeated the payee's name with various reference numbers. The Clerk explained that this is in part due to how the accountant has to enter the payments into the system and the transaction detail is taken from the first part of the entry. The Clerk would speak with the accountant to see how this could be improved.

Town Clerk

Members discussed general rates and queried whether these were high for some of the Council's properties. The Clerk will look at having all general rates reviewed.

Town Clerk

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments.

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iv) Bank reconciliations and statements.

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

Cllr C  
Osborne

## 6 Funding Request (71-2018/19)

Members received and considered a request from Ivel Sprinter to contribute towards the running costs and purchase of a new bus. It was noted that this was a yearly request but that the letter had been brought to committee for consideration before the office advised the applicant on whether the completion of a grant application is appropriate. A Member stated that regular grants should be recognised as such within the budget.

Members expressed concern about providing grant funding for running costs and a project (purchase of a bus) that is a couple of years away. It was Proposed and Seconded that a grant is not awarded on this occasion.

A Member stated that all the different bus services in Sandy should be working together to secure funding, publicise services and timetables etc. A Member responded that a service like the Ivel Sprinter is very different to Talk of The Town. The service offered and target market differs significantly between the two. Another Member stated that community transport was important, and he felt the Council should support it where it could.

A Member stated that they could not support a blanket 'no' on provision of funding. However, the Council's grant resources are small and this must be made clear to the Ivel Sprinter. They should be welcome to apply for grant funding.

Members voted in favour of the proposition and **RESOLVED** that no funding be awarded on this occasion and that the Clerk contact the applicant to advise them on the Council's grant procedure and the level of funding available under the grants budget.

Town Clerk

## 7 Internal Audit Report (72-2018/19)

The Internal Auditors completed their six month review the week of 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Unfortunately, the completed report had not yet been received. As soon as this is available it will be circulated to Members and placed on the next PF&R committee agenda for discussion. This will be accompanied by a review of the effectiveness of the internal audit.

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## **8 Action List (73-2018/19)**

As Members are aware, the archaeological excavation works have now concluded. However, before CBC are able to sign off on completion of the planning condition, the archaeologist must produce an initial report for the planning authority. This is still currently being worked on. Members asked that the importance of moving on with the work be stressed again to the archaeological contractor.

## **9 Sandy Fireworks 2018 (74 -2018/19)**

Members received and noted a profit and loss account from the Sandy Scouts in relation to the annual fireworks. The Chairman noted that the Scouts had now paid back the loan from the Council, as they have now done every year for which the support was given. Members agreed that the Scouts should be congratulated on running such a successful event.

Town Clerk

## **10 CCTV Savings and Upgrades (75-2018/19)**

The Chairman informed Members that the cost savings of decommissioning CCTV cameras was brought to committee following a recommendation by CS&E that the Council consider removing two cameras which had recorded low numbers of incidents over the last six years. Members had also viewed CBC's review of the cameras in Sandy.

Members expressed concern that the new cameras would only be able to pick up facial recognition at 40ft. If the purpose of installing cameras is for facial recognition, then we need further information on specifications. Some Members stated that cameras act as a deterrent and the Council shouldn't be looking to remove them. The Clerk reminded Members that the cameras could be fed through to the police control room, so while they may not get facial recognition of a crime if it is occurring some distance from the camera, the control room could still see it and alert the police to attend.

Members discussed camera 553. CS&E had felt that this could be removed due to the low number of incidents reported. CBC's review noted that the camera was not meeting operation requirements due to the lack of IR and the positioning of trees.

A Member stated that he believed anti-social behaviour occurred in the car park and was in favour of CCTV covering the area. The limitations of the present camera mean that it is not meeting operation requirements, however a newer camera in a different location would be of benefit. A Member suggested the camera be installed on the flood light next to the car park toilets.

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A Member stated that fully monitoring the car park and getting facial recognition would require several cameras, including one at each entrance. One camera would act as a deterrent, but to secure convictions, a big investment in a scheme would be required.

The Chairman asked Members to provide guidance on how to move the matter forward. CSE had suggested the camera be removed, if a new upgraded system is required then this will need to go back to CSE.

It was Proposed and Seconded that camera 553 be decommissioned. 3 – in favour / 4 – against. The proposal fell.

It was **RESOLVED** that further costs and information on moving and upgrading the camera be sought. The Clerk would ask the CCTV operations manager to attend a meeting with Council.

Members discussed Camera 555, Bedford Road. CBC were suggesting that the Council consider the removal of the camera. Members felt that it was important to have the camera remain in place as the park was a popular site and contained a lot of town council assets.

It was **RESOLVED** to retain the Bedford Road camera.

Members discussed camera 556 at the skate park and Sunderland Road play area. It was **RESOLVED** to retain the camera for the same reason as stated with camera 555.

Members discussed camera 558, Jenkins Pavilion. It was felt that on the basis that cameras had been retained to protect STC assets, this should be the same in this case. Members queried the effectiveness of the camera. CBC's review stated that the camera met operation requirements during daylight.

It was Proposed and Seconded that camera 558 be decommissioned. 3 – in favour / 5 – against. The proposal fell.

**RESOLVED** to retain camera 558 at the Jenkins Pavilion.

Members expressed some concern that the current monitoring system was working to the level members would expect. It was queried whether other systems could be looked at, such as having record only cameras as opposed to those that are monitored 24/7.

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A Member noted that the PCC had informed the Council that she felt CCTV cameras did have a worth and a part to play in tackling crime.

## **11 Fallowfield Recreation Ground Lighting Scheme (76-2018/19)**

Members considered the report on installing lighting and CCTV on the Fallowfield recreation ground.

Members raised concerns about moving forward with a CCTV installation given the current concerns over the operation of CCTV in the town. The project would be expensive, and we must be sure the CCTV is effective. The Chairman reminded Members that at this stage the committee was looking at whether they wished to budget for the works. Further research on the CCTV could be done and brought back.

A Member stated that the lighting was the most important element, CCTV could then be installed at a later date. A Member stated that it would be cheaper to do the works together as BT would not need to carry out separate trenching.

It was Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the scheme be budgeted for in 2019/20.

Town Clerk

A Member stated that the funds could come from the Fallowfield EMR. Members were reminded that the Council had agreed to use the Fallowfield EMR to pay for the cemetery project. This was then to be paid back via an internal loan. The Council had also resolved to use capital receipts and general EMR towards the cemetery project, so funds to cover the Fallowfield lighting and CCTV project should be available from Fallowfield reserve. A Member cautioned that final costs of the cemetery project were still to be finalised.

**RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the capital cost of work comes from the Fallowfield Reserve.

## **12 Village Hall Access Track (77-2018/19)**

Members considered the report on repair to the village hall access track. It was noted that the wording relating to the lease with the village hall should state 'must' rather than 'may' pay 55% of maintenance costs on demand.

Members agreed that the work was required, and an allowance should be made in the 2019/20 budget for this. Concern was raised over the Village Hall's ability to provide funding and liaising between STC and the management committee would be required.

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**RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the Council budget for repair works to the Village Hall access road in the 2019/20 budget and that the Clerk includes the best price obtained for the work in budget calculations.

Town Clerk

## **13 2019/20 Budget Preparation (78-2018/19)**

Members received and considered the draft budget and precept documents. An amended summary sheet was circulated, which had corrected average Band D property numbers. For the current financial year, the number of Band D was 4000 and this has increased to 4001 for 2019/20.

Members went through the document page by page.

Page 40 – The Clerk explained that projected income for tourism income (1003), photocopier income (1202) and grants received (1245) had been increased to match actual year to date income.

Page 41 – The Clerk explained that 402 4039 had been recoded to 403 4039. This did not affect any of the budget figures.

Page 42 – The Clerk explained that 403 4007 £135 had been recoded to 403 4005. The expenditure was for work's boots.

Page 44 – It was noted that there may need to be an increase in CCTV costs based on previous discussions on the agenda. The Clerk informed Members that the projected amount for 408 4011 had been increased to match actual year to date. This still represented a saving due to the recalculated rates for the car park.

Page 45 – 500 4036 – projected increase to match actual spend. Large spend was due to action to remove unauthorised encampment on The Pinnacle.

Page 46 – It was noted that the Clerk had included a £2,000 contribution towards the Sandy Green Wheel in the most recent budget calculation. This had been recommended by CSE, for the 2019/20 financial year only.

Page 48 – It was noted that the repayment for the internal loan from Fallowfield EMR may need to be increased due to project costs and agreed % of payback. The £9,102 stated is 3.64% of £250,000. A Member believed that this had been agreed at 4% and needed to be rectified. The Clerk would clarify with the accountant.

Town Clerk

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Additional capital costs would also need to be built in as agreed.

A Member stated that the Chamber needed an improved heating system and that he would like to see some allowance made for this in the budget. It was agreed to investigate an alternative.

A Member queried how an additional £15,000 in expenditure would impact on the precept increase. An additional £15,000 would result in a 4.64% increase based on the current revenue and capital budget.

## **14 Tree Works (79-2018/19)**

Members noted that tree works would be carried out on Beeston Village Green at the beginning of December which would result in maximum spend of the Council's tree maintenance budget. The works were costly but would reduce costs in future years.

## **15 Health & Safety Procurement Policy (80-2018/19)**

Members reviewed the Council's Health and Safety procurement policy.

**RESOLVED** to re-adopt the Health and Safety procurement policy.

## **16 Chairman's Items (81-2018/19)**

There were no Chairman's items.

## **17 Date of next meeting (82-2018/19)**

Noted that the next committee meeting will be 7 January 2019.