

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 16th September 2024 commencing at 7.30pm

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

Absent: None

In attendance: Councillor M Pettitt and Ian Reed Deputy Town Clerk

Action

1 Apologies for Absence (CSE-31-2024/25)

No apologies received

Admin

The Chairman welcomed Councillor S Lee to her first meeting of the Committee

2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (CSE 32 -2024/25)

The Clerk advised Members that they had the opportunity at the meeting to disclose any new items that needed to be disclosed

Deputy Clerk

- i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* – None.
- ii) *Non pecuniary interests* – Cllr A Lock declared an interest in Item 5 as being a member of St Swithuns PCC, Cllr R Lock declared an interest in Item 5 as Treasurer of St Swithuns PCC and Cllr Osborne declared an interest in Item 5 as a Church Warden at St Swithuns Church
- iii) *Dispensations* – None.

3 Minutes of previous meeting (CSE 33-2024/25)

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Community Services & Environment Committee held on Monday 22nd July 2024 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

Deputy Clerk

4 Public Participation Session (CSE 34-2024/25)

There were no members of the public present.

5 Churchyard Wall Repairs Update (CSE 35-2024/25)

Members received a report from the Clerk regarding repairs to the closed churchyard wall. Members welcomed the report and noted that the work would be centered on recently repaired wall that was in a poor condition. The report recorded the efforts of the

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Town Clerk to get advice and quotations for the work and her concern that the Diocesan surveyor for quinquennial inspections was offering advice to improve the chances of diocesan consent and to obtain competitive quotes subject to additional charges to seek competitive quotes, draw up contract documents, undertaking (regular) site visits and issue payment certificates. The Committee was advised that the quote, to adhere to DAC requirements, was similar to a quotation supplied to Great Barford Parish Council for its wall.

It was noted that due to her concerns the Clerk had sought other quotes. The Committee supported the actions of the Clerk. Concern was expressed that the current offer to project manage the works did not include an estimate of chargeable hours. It was further noted the Clerk would report back with costs after estimates of the work had been received. Councillors Aldis and Blackley suggested the project management of the scheme could be undertaken by the staff of the Town Council. It was also suggested by Councillor Osborne that the Council urgently contact the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust on the specification required.

Clerk

RESOLVED to note the report and Great Barford Parish Council be asked for its comments on the work carried out on its wall.

6 **The Depot Roof - Repairs (CSE 36-2024/25)**

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk regarding repairs to the depot roof. Three quotations had been sought but only one had been received. The company had quoted £2,500 exc VAT for the works and additionally had quoted for the opposite side of the roof to be replaced to the same specification at a cost of £1,250.

Clerk

RECOMMENDED to accept the quotations from Contractor A in the sum of £3,750.

Deputy Clerk

7 **Allotment Update (CSE 37-2024/25)**

Members received a report on the latest review of Field 3, Beeston. A successful site visit took place on 3rd September 2024. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk met Stephen Mooring, CBC and Councillors J Hewitt and S Sutton.

The Deputy Clerk was now arranging for Members of the Council to visit the site. A general discussion took place. Issues relating to archaeological sites was discussed. Also, it was recognised the

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Town Council needed detailed sizes of the site in order to calculate the number of plots, clarification on water sources and advice from CBC on whether planning permission was required. It was also essential that the site was secured with fencing and gates. It was estimated a third of the site would meet the Town council's allotment needs and avoid any possible archeological sites located in the area. The site had been left fallow for three years and was covered in knee high weeds (including Ragwort) and needed treating for leather jackets and to be ploughed over. A plan of the area was discussed. The site visit suggested (subject to further discussion), that the area delineated on the plan to the right of the pipeline would meet the requirements of an allotment for the Town Council.

Deputy Clerk

RESOLVED to note the report and the Committee encouraged all Members to attend the site visit to the proposed site

8 **The Council's Playgrounds (CSE 38-2024/25)**

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk on various aspects of responsibility and management of the Town Council's playgrounds:

(a) Annual Playground Inspection Report

The Committee considered a report from the Deputy Clerk on the results of the annual play inspection report considerations to develop actions to improve services and repairs to the Councils playgrounds. In relation to the Embankment slide, Bedford Road Recreation Ground the Committee considered submissions from three play equipment companies to provide a replacement stainless steel (double) slide.

A Member had concerns about the proposal that she only reported at the meeting about Council playground equipment schemes being inclusive and meeting the needs of disabled children. The Deputy Clerk advised:

- He had discussed inclusive schemes with all three companies and could provide schemes that would severely increase the costs and although inclusive schemes could be provided at Bedford Road Recreation Ground there was no car park provision there which highlighted the issue of how would disabled and special needs children gain easy access to the site.
- The Council did not have a play provision policy

The Committee also discussed the condition of play equipment at Sunderland Road Recreation Ground and asked the Play Strategy

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Working Group to look to setup a playground strategy, including future maintenance of play equipment.

- **RECOMMENDED** that the quotation for a stainless steel double width and extended play slide with platform with the cost of a soft play surface included in the price at a cost of £11,759.69 be accepted from Contractor B subject to the addition of a scheme to provide an access path that would take wheelchair and other users up to the slide .The cost of the additional scheme be discussed at the Full Council Meeting

Deputy Clerk

(b) Brown-Tail Moth

The Committee discussed a report on the problem of Brown-Tail moth at Fallowfield Recreation Ground and possibly in other playgrounds in the summer months

RESOLVED that the Outdoor Team undertake training about the moth and be asked to inspect the recreation areas to identify the moth and erect signs and affect removal if required.

(C) Request from Persimmon Homes about Playgrounds at Banks Drive and Owlswood, Sandy

The Committee considered the request from Persimmon Homes for the Council to take over the two playgrounds

Deputy Clerk

RESOLVED that Persimmon Homes be advised that the Council does not wish to take on the responsibility of the two play areas at this time

9 Pitch Maintenance – Pitchpower Update (CSE 39-2024/25)

The Committee considered an updated report on pitchpower following a site meeting where the requirements of the pitchpower reporting system was explained. There was a discussion about when the Pitchpower scheme would improve the pitches. It was explained the first survey was being carried out now so no changes would happen until the report was considered and a way forward was agreed with Pitchpower and the Football Association.

Deputy Clerk

RESOLVED the report be noted.

Town Clerk

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10 **Sunderland Road Drainage (CSE 40-2024/25)**

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk about the drainage investigation works at Sunderland Road. It was explained that further to the last meeting of the Committee a CCTV survey of the culvert at Sunderland Road had been carried out. The concrete culvert was in good condition but silted and camera survey was halted after 12 metres due to silt and root ingress. It was further reported the culvert was blocked and will not drain until the work was implemented. The contractor had advised the costs would not be more than £15,000. The Committee was advised there was no budgetary provision had been made for these works.

RECOMMENDED to Council that £15,000 budgetary provision be made available to fund the above works.
(Councillor Aldis voted against the proposal)

Deputy Clerk

11 **Review of Vehicle Fleet (CSE 41-2024/25)**

Members received a report which reviewed the Council's fleet of vehicles. A discussion took place covering;

- The current fleet
- The use of the Electric Vehicle
- Proposed purchase of a Kioti terrain vehicle

RESOLVED that a review of vehicles takes place in 4 years' time; in the meantime the fleet be maintained at its present level with annual reports on the costs of the vehicles to run and maintain and no additional vehicles be purchased until provision is reviewed again.

Deputy Clerk

12 **Tree Surveys (CSE 42-2024/25)**

The Committee received a report following consideration at the last meeting of quotations to carry out tree works at the cemetery. Following clarification with the contractor quoting the lowest price for two of the trees he had subsequently confirmed he would match the lowest quote for the third tree.

RESOLVED that Contractor B be requested to carry out the tree works at the cemetery

Deputy Clerk

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13 **Equipment Required by Outdoor Team (CSE 42-2024/25)**

The Committee discussed a report requesting additional equipment.

In order to keep up to date with landscape maintenance in general and the cemetery in particular the Team requested the following (Budget line 4038 will cover the costs);

- Stihl Hedge cutter attachment £331.50
- Stihl Ext 1 Carbon1 metre extension shaft £109.65
- Pole Saw attachment £242.25
- RTS harness £135.00

Total £818.40

Additional costs of handtools from Screwfix approx. £400 including garden fork and spade x3, soil rake x3, Dutch hoe x3, lawn rake x3. Plus 2x manual wheel barrows £50.00 each – total cost £500

Motorised barrow (dump truck – controlled by operative) £1,300 petrol engine soil dumper for work in cemetery and new cemetery extension.

Members commented that the barrows should have solid tyres and the hoes and rakes long shafts. Members discussed the request. The Committee did not support the purchase of a motorised barrow although it was acknowledged this may be required under health and safety requirements at a future budget review. A Member suggested the EV vehicle could be used for moving soil.

Deputy Clerk

RESOLVED that all the equipment quoted for be purchased from existing budgets and the purchase of a motorised barrow be not supported

14 **Action List (CSE 43-2024/25)**

Members received the Action List updates.

Re the unveiling of the mosaic the majority of the Committee complained they had not been sent the information.

Re the EV charging points there had been new delays; a new project manager had been appointed by BP Pulse and delays faced in getting the final mains connection. It was suggested that by the time the project was ready to install the EV points it would be close to Christmas. It was hoped the scheme could be

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introduced soon if not it was essential that Christmas events in the town were not disrupted by the work.

Deputy Clerk

15 Events Working Group (CSE 44-2024/25)

The Committee received the minutes of the meetings of the Events Working Group held on 23rd July and 21st August 2024

16 Chairmans' Items (CSE 45-2024/25)

There were none.

17 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 4th November 2024

The meeting ended at 21:35