

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Community Services and Environment Committee of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 4th November 2024 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, B Blackley, J Hewitt, S Lee, A Lock, C Osborne, M Scott, S Sutton (Chair) and N Thompson

Absent: Cllr R Lock

In attendance: Councillors A Effiong (until 9.00pm), S Baker, M Pettitt, P Sharman, Ian Reed Deputy Town Clerk, Hayley Stewart and Ben Yeomans - Sandy Incredible Edible Group

- | | | Action |
|----------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence (CSE-46-2024/25)
An apology for absence was received from Councillor R Lock | Admin |
| 2 | Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (CSE 47 -2024/25)
The Clerk advised Members that they had the opportunity at the meeting to disclose any new items that needed to be disclosed
i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i> – Cllr M Scott declared a pecuniary interest in item 7 as an operator of a private allotment based at Seddington Nurseries.
ii) <i>Non pecuniary interests</i> – Cllr A Lock declared an interest in Item 6 as being a member of St Swithun’s PCC, Cllr Osborne declared an interest in Item 6 as a Church Warden at St Swithun’s Church and item 8 as President of Sandy Football Club.
iii) <i>Dispensations</i> – None. | Deputy Clerk |
| 3 | Minutes of previous meeting (CSE 48-2024/25)
RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Community Services & Environment Committee held on Monday 16 th September 2024 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings. | Deputy Clerk |
| 4 | Public Participation Session (CSE 49-2024/25)
There were no members of the public present. | |
| 5 | Incredible Edible – Presentation (CSE 50-2024/25)
Hayley Stewart and Ben Yeomans attended the meeting to make a presentation on the first season of operation of Sandy Incredible Edible. A discussion took place on the planting sites and planting plans for 2025. It was reported that plans were in place to grow | |

Sandy Town Council

vegetables in the community garden at Bedford Road Recreation Ground. The Committee was advised the group was supported on a regular basis by six volunteers.

RESOLVED to note the report and welcome the work of the group.

Deputy
Clerk

6. **Churchyard Wall Repairs Update (CSE 51-2024/25)**

Further to the last meeting of the Committee (Minute CSE35-2024/25) refers), Members received a further report from the Clerk regarding updated repairs to the closed churchyard wall. Members noted the report and noted that the Clerk had received additional information from stone masons. It was also reported that Great Barford Parish Council had considered a report and survey estimate and had not taken the project forward.

Some Members were promoting that the way forward supported by the Clerk could project manage the scheme rather than using an outside project manager. To assist it was suggested the Clerk could go on a project management course. As the report was not complete it was proposed that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. It was noted the cost of the scheme would be approximately £10,000.

The Committee noted there were several organisations that could be approached for funding. A Member suggested that some organisations would not fund applications from local councils, in such circumstances the parochial church council be asked to make appropriate applications.

RESOLVED to note the report and a complete report be submitted to the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee.

Clerk

7 **Allotment Update (CSE 52-2024/25)**

Members received a report on the latest review of Field 3, Beeston as a potential allotment and Beeston Community Gardens at the site by the Beeston Green rural housing development. The Committee was reminded that the Town Council as part of the planning application had asked that the land be released to it. The site had been identified for allotments, but the Town Council deemed it unsuitable because the site had been a Market Gardeners yard for many years and was covered by hard standings. However, the site was considered ideal for creating raised beds for a community garden project. BRCC had section

Sandy Town Council

S106 funding that could be used to develop the community garden and a community orchard. CBC had already provided a water supply.

Regarding Field 3 the Town Council and CBC had identified the site as a potential site for allotments. There were potential constraints including a gas pipeline and areas of archaeological interest. However, there was sufficient land for a large allotment site. Several Members had visited the site, and it had been suggested that the Town Council lease the whole site and to bring this forward there would be two leases as allotments are subject to different conditions. The second area would be subject to a more traditional lease with provisions for the Town Council to use this area for appropriate uses. It was made clear to the Committee that if part of the land was leased for agricultural use the farmer concerned would plough and treat the land for allotments in return a water source would be made available that would fill troughs on the site. Also, a suitable access from the highway and a carpark would need to be identified. A detailed discussion took place on the two sites as follows.

Field 3

Concerns were expressed by some Members at the set-up costs of an allotment; it was suggested by some Councillors that the costs of fencing the site and gates would be too expensive and because of its rural location not required. This view was challenged. The ditch running along the road required clearing and it was agreed the Internal Drainage Board would be asked to clear the ditch.

Community Gardens Site

Concerns were expressed by some Members that the Town Council would need to secure a lease at a peppercorn rent from CBC. The proposal for the site to be developed as a community garden was considered desirable but not essential.

A third option was discussed that would set up a community growing scheme on the Field 3 site because it was a large site, and it could accommodate a raised bed site and a community orchard. Those using it would also benefit from experienced allotment holders who would be present.

RESOLVED that in principle the cost of £8,000 capital costs to set up the community garden and the setup of Field 3 as allotments

Sandy Town Council

be considered as part of the budget review process for the financial year 2025/26.

Deputy
Clerk

8 Report on Condition of Playgrounds and Recreation Grounds (CSE 53-2024/25)

The Committee received a report that would be a regular agenda item, on the Councils' play areas and recreation grounds. A detailed discussion took place on the items raised in the report and the main issues are captured as follows:

(i) The signs located in all play areas and recreation grounds were to be audited to ensure the information was up to date and relevant.

(ii) Dog fouling was a severe problem in Sunderland Road and Fallowfield recreation grounds that required further discussion including the possible enforcement of regulations controlling dog fouling and keeping dogs on leads. During the discussion it was suggested the Town Council look at providing a designated dog exercise area – no site was identified at this stage. Rather than moving straight to a Dog Control Order it was suggested a dog walking space around the outside of the playing fields be created at Sunderland Road or a general community engagement programme to engage with the local dog walking community.

(iii) The proposal to install soft pour play surfacing on the banks of the skate park at Sunderland Road Recreation Ground was challenged because it was suggested topping up soil on the exposed areas was preferred. The area that needed soft pour to be measured and costed for PFR Committee for final decision.

(iv) Anti-social activity at the skatepark would be addressed by removing brambles/foilage on the mound situated between the back of the skatepark along to the car park by the village hall as well as providing a CCTV camera to be located at the skatepark.

(v) Bedford Road Recreation Ground - to treat the football pitch for reduction of worm casts.

(vi) Bedford Road Recreation Ground – installation of embankment slide to be carried out in December 2024.

(vii) Replacement of noticeboards - it was hoped that noticeboards that had recently been replaced could be retained and repaired for use elsewhere in the town.

The Committee noted that all the expenditure items identified during the current financial year had been carried out.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the funding of the treatment of worm casts at the football pitch at Bedford Road

Clerk

Sandy Town Council

Recreation Ground, potential soft pour area at the skatepark measured and the location of a CCTV camera at the Skatepark, Sunderland Road Recreation Ground be considered with detailed costs at the PFR Committee

9 **Report on Condition of Cemetery (CSE 54-2024/25)**

The Committee considered an updated report on the cemetery based on a report considered by the Cemetery Working Group.

The issues raised were;

(i) Control of rabbits.

(ii) The poor quality of grass in places where it looked like weeds had taken over.

(iii) The cap stones on the cemetery wall needed addressing as well as maintenance of the wall.

(iv) The chapel - its reported deteriorating state was of concern to the Committee. It was suggested community fund raising/ crowd funding could be used to fund the necessary works. The Deputy Clerk to report back to the Committee on securing a survey of the Victorian building and a report on its usage.

(v) The slope from the back of the depot to the cemetery main grounds was not complete.

(vi) Essential hedging needed to be replanted in parts of the cemetery.

(vii) Pathways required repair.

RESOLVED the report be noted and photographs showing the defects at the cemetery be circulated to all Members.

Deputy
Clerk

10 **Action Plan 2024/25 (CSE 55-2024/25)**

The Committee considered a draft of the Community Services and Environment Committee's Action Plan for 24/25. The Chairman took Members through the plan. Members commented as follows;

- EV Charging Points – to be installed in January 2025.
- CBC failed trees to be addressed at entrance to Mayfield Court, Birch Drive and Mills Walk.
- Electric Vehicles – no further discussion on purchases for four years.
- VE Day Memorial May 2025

RESOLVED that the Action Plan be approved and reports be submitted to monitor progress

Deputy
Clerk

Sandy Town Council

11 Action List for November 2024 (CSE 56-2024/25)

Members received the Action List updates.

Deputy
Clerk

- The unveiling of the mosaic had taken place and it was reported it had been a highly successful event. It was agreed this item could now be removed from the Action List.
- Allotments and community orchard had been discussed at this meeting.
- EV charging points would be installed in January 2025.
- Land at Scout HQ/Cadet HQ – no further update received from Taylor Wimpey.
- Summer Bedding Contract – no update.
- Sunderland Road Drainage a report to go to PFR Committee.

12 Summary of budget proposals for 2025/26 (CSE 57-2024/25)

The Committee considered a report on its proposed budget submissions. It was invited to discuss the items and make recommendations to the PFR Committee. It was noted event issues relating to VE Day celebrations, Big Lunch 2025, Remembrance Sunday 2025 had not been discussed. With regard to the skate park anniversary grants would be sought

RECOMMENDED:

- (1) Banner Installations £475 per installation – ongoing installation
- (2) Sunderland Road Pitch improvement £4,000 – ongoing item
- (3) Fallowfield footways – costs of £7-11,000
- (4) St Swithun's Western Wall currently estimated at £11,000
- (5) Pitch line marking – robot system £500 per session
- (6) Ex SEG spaces managed by Incredible Edible £2,500
- (7) Skatepark soft pour installation to replace deteriorating grass surface £9,000 – this required a further review
- (8) In principle agree the cost of £8,000 capital costs to set up the community garden, Beeston Green and the setting up of Field 3 as allotments
- (9) Provision of full events programme

Clerk

Sandy Town Council

13 Use of Cricket Square (CSE 58-2024/25)

The Committee was advised that Sandy Cricket Club would share the square with another club for Saturdays next season. A Sunday team would be set up. It was noted that the Sandy Cricket Club would receive the income from the other club using the facilities.

RESOLVED that the report be noted

14 Playground Provision Working Group (CSE 59-2024/25)

The Committee received the minutes of the first meeting of the Playground Provision Working Group

15 The Beeston Green, Riddy and Pinnacle Working Group (CSE 60-2024/25)

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 30th September 2024.

RESOLVED;

- (1) The minutes be received.
- (2) That Biggleswade and Hitchin Angling Association be charged its annual fees of £691.25.
- (3) That further discussions be held with the grazier on the best dates to allow cattle onto the Riddy.

Deputy
Clerk

16 Events Working Group (CSE 61-2024/25)

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Events Working Group held on 16th October 2024.

17 Chairmans' Items (CSE 62-2024/25)

There were none.

18 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 16th December 2024

All Members were invited to attend the next meeting as it was the last committee meeting before Christmas; refreshments would be made available.

Deputy
Clerk

The meeting ended at 21:25.