

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Services and Environment Committee of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 30th April 2018 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, A M Hill, T Knagg, C Osborne, M Scott, J Sparrow, S Sutton (Chair), N Thompson

Absent: Cllr T Cole, G Leach

In Attendance: Cllrs W Jackson and M Pettitt, and Mr C Robson (Clerk)

Action

1 Apologies for absence (106-2017/18)

Cllrs T Cole and G Leach
CBC Cllr Caroline Maudlin

2 Declarations of interest (107-2017/18)

i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests – None

ii) Non-disclosable Interests – Cllr Sutton declared an interest in item 9 as an employee of the RSPB. The interest would only apply should there be discussion on where recommended items are to be purchased.

iii) Dispensations – None

3 Minutes of previous meeting (108-2017/18)

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on Monday 26th March 2018 as a correct record of proceedings.

The Clerk informed the Committee that a member of the public who was present at the meeting of the committee held on 26th March 2018 had raised a query over the minutes. Clarification had been sought over intended actions related to advice from the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG). The minutes state that a free advisory report will be requested for Sunderland Road recreation ground. The minutes did not mention advice from a regional advisor, the advice of which a Councillor had informed the Member of the public would be sought.

The Clerk informed Members that as well as asking the IOG for a survey of Sunderland Road recreation ground he had also asked whether a regional advisor could attend the site.

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4 **Public Participation Session (109-2017/18)**

- i) A Member on behalf of a member of the public asked the Clerk for an update on the state of the car park public toilets. A visitor to the town had told him he was very disappointed with the toilets. Further damage appeared to have been caused to the toilet doors. The Clerk informed Members that he had not received any further reports of damage since the toilet doors were fixed. The toilets are becoming older and more difficult to maintain. The Clerk will look into the reports of damage with the foreman and will look to have signage put up advising that CCTV covered the area and vandals would be prosecuted.

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A Member stated he had visited public toilets in other towns which were well maintained and coin operated. This might be something the Council wants to investigate.

It was Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that the improvements and changes to the public toilets would be looked at when other more pressing projects were completed.

- ii) A Member asked on behalf of a member of the public whether the Council would be consulted on the enormous changes to the rail timetable. It was noted that Council would not be consulted on such changes.
- iii) A Member commented that the police had spoken with him regarding a recent incident involving a firearm on Beeston Village Green. The police had provided information boards to be placed around the Village Green about rural activities such as hare coursing.

It was agreed the Member would liaise with the outdoor team before putting any signage up. It was also noted that the police could provide similar signs covering urban issues for the town centre.

5 **Action list (110-2017/18)**

The Action Report was received and updated.

Beeston Green, Orchard/Allotments: Draft Heads of Terms had now been received from CBC and would be discussed later on the Agenda.

Parking Restrictions: The Clerk advised that he had met with CBC's Head of Community Safety, Parking and Programs. CBC will no

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longer be setting up a long-term strategy for parking. It is felt that the emerging Local Plan may conflict with a long-term strategy and as such a short-term strategy would be preferable. CBC will be inviting members of Sandy Town Council to a consultation session in May to discuss specific parking problems and possible solutions. The Chair stated that once the request comes through the Council can select members to attend. Members were asked to report problem areas to the Clerk for inclusion at the meeting.

Rural Match Fund: This matter would be looked at by CBC Highways in the second financial quarter of the year.

The Pinnacle Lease: The Clerk informed the committee that a meeting was to be held with the landowner on Friday 4th May to discuss costs and responsibilities of securing and maintaining the Pinnacle.

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Improvements to Town Council owned Play Areas: To be discussed on Agenda Item 10.

Sunderland Road Recreation Ground: The Clerk advised the committee that he had contacted the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) to enquire whether a survey could be carried out for Sunderland Road and what advisory services are offered. As a Member of IOG the Council receives a 10% discount but there is no free advisory service which will visit the ground.

IOG have provided a quote for the site assessment of sports fields at Sunderland Road recreation ground. The total cost of the site assessment would be £1,501.92 (inclusive of VAT). Regional Advisors must be referred to the ground via the relevant sports County bodies and this will incur a cost.

A Councillor informed the committee that the recent report on Bedford Road recreation ground by the Bedfordshire Football Association was a free service which Sandy Football Club (SFC) arranged. Beds FA contacted all member clubs who had a leasehold or freehold on grounds offering a free survey. SFC followed the offer up and invited STC's foreman to join them in an onsite meeting. Samples of soil were taken, and a resulting report was passed from the SFC to Council for use by the outdoor team. The report did not result in any costs to Council and many recommendations were about timing and management which are for the outdoor team to incorporate into their schedules. It is unlikely this report service would be offered for Sunderland Road as there are no football clubs with a lease or freehold.

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A Member stated that the Council must do what is proportionate and target its resources. Previous minutes of the Council show a report was carried out some years ago and significant sums of money would need to be spent if a drainage system were to be integrated. The Council should ensure that machinery we have is used well.

A Member stated that he was aware some football games had been cancelled at Sunderland Road during the season, however he had not received a lot of complaints or feedback. To spend large amounts of public money there must be a strong demand.

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the site assessment is not pursued further at this stage.

The committee agreed that an internal audit should be carried out based on the Bedford Road report and if principles can be practically carried over to Sunderland Road this should be looked at. A Member noted that the Bedford Road report was as a result of soil samples and the two grounds are different. Therefore, not all recommendations may apply.

6 **Community Action Bedfordshire (111-2017/18)**

Information on project 'Café Connect' was received and considered.

Members commented that while there are very few free venues in Sandy, venues such as the Village Hall, Jenkins Pavilion and Church rooms may be appropriate depending on the project's budget.

Members expressed some confusion as to the project's target group and how they were going to identify and liaise with them. The Children's Centre was set up to reach out to members of the community and the project officers should work with them to identify areas in need. Members also questioned how long the project was intended to run for.

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Members noted that there were already other activities going on within Sandy. As well as the Children's Centre, Sandy Good Neighbours held a regular friendship club and networking clubs also ran out of the Jenkins facility. Members agreed it was important that this project engages with those clubs to see how they can help each other.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Community Action Bedfordshire to advise them of the suggested venues and provide

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contact details for the Children's Centre and Sandy Good Neighbours. More information on the target group and length of project would be requested.

7 **Depot Tender (112-2017/18)**

An update on the Council depot tenders was received and noted. The Working Group will be meeting on Wednesday 2nd May to review further information received.

8 **Specialised Markets (113-2017/2018)**

A proposal for a specialised event in Sandy was received and considered.

A Member stated he was not going to support the recommendation to hold the beer festival. He had believed the markets brought forward would be specialised markets such as farmers markets. There are already local beer festivals run by pubs.

A Member stated he was surprised that the event would take over the whole of the car park, but asked whether the COOP could be approached to see if their parking could be used for the day by visitors to the town. He commented that the event surely has the potential to pull people into the town centre.

A Member commented that the event should be encouraged. Its position means that people will be brought into the town centre and this may have a positive effect for businesses.

A Member commented that if successful it may become a regular thing that pulls people into the town in the same way the Carnival and Christmas Lights Switch On does. The Council should give permission for use of the car park for this event then carry out a review to see if it was successful or not.

A Member stated he was pleased to see there were other elements to the event aside from beer, such as music and poetry. It is an opportunity to do something positive.

A Member stated that he felt it was a good idea but that there should be police presence. Other Members believed the police would only provide a presence if paid to do so. The event itself would be responsible for security and the proposals states this will be provided.

A Member commented that he had misgivings, particularly around how we would get the car park cleared in time. He had recently

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visited the car park on a weekend evening and noted at least 30 cars parked. He also noted that there was an order prohibiting alcohol covering the area. The Clerk informed Members that the ban would remain in place but that the police would be notified of an arranged event. It is not a blanket ban on the consumption of alcohol in public but affords the police with additional controls to deal with anti-social behaviour arising from the consumption of alcohol. Given the security and stewarding arrangements in place it is hoped that such a power will not be invoked and certainly only as a last resort.

Members queried how many people the event would take. A member said that they felt it had the potential to be a successful event.

Some Members asked whether the event could be marketed to focus on craft, food and music rather than just beer.

It was Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council agree that the Market Square Group run a craft beer event in the Council's Car park on 16th and 17th June 2018. That the marketing and name of the event be known as 'Craft, Beer, Food and Music'.

Admin

A Member asked if those Members who had supported the proposal would be helping the office in the running of the event. The Chair commented that the Market Square Group would be running the event and the Council was only providing permission that it go ahead. Cllrs Knagg, Scott and Sparrow offered to help if needed.

9 Bee Boxes (115-2017/18)

The report by Liz Fuller, Administrator on the proposed installation of bee boxes at 10 Cambridge Road was received and considered.

A Member moved that the recommendation within the report be approved.

A Member queried the locations of the proposed bee/insect boxes and bird boxes and whether 10 Cambridge Road was the most suitable location. The cemetery and sports pavilion may be more suitable.

It was noted that blackbirds and finches would not use the nesting boxes as suggested by the report.

A Member proposed an amendment that bat boxes also be purchased and installed. The amendment was accepted.

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It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council install bee/insect boxes, bird boxes and bat boxes on Council buildings located at the cemetery and Sunderland Road.

10 Play Parks Improvement Program (116-2017/18)

The Clerk's report was received and considered. The Clerk reminded Members that the working group were recommending a preferred partner to carry the project forward with, rather than a finalised tender and cost. The total cost of the improvement project will change depending on finalised designs following consultation.

A Member thanked the working group for the thorough report and good analysis of each tender. The report built up a clear picture.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the recommendation of the working group.

RESOLVED that Company D be selected as the preferred partner to take forward designs for consultation.

Town Clerk

The committee recorded its thanks to the working group for the work that had gone into the project so far.

11 Community Stand (117/2017/18)

The plan from Highways showing the proposed position of the community stand was received and considered. The Clerk informed Members that due to underground services the location proposed by Highways was the only workable installation.

Town Clerk

A Member expressed some concern over the intended use of the stand. Other Members commented that it would provide a focal point and could be used for stalls, musicians and help enhance town centre events.

The Clerk informed Members that Highways were happy that the space between the stand and the canopy was sufficient to stop anyone climbing and jumping from one to the other. A Member stated he was concerned that the space was not wide enough.

A Member commented that they were concerned that this was the only place the stand could go. If it is to be a focal point it should be further forward. The Clerk informed Members that test pits would soon be put in place by Highways, so if Council wished to halt the project it should do so now.

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A Member stated that the Council should be positive about the stand and its use for displays and events. The funding was coming from CBC's Market Town Fund and if the money was not spent in Sandy, it would be spent elsewhere or lost.

RESOLVED to move forward with the project based on the position Highways have advised.

12 **Beeston Community Orchard and Allotments (118/2017/18)**

A copy of Heads of Terms (HoTs) for the lease of land from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) was received and considered. The Clerk informed Members that he had not yet received a redline drawing for the site and that this was due. Once received he would circulate to Members.

The Council's original preference had been to take the land on a freehold basis. CBC were offering a long lease (125 years). Members felt that this was still acceptable given the responsibility it placed on CBC.

Having reviewed the Heads of Terms, Members asked that the Clerk respond to CBC asking that;

- Security of tenure provisions of Section 24-28 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 Part 2 be explained within the document.
- The document clearly identifies an allowance for sheds and greenhouses on allotment land.
- That the landlord prepare the ground for development as an orchard/allotment, as was initially agreed.
- Rights of vehicular access be included. A car park will need to be allowed for within the allotment land and therefore access should be identified.
- The review date for the contract is included.

The Clerk confirmed he would respond to CBC asking that the above points be included with the draft HoTs.

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13 **Chairman's Items (119/2017/18)**

The Chairman reminded Members that the second talk in the Councils WW1 talk series would be held on 2 May 2018 at 7:30pm in the Council Chamber. Sponsorship of the lamp post poppies would be launched at the talk.

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Members were informed that the archaeologist carrying out excavations at the cemetery extension site proposed to hold an open session on 10th May between 5pm and 7pm. The office would advertise the open event via social media, news releases and posters.

- 14 Date of Next Meeting (120-2017/18)**
Monday 2 July 2018