

# Sandy Town Council

**Minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee of Sandy Town Council which held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 14 July 2014 commencing at 7.30**

Present: **Cllrs N Aldis, C Butterfield, M Groom, W Jackson, M Pettitt, M Scott , K Sharp, D Sharman and R Smith**

Absent: **Cllr Osborne**

In attendance: **Town Clerk**

|          |  | Action            |
|----------|--|-------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Apologies for absence (10-2014/15)</b><br>Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Osborne.  |                   |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Declarations of interest (11-2014/15)</b><br>i) Declarable pecuniary interests -None<br>ii) Non pecuniary interests-None  |                   |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Minutes of previous meeting (12-2014/15)</b><br><b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 2 June 2014 as a correct record of proceedings.   | <b>Admin</b>      |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Review of Financial Regulations(13-2014/15)</b><br>A working group had prepared a draft of new financial regulations based upon the model financial regulations recently issued by NALC and this was discussed in detail. It decision to omit regulation 3.1 was reconsidered and it was agreed to retain this regulation but to reword it to say "The council" rather than "Each committee (if any)". The draft was approved with other minor typographical corrections and a copy with the approved amendments is attached these minutes.<br><b>RESOLVED to recommend</b> to Town Council that the draft new financial regulations should be adopted and implemented with immediate effect.                                     | <b>Town Clerk</b> |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Review of Model Publication Scheme and charges for FOI requests (14-2014/15)</b><br>A draft of a revised model publication scheme together with revised charges for FOI requests had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the new scheme would require additional information to be added to the website. One amendment was added to the draft scheme to include the Dog Control order at Bedford Road (though it was noted this was likely to be superseded in due course).<br><b>RESOLVED to recommend</b> approval of the new publication scheme as amended.<br>Members discussed costs for FOI requests and noted that the Council was not permitted to charge for officer time unless it exceeds the |                   |

# Sandy Town Council

|           |   |  |
|-----------|---|--|
|           | <p>appropriate limit of £450. Members noted that very few FOI requests were received but considerable officer time was taken on dealing with one or two regular requesters.</p> <p>The Clerk noted that a recent decision not to disclose information had highlighted the fact that the council did not have a policy or internal review panel for dealing with appeals by requesters who were refused information under one of the exceptions to the Act.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> to instruct the Town Clerk to prepare a draft policy including arrangements for internal review and to submit this for approval as soon as practical.</p> |  |
| <b>6</b>  | <p><b>Changes to accounting codes and management information (15-2014/15)</b></p> <p>Members noted that an accounts recoding exercise will take place during August 2014 and expressed their desire to retain detailed management information from the accounts system whilst recognising the need for streamlining of accounting codes.</p>  |  |
| <b>i</b>  |   |  |
| <b>ii</b> | <p>The Town Clerk gave an oral report on operational experience of the outsourcing of council accounts work. Stationery for printed cheques had now been ordered and it was expected that the last manual cheques run had now been completed, although there would still be the need for occasional manual cheques. Existing staff had adjusted to the changes and further changes to administrative processes were gradually being introduced.</p>   |  |
| <b>7</b>  | <p><b>Financial Reports (16-2014/15)</b></p> <p>A detailed financial report showing income and expenditure against the revenue budget for the current financial year to date had been circulated before the meeting and was discussed in detail.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> to note the report.</p>   |  |
| <b>i</b>  |   |  |
| <b>ii</b> | <p>The list of payments made had also been reported to members in advance of the meeting and this was also discussed.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> to note the payments authorised.</p>   |  |
| <b>8</b>  | <p><b>Street Lighting (17-2014/15)</b></p> <p>Members discussed a quotation for the replacement of an unsafe street column S4 in the Avenue at a cost of £1,600. An alternative option of removing the column completely (at a cost of £450) was also considered. Members noted the nearby tree which was impeding the light shed from the column. A budget of £4,000 for street lighting repairs had been allocated for the year and no expenditure had yet been committed.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> to replace street column S4 in the Avenue at a cost of £1,600 and to ask Central Bedfordshire Council or the owner of the tree</p>      |  |

# Sandy Town Council

|          |  |  |
|----------|--|--|
|          | if not CBC to prune or remove the tree which was unsuitable for the location.  |  |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Car Park Barrier (18-2014/15)</b><br>A quotation for replacement or repair of the housing of the car park barrier machinery in the Town Centre car park had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was not feasible to claim on insurance for damage to the housing which had been sustained over time rather than from one incident. The clerk advised that the housing could be made safe provided it was repaired and this could be funded from existing budget provision. Replacement of the housing was not feasible without approving expenditure from the council's reserves.<br><b>RESOLVED</b> to approve repair of the barrier at a cost of £598.80. |  |