

# Sandy Town Council

**Minutes of a meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 19 January 2015 commencing at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs N Aldis, J Ali, C Butterfield, A Jackson (Mayor), C Osborne, M Pettitt, M Runchman, D Sharman, P Sharman, M Scott, S Sutton

**Absent:** Cllr R Smith and Cllr K Sharp.

**In attendance:** CBC Cllr Caroline Maudlin, fourteen members of the public and the Meeting Clerk

**Action**

**1 Apologies for Absence (115-2014/15)**

Apologies for absence had been sent by PCSO Anne Jeeves and CBC Cllr N Sheppard

**2 Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations (116-2014/15)**

- i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests - None
- ii) Non Disclosable Interests- Personal Interests – Cllr Osborne drew attention to his role as Chairman of Sandy Football Club in connection with item 7 of the agenda.
- iii) Dispensations- None

**3 Public Participation Session(117-2014/15)**

A member of the public asked why it was taking so long to produce the report on the possible amendments to the cemetery regulations. Cllr Aldis apologized and said that the report would be presented to the Community Services and Environment Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

The same person also asked whether or not there would be full access to the Tourist Information Services in place at the moment when the service moves in house.

A member of the public read prepared questions concerning the Tourist Information Centre:

1. Why were residents, traders and tourist centres not informed about the closure?
2. When was the decision made to close it and when is it going to take place?
3. How will people access the new arrangement in Council Office and will the TIC be open on Saturdays?
4. Why are new facilities required for the Groundstaff.
5. What is the cost of alterations to the TIC office?
6. What will happen to the Walkers are Welcome status?

# Sandy Town Council

7. Can signs be erected directing people to the TIC?

She also stated that written and online petitions against closure of the TIC office had been prepared.

Cllr Pettitt replied that there was a plethora of false information being circulated and to describe it as a closure is incorrect, local tourist services were being incorporated within the main office. It was inevitable that the staff re-structure would have some impact on the service bearing in mind the budgetary constraints and that talk of petitions and speculation on social media was not helpful.

Cllr Pettitt also stated that there are signs to the TIC throughout the town and subsequently checked the number – there are 8 signposts to the Tourist Information Centre within the environs of Sandy.

A member of the public asked what the benefit to the Council from a budgetary point of view were the changes to the TIC service.

The Mayor told him that he would receive a written response.

A member of the public said that Sandy had a serious burglary problem and asked that Town Council members to send representatives to meet the police. He also said that there were not enough cold-calling signs in Sandy.

Cllr Osborne said that police matters were a great concern to the Council and on every Town Council agenda there was a report from the local police with attendance where possible.

## **4 Minutes of previous meeting (118-2014/15)**

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of a meeting of Sandy Town Council held at 7.30 pm on Monday 15 December 2014 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings with the following amendment.

Page 2 Item 6 February 2014 should read February 2015.

## **5 Police Matters (119-2014/15)**

The report received from PCSO Ann Jeeves was received and noted.

## **6 Minutes of committees and recommendations therein (120-2014/15)**

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 note the minutes of meetings of the Development Scrutiny Committee held on 15 December 2014 and 5 January 2015.

# Sandy Town Council

- ii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 5 January 2015. It was noted that quotes were still awaited for the removal of trees in the cemetery.
- iii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meetings of the HR Committee held on 22 December 2014 and 15 January 2015.

## **Confidential Item (120-2014/15)**

**It was resolved:** that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers are likely to be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business. See confidential notes.

## **7 Financial Matters (121-2014/15)**

- i) **RESOLVED** to note a summary statement of income and expenditure against budget for the year to date as previously scrutinized by the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee
- ii) **RESOLVED** to note a list of payments made since the last Town Council meeting.
- iii) Cllr Osborne presented the budget for 2015/16 which had been extensively discussed at earlier meetings of both PF & R Committee and Town Council. He highlighted some of the difficulties which had been caused by Central Bedfordshire Council refusing to pass on support of circa £50,000 but said that the budget had been carefully considered to ensure that the Council's core services did not suffer. There is increasing pressure from national government for Town Council's to save money including a threat of capping for those which had too high a percentage increase.  
Cllr Aldis questioned whether there should be such a large amount in the reserves but Cllr Osborne replied that the Council's Financial advisers had given them the figure of £110,000 which should be kept in the reserves. At present there was only £60,000 in the reserves and it had been agreed that a further £10,000 should be deposited each year for the next 5 years.  
**RESOLVED** to approve the annual budget as presented.
- iv) **RESOLVED** to approve a precept amount of **£479,098** which will give a Band D payment of £123.67 an increase of £3.05 or 2.53% on 2014/15.

## **8 Calendar of meetings 2015/16 (121-2014/15)**

It was suggested that the meeting scheduled for 25.1.16 should take place on 18.1.16 to conform with Central Bedfordshire Council's requirements with regard to the precept. It was also pointed out that some dates in May needed to be revised because of the election process.

Town  
Clerk

# Sandy Town Council

**RESOLVED** that the calendar of meetings should be re-worked and taken to the next meeting of PF&R committee.

## **11 Reports from Representatives (122-2014/15)**

- i) CBC Ward members – Cllr Maudlin reported that she was looking forward to the next evening's Town and Parish Council Conference at the Central Bedfordshire Council Offices.  
Cllr Aldis reported that the Information Point in the library was not operating and that he would request that a dedicated telephone line for residents to contact CBC be installed in its place.
- ii) Cllr Pettitt reported that the Sandy Twinning AGM had been held and officers remained the same. There were not sufficient members for the trip to Malaunay to make the hire of a coach viable so members would be providing their own transport. No community group was willing to go with them. It was hoped that the Polish summer school would go ahead this year.
- iii) He also reported that he had been asked to meet with members of the Ivel Protection Society to discuss a consultation document received from the Environment Agency with regard to structures in the Ivel. He subsequently reported that landowners along the river would be consulted later in the year (STC being one of them with the Riddy).
- iv) Cllr Aldis reported that the Village Hall financial situation was improving and that they were working hard to increase lettings of the hall.
- v) Cllr Runchman said that a report on the Sandy Community First Project would be presented to the next TC meeting and that the project had now come to an end.

## **12 News Release (123-2014/15)**

**RESOLVED** to issue a news release regarding the budget and precept.

Town  
Clerk