

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 16th April 2018 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, A M Hill, T Knagg, C Osborne (Mayor), M Pettitt, M Scott (Deputy Mayor), D Sharman, P Sharman, J Sparrow, S Sutton and N Thompson

Absent: Cllrs T Cole, W Jackson and G Leach

In attendance: CBC Cllrs C Maudlin, P Smith and T Stock, Mr C Robson (Clerk), Mrs C Baker-Smith (Admin Team Leader) and four members of the public

	Action
<p>1 Apologies for Absence (173-2017/2018) Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs T Cole and W Jackson.</p> <p>The Mayor thanked everyone for their good wishes on his recent accident. He also mentioned that a minute's silence had been held at the Human Resources Committee meeting on the 19th March for the recently deceased former-Councillors: Mr Fred Lincoln and for Mrs Patricia Sherwood-King at the Policy Finance & Resources Committee meeting on the 9th April.</p>	Admin
<p>2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (174-2017/2018)</p> <p>i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i> - None</p> <p>ii) <i>Non Pecuniary Interests</i> – Cllr Aldis declared an interest in Item 8 as he is a governor at Sandy Upper School. Cllr Knagg declared an interest in Item 8 as his grandchildren attend a local school. Cllr Sutton declared an interest in Item 5 (iii) as she is President of the Royal British Legion (Sandy Branch). Cllr Osborne declared an interest in Item 8 as his wife is Chair of Governors at St Swithun's Primary School.</p> <p>iii) <i>Dispensations</i> – None</p>	
<p>3 Public Participation Session (175-2017/2018) The Mayor noted there were four questions to be raised:</p> <p>1) The Clerk had received an email from a member of the public regarding the Highways England visit and this would be dealt with at Item 15.</p>	

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- 2) The Clerk had received a letter for the Council from SHRG regarding Sandye Place Academy and this would be dealt with at Item 8.
- 3) The Clerk had received an email from Mrs Buttiteg regarding Sandye Place Academy and this would be dealt with at Item 8.
- 4) Mrs N Chapman wished to raise a question regarding Sandye Place Academy and this would be dealt with at Item 8.

4 **Minutes of previous Town Council Meetings (176-2017/2018)**

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 12th March 2018 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

5 **Minutes of Committees and Recommendations therein (177-2017/2018)**

To receive and note the minutes of the meetings of the following committees and sub-committees and (if applicable) to approve recommendations therein which do not arise elsewhere:

- i) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Development Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 12th March 2018 and 9th April 2018.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 19th March 2018.

Members discussed the recommendation from the Human Resources Committee. It was agreed that as worded the recommendation lacked flexibility. Members agreed that there should be a standard start time for Development Scrutiny meetings and that the Chairman of the Committee should have flexibility to amend the meeting start time depending on the number and complexity of applications received. It was agreed that the standard time should be at 6:45pm as it was easier for Members who had work commitments.

Admin

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that meetings of the Development Scrutiny Committee shall begin at 6.45pm, subject to the Chair's approval should the meeting be required to start later or earlier.

Admin

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It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to approve the **RECOMMENDATION** that the amended Equalities Policy be adopted by the Town Council subject to the suggested amendments to the wording.

Admin

- iii) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on the 26th March 2018. Cllr Sutton explained that the copy of the Minutes received on the night, superceded the previous copy.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to approve the **RECOMMENDATION** that the Council purchase six bench 'Silent Soldiers' (£42 each) and lamppost poppies (£3 each) to run from the War Memorial, through the town to the train station. The Clerk said there were 29 lampposts.

Admin

Cllr Sutton suggested the public be asked to sponsor a poppy and record a message which could go on the Council website in memory of a loved one. The Clerk said the office would prepare posters to this effect.

Admin

A Member stated that he would still vote against the recommendation regarding car parking charges. A Member said that the streets should have a one-hour limit for parking and the car park should be free as people working in the town used it, and the costs outweighed the turnover. Another Member said that he had not experienced any parking difficulties when visiting the town. Another Member said that the parking situation was not utterly unacceptable as yet.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to approve the **RECOMMENDATION** that the Council would not pursue the introduction of car parking charges in the car park.

- iv) **RESOLVED** to receive and note the minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 9th April 2018.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to approve the **RECOMMENDATION** that the Grants Policy be adopted by the Town Council subject to the

Admin

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inclusion of 'Arts and Culture' within the grant policies objectives.

6 Financial Matters (178-2017/2018)

- i) **RESOLVED** to note a summary statement of income and expenditure against the budget for the year to date (previously circulated and scrutinised at a meeting of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee on 9th April 2018).
- ii) **RESOLVED** to note a list of payments made since the last Town Council meeting (previously circulated and scrutinised at a meeting of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee on 9th April 2018).

7 Reports from Central Bedfordshire Councillors (179-2017/2018)

Members received the briefing notes from Central Beds Council.

Cllr Stock reported that they had received 14,000 responses to the consultation regarding bin collections which closes on the 20th April 2018, 5,000 more than to the Local Plan consultation. 93% agree to recycle but do not want a three week collection of black bins.

Ringway Jacobs will be sending a highway plan to all local councils.

Station Road, Sandy will be re-surfaced in the last quarter of this financial year. Central Beds Council are looking at alternative machinery for dealing with potholes.

A Member asked if there would be a reduction in the opening hours of the Tidy Tip at Biggleswade. She reported that there would not be and would send a report to the Council.

A Member asked how Central Beds Council will monitor who paid for the green waste collection? She said that the responses to the consultation were being studied and more detailed proposals will come forward.

A Member asked when the roundabout at the junction of the High Street and Station Road would be re-painted and Cllr Maudlin said it was still being looked into. Cllr Maudlin stated that there would be some work to the A1 and it may be able to

Cllr C Maudlin

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look at removing redundant signage. The Clerk will be provided with more information.

Cllr Maudlin thanked everyone for nominations for "Cheering Volunteering 2018" which is being held on the 5th June 2018 at the Grove Theatre in Dunstable and tickets are available.

Cllr Smith said that Central Beds Council are still under pressure for land for housing. Some developments will come forward in Bedfordshire and open spaces and community halls will benefit from S106 monies. He asked that Council put forward any projects that may benefit now. He said that the Local Plan would be endorsed by the end of the year and the plan will be going to the Executive next week. A Member said that as the Council's Community Plan was in the final stages, it could be made available to Central Beds Council as it had projects within it that could be put forward for S106 monies.

Town Clerk

Cllr Maudlin said that Central Beds Council is looking into the problem of homelessness in Bedfordshire which includes whole families and asked that Council think about where they could be housed in Sandy in an emergency. A Member said that pressure should be put on developers to build more one or two bedroomed homes not just larger houses.

8 Sandye Place Academy (180-2017/2018)

Nicola Chapman a member of the public asked what Sandy Town Council will do about the possible closure of the school. Mrs Chapman noted that a Facebook survey showed that parents of children at the school used town centre shops when dropping off and picking up children. She stated that the closure of the school could impact on those shops and aid a decline in the town centre.

The Mayor said it had been the policy of the Council to be aware of the situation, but not to put in any representation into the changes. The Town Council does not have the authority to influence the schools or the LEA on changes, restructures or closures. The Chairman reminded Members that they must bear in mind declarations as several Members had links to governing bodies of schools.

Members received a copy of correspondence issued by Central Bedfordshire Council on Sandye Place Academy which had been received from a Town Councillor and correspondence from Sandye Place Academy Parents Group.

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Members held a lengthy debate on the matter and commented as follows:

A Member said the he was no longer a governor at Moggerhanger School. Although SPA is an academy, Central Beds Council are responsible for admissions. The letter states that the school will close. He questioned why this had to be the case as other schools had been in special measures and were allowed to remain open. The Member acknowledged that the change over from three tier to two tier was replicating a national trend.

A Member said that he was surprised that there would be an impact on the shops if the school closed as parents would still be dropping children off at alternative schools in town. It was noted that there was a petition circulating which requested SPA be allowed to become a secondary school. The Department of Education has said there is no place for two secondary schools in Sandy and that a choice does exist as parents could chose other schools in the county.

A Member said that he was under the impression that parents do send their children to other schools as they are unhappy with schooling in the town. He stated the provision of more schools would surely give parents better choices. There is a history of selling schools and their grounds to be turned into something else and if a school closes, it is an asset that is hard to get back.

A Member said that the 3-tier system cannot survive in Bedfordshire, it does not work effectively, and action is long overdue. The key stages do not correspond with age groups and problems cannot be identified when they occur. Changing schools affects performance. The management team need good results, so they put their best resources into pre-SATS classes. Exam results in Bedfordshire are poor and there are no outstanding schools. The system should have been managed better. Lower and upper schools have upped their age ranges and SPA will feel the squeeze in terms of pupil numbers. Central Beds Council is in a difficult position, if parents had no knowledge of changes they would have been subject to criticism. If SPA closes, the site should be retained for educational purposes or facilities in the Community Plan, the site should be available for public use in the future. The Council should support SHRG to make it an asset of community value.

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Cllr Smith said that there is a 10 year moratorium on change of use and the land cannot be sold off for any other use, it must remain in education status. It is premature for SHRG to be asking that the school get asset of community value status at this time.

A Member said that if the government is pushing increased housing numbers it may result in Sandy growing and more children will need school places. SPA should be kept open and extend the age ranges.

A Member commented that the push to be an independent school put the matter outside of the Town Council's remit.

A Member noted that schools can be declared assets of community value and the school facilities are used by the wider community. It could be used in the evenings and SHRG are not wrong to apply for asset status.

A Member proposed that the Council should support SHRG. Another Member said that if no school facility is moved into SPA the building will fall into decay. It could be used for community events using the swimming pool, sports hall and the land for a park.

A Member stated that the Council will want to ensure that the facility remains available for community use whatever the situation may be with the future of the school. Supporting an application for asset of community value in no way placed the Council within the debate on the school's future.

It was proposed and seconded that the Town Council should support SHRG's application for Sandye Place Academy to become an asset of community value to ensure that whether it remains a school or not, its future as an asset to the community is protected.

Cllr Stock will take SHRG's letter to Central Beds Council as Assets are under her remit.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to support SHRG in making the site an asset of community value. This in no way places Sandy Town Council anywhere in the debate on the future of Sandye Place Academy.

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9 Action List (181-2017/2018)

Members noted the action list.

Mr Burt is pursuing dates for a meeting between the DoT and Town and Parish Councils in the area. The Clerk and Mayor have both spoken with representatives of Mr Burt's office in an effort to push the matter forward.

10 Beeston Green (182-2017/2018)

- i) The draft version of the Beeston Village Green Plan was received and discussed. Amendments were needed to:
 - 3.4 – Delete 'but is divided from Sandy by the A1'.
 - 4.3 – Delete paragraph beginning 'Mole treatment', and move last paragraph to second paragraph.
 - 7.4 – Delete 'in the ground'.
 - Add '7.5 – Shooting – Carrying and discharging guns on the Green is strictly prohibited.'
 - 8 – Seek recompense from residents/businesses.
 - 8.1 – Change to 'a weight restriction has been placed'.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to adopt the Beeston Village Green Plan for the purpose of consultation.

- ii) The Clerk's report was received, and Members noted that the Council had taken on responsibility of two tracks which crossed the Village Green when the land came over to STC. The remaining tracks across the Green were recognised and no objection made to them, however they were not adopted or maintained by the Council. A Member said that any new dwellings which crossed the Green for access needed Council permission and that recent developments had used the access without permission resulting in increasing damage. There had been past communication with a developer but no request for access submitted or granted.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that legal advice be sought and a stronger worded letter be sent to the developers about access over the Green and the required permissions.

- iii) A written request from a Beeston Green resident was received. It was reiterated that the Town Council only recognise the roads coloured red on the plan and all

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other crossings over the Green are maintained at the owner's expense.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to approve that the owners of Elm Farm carry out the repairs and advise the Council what materials they will be using, but that the Town Council will not be responsible for maintaining the track.

11 Beeston Green Community Orchard and Allotments (183-2017/2018)

The Clerk reported that he had not received a draft copy of the Heads of Terms in time for the meeting and that this item will be taken to the Community Services and Environment Committee meeting on the 30th April 2018.

Town Clerk

12 General Data Protection Regulations (184-2017/2018)

Members received and considered the Clerk's report.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council appoint the Local Council Public Advisory Service as its Data Protection Officer (DPO) for the forthcoming year and that the Clerk work with the DPO to put the relevant forms and required documentation in place.

13 Council Depot and Cemetery Development (185 - 2017/2018)

Members received and noted the Clerk's report.

The Clerk said that the archaeological dig had started today and that a press release and notices had been sent out. An Open Day would be arranged in the second phase of the dig where residents could visit the site. He said that the working group would be meeting to discuss tenders for the building of the new depot this week.

14 Crime and Policing (186-2017/2018)

- i) Members received and noted a report outlining data provided by the CCTV company.
- ii) Members received and noted a report outlining Police crime figures for Sandy. It was noted that shop lifting from both Tesco's and the Co-op stores was prolific. Additional information was still awaited. Additional information was also still awaited on anti-social behaviour.

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15 Reports from Representatives on outside bodies (187-2017/2018)

Cllr Pettitt gave a verbal report on his visit to Highways England's Mobile Visitor Centre on the 5th April located in Tesco's car park. He said that it was located in a prominent position and the staff attending were knowledgeable and promised an update on the day.

The Clerk had received an email from a member of the public who had raised concerns about the visit, which the Clerk shared with Members.

CBC Cllr Stock said that average speed cameras on the A1 were in the 2018/19 budget. She said that 70% of Beeston residents did not want the Orchard Road Gap to be closed. The Mayor commented that if Members felt this was an issue that needed to be addressed, it could be put on a future agenda and consultation on the matter could be dealt with at the same time as the Beeston Plan.

CBC Cllr Maudlin said that she would be arranging a meeting to discuss signage on the A1 and the Council would be invited to attend. She would liaise with Cllr Pettitt.

Cllr
Maudlin/Cllr
Pettitt

16 Consultations (188-2017/2018)

- i) The review of the Local Government Ethical Standards consultation was received and noted.
- ii) Network Rail's consultation on the proposed disposal of land in Sandy by way of freehold sale or long leasehold was received and considered.

Members said that more parking was needed and that it was premature to dispose of the land, especially for residential development. Parking is already under pressure and the possibility of the East West rail link and demand to increase housing would amplify the situation further. Members also stated that the site was unsuitable for housing and therefore should be used for station car parking.

It was proposed and seconded and **RESOLVED** to object to Network Rail's disposal of land in Sandy by way of freehold sale or long leasehold.

17 News Releases (189-2017/2018)

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To issue a news release on the sponsorship by residents of the lamppost poppies for the town.

Admin

18 Chairman's Items (190-2017/2018)

The visit by Lord Peel (Lord Chamberlain) on the 19th March 2018 to unveil a mosaic to his great, great uncle Captain Sir William Peel, was followed by a visit to St Swithun's Church where he was joined by pupils from Robert Peel Lower School and he answered their questions. He then went on to a reception hosted by the RSPB.

The Mayor accompanied by the Mayoress, judged a cake competition on Easter Saturday at St Swithun's School.

The Mayor's final event is the Civic Service to be held on the 6th May 2018 at 3pm at St Swithun's Church.

The Mayor said that the next Full Council meeting would be the Annual Town Council meeting on Monday 21st May 2018 and Members should consider which committees they would like to sit on. The Clerk would circulate dates for councillor training. The Mayor also thanked all Members for their support over the last two years.

19 Date of Next Meeting (191-2017/2018) Monday 21st May 2018