

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 15th July 2019 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, S Doyle, A Gibson, J Hewitt, W Jackson, R Lock, C Osborne, M Pettitt, M Scott, P Sharman, and S Sutton

Absent: Cllrs A M Hill, T Knagg, and N Thompson

In attendance: Mr C Robson (Clerk), CBC Cllr T Stock and two members of the public.

	Action
<p>1 Apologies for Absence (50-2019/2020) Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs A M Hill, T Knagg and N Thompson. Central Bedfordshire Cllrs S Ford and C Maudlin had also sent apologies.</p>	Admin
<p>2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (51-2019/20) Cllr Lock declared a personal interest as her husband is an employee of Sandye Place Academy. Cllr Osborne declared a personal interest as his wife is Chair of Governors for St Swithun's School, which adjoins Sandye Place playing fields. Cllr Scott declared a personal interest as a governor of St Swithun's school.</p>	
<p>3 Public Participation Session (52-2019/20) Two members of the public were present but did not wish to speak. A Member of the public had passed a proposal on future use of Sandye Place to the Council. The Chairman had thanked him for this.</p>	
<p>4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meeting (53-2019/20) RESOLVED to: Receive the minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 24th June 2019 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>5 Sandye Place (54-2019/20) The Chairman reminded Members that Sandye Place was not an asset the Town Council had any direct involvement or control over and as such, our power was somewhat limited. However, Sandye Place is an extremely valuable site and could provide many opportunities for the town, and the Council must look to make itself</p>	

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a part of discussions on the future of the facility and influence future use in whatever ways it can. The Chairman said that there appear to be confusion over certain aspects of the playing field, including where a dividing fence line was to go with St Swithun's school. Things appeared to be changing on a regular basis. The Chairman stated that the purpose of the meeting was to give the Clerk the relevant authority to enter into discussions with CBC over STC taking on some grass cutting and line marking work in an effort to keep the sports fields available for community use.

A Member asked to what degree Members would be in discussions over Sandye Place as there are a lot of important additional issues beyond the sports fields and there is a lot of discussion in the town about the future of the site. The scenario seems to change on a daily basis.

A Member commented that the Clerk referred to a meeting with CBC's Mr Keaveney which was due to take place in September and the need to push the Council's Community Plan, which identifies potential uses for the Sandye Place site. The ideas in the Community Plan are very broad and the Council needs to meet and develop these into a clear and realistic message to CBC.

A Member commented that as the situation was continually developing, it was difficult to have an agenda based on facts. It was acknowledged that greater in-depth conversations about the future of Sandye Place would be needed but that in the short term, a focus on the sports pitches was sensible as there was a pressing need, and it may be one area that the Town Council can practically impact on. This represented a way of potentially working in partnership with CBC.

A Member stated that the Council cannot just concentrate on football and that there were other areas to consider. If the Council can reach an agreement with CBC to take on some cutting and line marking work, he would hope this would be a lever to push for more access.

Members commented that the site was suffering from a degree of neglect. If STC can have an impact on keeping the football pitches open, this would be important for the community and makes us a stake holder for the future. Putting a proposal forward for grass cutting and line marking is a small step forward but is something concrete we can do as a Town Council. Developing a plan for the future use of Sandye Place will be a long process and a proposal from us would be an opening gambit.

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A Member commented that he had no problem advancing the short-term issue which was on the agenda, but that if the Council waits for other people to approach them with information or plans, it may miss valuable opportunities. The use of Sandye Place will have important implications for the whole town. Sandy Town Council needs to firm up its views on what the community needs and present this to CBC.

CBC Cllr Stock spoke to confirm that the site is closing and will need to be made secure and safe. Some staff will remain in place to complete the closing of the academy trust, these staff will work off site. The Youth Club will continue to operate as it can be accessed separately. The letter from Mr Keaveney highlights CBC priorities in Sandy which will be taken into consideration for the future use of this site.

A Member stated they had heard the pool was to be filled in. CBC Cllr Stock informed Members that the pool had to be filled in as it represented a safety risk. It will not be filled in with concrete.

A Member commented that he would like to see the Council agree in principle to cutting and line marking work at Sandye Place and add a supplementary resolution that the Council engage in meaningful discussion on the future of the site. A Member agreed that putting a short-term proposal forward for cutting work could be good, if the Town Council were willing to get involved and meaningfully engaged with the use of the site.

A Member referred to a letter from CBC in which it stated that they would be engaging with the Town Council and the public over the future of the site and that this was a positive step.

The Chairman commented that it was obvious Members felt the need to meet to discuss the long-term use of Sandye Place and for the Council to develop its vision on the matter. The Council must gradually form a view of what it is able and willing to get involved in with the site and what the financial implications would be. A Member said that if the Council was going to put something forward it must ensure that it is realistic. The Chairman commented that a business plan for the site might be required.

RESOLVED that the Council agree in principle to take on grass cutting of the playing fields and line marking of football pitches for the next season subject to the further development of a proposal for discussion with CBC.

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RESOLVED that the Council give authority to the Clerk to enter into discussions with CBC on the Council's behalf. That the Clerk's discussions include security, access, key holder responsibilities, access to toilets and liability matters.

It was suggested and agreed that the Community Plan group could act as a forum for further discussions and development of the Council's vision for Sandye Place. The Community Plan group would meet ahead of the next Full Council.

6 Cemetery Car Park Development (55-2019/20)

Members considered surfacing of the cemetery extension car park and the path connecting it to the existing site. The original tender detailed the surfacing as crushed stone, but the Cemetery Working Group were recommending that the area be tarmacked as this was easier to maintain, cheaper in the long run and safe for those with accessibility issues.

A Member said that he was not in favour as the Council should be looking at alternatives to tarmac. There was also a question of drainage. The contractor had said that the tarmac would not impact on the drainage and that grates were included for run off water. A Member commented that some people found it very difficult to walk on crushed stone and that he supported the proposal.

RESOLVED that the Council include tarmacking of all parking bays and the connecting cemetery path in the current scope of works at a cost of £5,585 to be taken from the Council's rolling capital fund.

7 News Release (56-2019/20)

To publicise that Sandy Town Council will engage with CBC to put forward a proposal for grass cutting and line marking work.

8 Chairman's Items (57-2019/20)

The Chairman thanked all those who attended the Mayor's Quiz night which raised just over £500.

The Chairman reminded members about the Community Stand opening on 20th July.

9 Date of Next Full Council Meeting (58-2019/20)

Monday 5th August 2019