

# Sandy Town Council

**Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 21 December 2015 at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs P N Aldis, P Blaine, T Cole, A M Hill, W Jackson (Mayor), G Leach, C Osborne, M Pettitt, D Quick, M Scott, P Sharman and S Sutton.

**Absent:** Cllrs J Ali, D Sharman, J Sparrow

**In attendance:** Cllr Stock (CBC), Chris Robson (Town Clerk), Ms M Bracey (Minutes Clerk), PCSO Ann Jeeves and one member of the public.

	<b>Action</b>
<p><b>1 Apologies for Absence (93-2015/2016)</b> Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Ali, D Sharman, J Sparrow and Cllrs Maudlin and Smith (CBC).</p>	Admin
<p><b>2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (94-2015/16)</b> i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i> – None ii) <i>Non Disclosable Interests</i> – Cllr Aldis is Chair of Sandy Enhancement Group and Cllr Sutton is President of Sandy Enhancement Group at Item 6 iii). Cllr Sutton as a Director of D &amp; S Homes Ltd at Item 11. iii) <i>Dispensations</i> – None</p> <p><b>The Chair announced he would take Item 9 after Item 5.</b></p>	Admin
<p><b>3 Public Participation Session (95-2015/16)</b> Cllr Pettitt raised the question put to him by residents who have been alerted to the road works on the Potton Road by the RSPB. He understands this is to do with the cycle way between Potton and Sandy. He asked about the time scale and perhaps investigations could be made about the definitive route for this cycle way. Cllr Aldis replied that he is the representative from Sandy Town Council on the Potton – Sandy Cycle way steering group and that he would look into getting a map.</p> <p>Cllr Pettitt had been asked about the unkempt state of a piece of land by the side of the Conservative Club. He had spoken to the Steward who had accepted responsibility for the maintenance of this land and he hoped to get this done fairly soon. Cllr Pettitt requested the Town Clerk write to the Conservative Club to get confirmation that this land was their responsibility and get an undertaking to keep it maintained.</p>	Admin

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Cllr Stock (CBC) informed the members that as a member of the Conservative Club Committee she was able to confirm the land in question is part of the Conservative Club land and the matter had been discussed at a committee meeting with the club agreeing to maintain the land.

## 4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meeting (96-2015/16)

Cllr Pettitt asked about Item 8, Planning Application CB/15/03937/OUT, and when this would be going to CBC Planning Committee. He was informed that there are additional consultations to take place which will slow the progress of this application. Members will be kept informed.

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 9 November 2015 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.

Admin

## 5 Police Matters (97-2015/16)

PCSO Ann Jeeves presented her report. She reported there was an increase in burglaries from dwellings but this is not just in Sandy but all over the County and could be a sign of the times and the darker nights. There is always a follow up after burglaries to give home security advice. There have been some garage break ins and vehicle crime of index plates. There continues to be theft of tools from vans. She explained that the violence against the person shows a high number of incidents but this is usually between two people and therefore reported as two crimes. Violence against the person could also be verbal as well as physical.

Admin

A member noted the rise of dwellings burglaries and asked if some publicity highlighting these, as a community safety issue, could be put in the Bulletin or on the website.

A member stated that he gets leaflets and resources from community safety which he suggested could be available in the Town Council office.

Another member asked what could be done about vehicles not stopping at crossings and in some of these vehicles people are using their mobile phones. PCSO Jeeves replied that this is difficult to police and will become even more difficult when PCSO numbers are reduced.

## 9 Market Town Regeneration (98 -2015/16)

Carolyn Blake, working on an application for Market Town regeneration funding, across the three towns of Biggleswade, Sandy and Potton, introduced herself and outlined the proposed project.

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She had originally seen mosaics in London and these had been produced by working with vulnerable people, including ex offenders. She will be speaking to local shop keepers, supermarkets, libraries, schools and churches as well as coffee shops and small businesses to seek match funding and support. She will be talking to Conservation officers at CBC as the mosaics will have to go on walls in a frame. She feels that the rich history of the area will become mosaic pieces for example the market garden produce being taken to Covent Garden. She has spoken to the Sandy Historical Research Society and they are keen to help.

A Councillor said she was glad to hear about the proposed project but mentioned Section 106 money had been requested in the past for a similar project but this had been refused. If Carolyn could get the assurance and support of CBC then she would happily support the project.

Another member stated that this was Government money not local council money, and the support of the planning team at CBC was essential.

All members agreed to support the project subject to assurances from CBC planning department.

Carolyn to liaise with the Town Clerk over the application form and other issues.

## **6 Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein (99-2015/16)**

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

i) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of meetings of Development Scrutiny Committee held on 16 November 2015 and 7 December 2015.

ii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on 16 November 2015.

iii) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 7 December 2015 with **RECOMMENDATION** that £250 be awarded to Sandy Enhancement Group and

**RECOMMENDATION** that Company A install a GSM unit at Jenkins Pavilion which can be monitored by the SLL management.

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iv) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of Human Resources Committees held on 30 November 2015 with **RECOMMENDATION** that the temporary role of Committee Clerk be extended for a further three months until the end of March 2016.

v) **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of Human Resources Committee held on 14 December 2015 with **RECOMMENDATION** that the office opening hours be changed to be open Mondays from 9am – 4pm, Wednesdays 9am – 4pm and Fridays 9am – 2pm. That survey of public usage be carried out and the hours reviewed in March 2016.

Cllr Aldis proposed an **AMENDMENT** to the recommendation. It was proposed that the hours recommended are agreed with the addition of Thursdays 9am – 4pm.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Cole.

Cllr Aldis stated that he wished the Council offices to be open to the public as much as possible and he considered with the move of the former Tourist Information office which is now Reception and Information office that this could be open more.

He contended that Sandy Town Council is on its own amongst local councils with its low opening hours.

Cllr Hill stated that this item has been under discussion by HR Committee for some time and has been discussed at length with staff.

The staff are currently in the process of team building, moving forward purposefully to build new procedures and structures and there is ongoing engagement with staff around job descriptions and appraisals. The staff understood that the office should be open to the public as much as possible. The question is what is the need of the public to be open more?

A mixed picture was reported from other Councils opening hours, with some open 4 days some for 3.

There is no reason to change the recommendation now, for seemingly no particular reason and which had been passed at the Human Resources meeting. He added once needs are known then there may be a different arrangement.

A member suggested a review of opening hours March/April 2016 and a user survey be carried out.

A member suggested that this was in fact too short a time period for a comprehensive survey to be take place.

A Councillor stated when he is about the town very few residents

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complain about the opening hours. He felt that it was most important at this stage to mention how members of staff have responded positively to the circumstances of the last twelve months and he considers these are unnecessary changes at this time.

A member said she did not support the recommendation at the Human Resource Committee meeting as she felt the recommendation did not reflect the situation.

A recorded vote took place on the **AMENDMENT**.

Councillors Blaine, Hill, Jackson, Osborne, Pettitt, Scott, Sharman, Quick and Sutton voted against the **AMENDMENT**.

Councillor Aldis voted for the **AMENDMENT**.

Councillor Cole and Leach abstained

The **AMENDMENT** was defeated.

A recorded vote was taken on the **RECOMMENDATION** of the Human Resource Committee on 14 December 2015.

Councillors Blaine, Hill, Jackson, Osborn, Pettitt, Quick, Scott, Sharman and Sutton voted for the **RECOMMENDATION**.

Councillor Aldis, voted against.

Councillors Cole and Leach abstained.

The **RECOMMENDATION** was approved.

## **7 Financial Matters (100-2015/16)**

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

## **8 Action List (101-2015/16)**

The Town Clerk presented the Action List and reported that the Surgery at Shannon Court had received planning permission. A Councillor asked about the car park line marking costs and the Town Clerk reported the quote was for £1,200.

Admin

Town Clerk

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<b>10</b>	<b>Agendas (102-2015/16)</b> <b>RESOLVED</b> to adopt <b>RECOMMENDATION</b> <b>1)</b> That the current procedure be formally agreed, whereby; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agendas are issued electronically to all Members and CBC Members who have email addresses.</li><li>• Individual Members may request that agendas be issued by post.</li><li>• Hard copies of agendas are provided in Member’s trays for collection.</li></ul>	Admin
<b>11</b>	<b>NALC Policy Consultation (103-2015/16)</b> The Town Clerk presented the papers from NALC. Councillors commented upon the Community Infrastructure Levy Review and considered this would be difficult to administer across Central Bedfordshire. They noted that the Councils with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan receive 25% to 35% and this would give an incentive to put a plan in place. It was said that this is not cheap. Members then discussed the Review of local council tax support schemes. A Councillor said that CBC had not passed any monies in this and the last financial year and that Sandy had lost out substantially. <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Clerk with Cllrs Scott and Osborne assisting, provide evidence for the review team.	Town Clerk
<b>12</b>	<b>Allotments (104-2015/16)</b> It was agreed at the Allotments Workshop that the Allotment Association be present at a meeting so that they receive the same information available to the Town Clerk. The Clerk requested that an honorarium of £50 be granted to the Horticulturist for this. This meeting will take place on Monday 11 January 2016. <b>RESOLVED</b> that an honorarium of £50 be granted to the Horticulturalist.	Town Clerk
<b>13</b>	<b>Budget 2016/17 (105-2015/16)</b> The Town Clerk presented the Budget Summary. This was a balanced budget with a 3 month reserve level. The rents, previously questioned, had been included although the Council is still awaiting rent from Football club, which is payable at the end of the season. Zero budgets had been recoded. At the precept meeting on 18 January 2016, a suggested raise of 2% would balance the budget by raising £19,000. The Town Clerk informed members that a 5% would raise £33,000 with £14,000 available to increase any budgets from the levels currently proposed. For example the Grants budget could be raised to £3,000 and there would be an additional £10,000 for the rolling capital fund to cover	Town Clerk

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projects.

A Councillor stated he would support the Grant budget increase, as community organisations work hard for the town.

A Councillor requested that if possible, could the papers be in larger print or perhaps A3 size. This will be investigated.

## **14 News Release (106-2015/16)**

a) Opening hours – Publicising the new opening hours.

b) Market Town Regeneration –Working with Carolyn Blake on the proposed application form.

c) Neighbourhood Watch and resources being available in Sandy Town Council offices.

Admin

## **15 Chairman's Items (107-2015/16)**

No announcements.

The Chair wished everybody a Happy Christmas.

A Councillor thanked the Chair for the Carol Service which was thoroughly enjoyed by everybody.

Admin

## **16 Date of Next meeting: 18 January 2016**