

# Sandy Town Council

**Minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 9 November 2015 at 7.30pm**

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

**Absent:** Cllrs C Osborne, S Sutton, and PSCSO Ann Jeeves

**In attendance:** Cllrs Maudlin, Stock and Smith (CBC), Chris Robson (Town Clerk), Ms M Bracey (Minutes Clerk), Mr Larry Stoter from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) and nine members of the public.

	<b>Action</b>
<p><b>1 Apologies for Absence (77-2015/2016)</b> Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs C Osborne, S Sutton and PCSO Ann Jeeves</p>	Admin
<p><b>2 Declaration of Interest and requests for dispensations (78-2015/16)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i> – None</li><li>ii) <i>Non Disclosable Interests</i> – Cllr Aldis is a user of the Sandy Community Transport Bus and Cllr Cole is a member of the Sandy Community Transport Bus Committee which will be discussed at item 12 on the agenda.</li><li>iii) <i>Dispensations</i> – None</li></ul>	Admin
<p><b>3 Public Participation Session (79-2015/16)</b> Cllr Sparrow had been requested by a number of residents, attending the Drop in Meeting on 7 November, that a letter be sent to the Chief Executive of Central Bedfordshire Council about the deep sense of frustration felt by Sandy residents about the stopping of the 73 bus. The lack of this bus service leaves some residents a mile to walk to catch a bus. All members supported this. <b>RESOLVED</b> to write to the Chief Executive of Central Bedfordshire Council on this issue. A reminder was given to members of the Town and Parish Conference taking place on Wednesday 11 November, where this question could be raised.</p>	Admin
<p><b>4 Minutes of previous Town Council Meeting (80-2015/16)</b> <b>RESOLVED</b> to receive the minutes of the meeting of Sandy Town Council held on Monday 28 September 2015 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings.</p>	Admin

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<b>5</b>	<p><b>Police Matters (81-2015/16)</b> The Town Clerk presented the Report in the absence of PCSO Ann Jeeves. A member mentioned complaints she had received about incidents at the shelter in the skate park on Sunderland Road. These will be passed to PCSO Jeeves. A member wished to record their appreciation of the number of police present on the Remembrance Day service.</p>	Admin
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Committees and recommendations therein (82-2015/16)</b> 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) <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the minutes of meetings of Development Scrutiny Committee held on 5 October 2015 and 26 October 2015. ii) <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services and Environment Committee held on 5 October 2015 iii) <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the minutes of the meeting of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 12 October 2015</p>	Admin
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Financial Matters (83-2015/16)</b> i) <b>RESOLVED</b> 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) <b>RESOLVED</b> to note a list of payments made since the last Town Council meeting (previously circulated).</p>	Admin
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Planning Application (84-2015/16)</b> Cllr Pettitt took the Chair as Chair of the Development Scrutiny Committee. He welcomed members of the public who had come to the meeting and Mr. L Stoter of Campaign for the protection of Rural England (CPRE). It was noted that the application had come to the Town Council to enable all members to debate one of the most significant developments in Sandy for a number of years. Every member had the opportunity to view the documents and plans prior to the meeting.</p> <p>A member objected to the application quite strongly. The development is for the other side of the A1 which is a very busy road and also by the River Ivel which has flooding issues.</p> <p>A member mentioned the impact this development would have on the environment. Approximately 200 letters had gone to near</p>	Admin

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neighbours and it is unknown what the response was. The Town Council has received 2 objections.

Members felt the location was an inappropriate place to develop, creating a separate community with no natural relationship to Sandy. The proposed bridge access is not conveniently placed and there are environmental issues.

A member mentioned the Town Plan which had not considered this site for development in the future specifically because of Highways and Environmental issues.

Concern was also raised about the impact of this development on the Gypsy/Traveller site in the area.

A member raised concern that if this development is approved would it open the floodgates for more development in this area. It was stated that if the Environment Agency were to downgrade the flood risk in this area this would be unusual as they haven't settled on their plan.

A member raised concern on the impact on services in Sandy, such as schools and health which are already at stretching point. The building of a Care Home on the site was raised and being unacceptable for a number of reasons. The isolation of the elderly from the community of Sandy, the distance to travel to access services in Sandy as there is no safe access. The slip road behind the garage will be a potential area for disaster with residents/staff/visitors and trades people causing congestion in and around the slip road. The Care Home is proposed for one of the most unsuitable of all locations.

There has no adequate demarcation between the residential and commercial area of the site. Traffic will need to drive through the residential area to get to the commercial area.

It was agreed to add to the submissions prepared by Cllr Aldis that most people live north of where they work and the proposals on Highways will cause considerable congestion which will spill over into other areas such as London Road which has major tailbacks. The slip road behind the filling station is a dangerous situation at the moment without the increased traffic that this development will cause. Turning right on to the A603 is particularly hazardous. School children would not be able to walk to school because of the pedestrian access being dangerous and this would increase traffic problems.

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	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that the Council would use Cllr Aldis's submission for objection with the additional comments above.</p> <p>Cllr Maudlin (CBC) said that this would come before the Development Committee and the Town Council has the right to make representation. It was noted designated CBC Ward Councilors can speak on behalf of the Town Council if they agree with its views.</p> <p>A copy of the submission is attached as Appendix 1</p>	Appendix 1
9	<p><b>Local Council Award Scheme (85-2015/16)</b></p> <p>A member asked about the additional criteria required for the higher levels. Members were informed the Town Clerk has to be Cilca qualified to achieve the next level. Councilors will be provided with a list of criteria for higher levels once the Clerk is qualified. Members were informed that there was no defined timeframe for confirmation of accreditation once the application was submitted.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> to confirm policies and procedures on the Council's website as per the local Council award scheme, foundation level</p>	Town Clerk
10	<p><b>Bedford Road Recreation Ground – Outdoor Equipment (86-2015/16)</b></p> <p>Cllr Pettitt reminded the members of this initiative by a young resident seeking support for adult exercise equipment on Bedford Road Recreation ground. There are no financial implications for the Council, either revenue or capital. Sport England, potential funders for the project, have asked for 6 tasks to be completed if this is to proceed. One of the tasks is a park users survey and Cllr Pettitt is looking for support from members in carrying out a survey over a period of 3 to 4 months, 2 hours a week every fortnight. It is hoped that a grant application would be ready for June 2016. Cllr Pettit requested members email if they were able to help with the survey.</p>	Cllr. Pettitt
11	<p><b>Surgery (87-2015/16)</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk presented the report and added that he had a quote for £1,200 for marking out the spaces required. A member suggested that the NHS contribute 50% of the cost. A member mentioned the access through a heavy door and down a slope which may be difficult.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> THE Council agree to the suggested changes in principle and that the Town Clerk continue to work with Dr Graffey to identify funding and address the slope and heavy door.</p>	Town Clerk
12	<p><b>Talk of the Town Community Bus (88-2015/16)</b></p> <p>Members received and discussed a request from Sandy and Beeston Good Neighbours. A member raised the question of mail</p>	Admin

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coming to the office and the increased work this may create for staff. It was suggested that a post tray be made available in the Reception area and the group informed of the opening hours so the post could be collected during these times. An email could be sent to the group as a reminder if there is a buildup of post. This could be trialed for 6 months.

A member stated that it was thanks to a number of people that this valuable resource exists in the town.

## 13 **East West Rail Link (89-2015/16)**

The Town Clerk presented the report. A member stated that this would be a big plus for Sandy should the East West rail link come this way. Members felt that waiting for processes to unfold and not applying any influence to the process is not the best approach. Members were of the opinion the Council should be pursuing the interests of the town and campaigning.

**RESOLVED** that the Town Council strongly support the East West rail link coming through Sandy and to lobby the relevant authorities.

Town  
Clerk

## 14 **Cemetery Burial Fee Request (90-2015/16)**

A member stated that this was a reasonable request considering the support that the person had given the community.

**RESOLVED** to agree the request for reduced burial fees from a member of the public.

Admin

## 15 **News Release (91-2015/16)**

1. Objection to the proposed development West of Sandy.
2. The recent Polish visit to Sandy being very successful.
3. Car park for regular users
4. Support East West rail link

Town  
Clerk

## 16 **Chairman's Items (92-2015/16)**

- a) An invitation to the Market Town regeneration meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> November at Chicksands at 4pm. There could potentially be grants available.
- b) Cllr Mauldin and Stock (CBC) are meeting with Highways England on a site visit at strategic places on the A1 between the Biggleswade and Sandy roundabouts.
- c) Christmas lights switch on posters are now available and the Mayor requested help from members on the morning of the event at 8.30am.

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d) Photographs will be taken of members, as a group, for a picture on the wall in the Council Chamber and on the website at 7pm before the next Town Council meeting.

**17 Date of Next meeting: 21 December 2015 (93-2015/16)**

## Land West of the A1 at Sandy

### General Reasons

1. Application is premature and not included in the Development Framework for the area.
2. There is a study into the route of the A1 between Peterborough and London and until the outcome of that is known it would be premature to build so close to the existing road.
3. The same objection applies for the East-West Rail Link. The route for this is not yet known and it may impact on this area.
4. The proposed housing is too close to the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites which expect to have a field and a half between their location and the settled community. There will be an unacceptable loss of privacy to the residents of the two sites as well as loss of grazing.
5. This is a totally inappropriate place to develop, creating a separate community with no natural relationship to Sandy.

### Highway Reasons

6. A bus stop in the lay-by between the site for the proposed Care Home and the existing garage was turned down by the CBC Highways on the grounds that it would encourage pedestrian traffic across the A1. This should surely apply to the development of a care home in this location which would generate a considerable number of pedestrian movements by the lower paid members of staff employed in such an institution. While the developers have proposed that a shuttle service between the proposed care home and Sandy town centre by mini bus would be provided for a period of 5 years members questioned how that could be guaranteed and what would happen anyway at the expiry of that period.
7. The southbound traffic from the estate trying to access Sandy for commuting and the school run will be forced to use Sunderland road and St Neots road adding to the existing congestion.
8. The slip road between the A603 and the A1 is already heavily used by vehicles accessing the A1 to go north, the garage for fuel and the reverse route back to the A603 to re-join the A1 southwards or to access Sandy. Building a major size care home at this location would over burden the local road network, cause congestion and would be dangerous for road users especially pedestrians. Turning right onto the A603 from this junction is particularly hazardous.
9. The location of the care home near a busy junction and acceleration area on the A1 would be unacceptable in terms of noise, vibration and nitrogen oxide emissions. This area is already under scrutiny for the high level of pollution caused by the A1.

10. The access of several hundred additional vehicle movements from the housing site onto the A1 is unacceptable. Traffic wishing to go south or into Sandy would have to use the Girtford underpass which is already heavily used by HGVs buses and lorries going to the Frontier Agriculture site and the vehicle auction company.
11. There is no adequate demarcation between the residential and commercial area of the site. Traffic from the proposed commercial units will have to go through the residential areas to access the A1 and vice versa.
12. The proposed bridge is not conveniently placed and will not offer an acceptable means of access for pedestrians, mobility scooters and children in push-chairs in a sustainable way to get access to goods and services in the centre of Sandy which is some distance from this location.
13. How will pedestrians from the housing area access the amenities at the care home or get to the garage for groceries. There is no pedestrian access shown on the plan which would be available in all weather conditions and 24 hours a day.

### **Environmental Reasons**

14. With changes proposed to the River Ivel by the Environment Agency like the removal of weirs, changes to the flooding pattern are not yet known and may put this development at risk.
15. The developers state that the Environment agency has downgraded the flood risk in this area to grade 3, 1 in 100 years. They stated that this down grade took into account the changes to the Ivel proposed by the environment agency. This area has flooded severely in the recent past and in the event of flooding occurring again will impact heavily on lower lying residential properties above and below the new development because of increased run off.
16. The proposed flood water containment "system" has only been used in Kent on a small development of 8 dwellings. It does not have any means of cleansing the run off water from drives and gardens which will contain pesticides and oil pollution. It is proposed this be pumped directly into the Ivel or the existing sewerage system designed for the three cottages at the north of the site, if pumped into the Ivel at the north of the site, it will cause severe harm to the ecology of the river.
17. The proposed care home is far too large for the site. At over five stories high it would be the tallest structure in the Town and in a rural environment would be unacceptable.
18. The impact of a development of this size so close to the Ivel will impact on the abundant wild life along this stretch of the river, which now contains Eels, Otters Water voles, kingfishers, bats, Tawny and barn owls, reptiles (smooth snakes) crested and common newts, toads and frogs as well as numerous waterfowl species and other birds whose habitat will be disrupted. The statement that



“management” of this area by the RSPB or STC would be beneficial to the habitat can not be taken as fact because of the disturbance the area will endure during construction with the inevitable pollution during building and subsequently, and the noise and disturbance caused by large numbers of people in close proximity to the river.

### **Other Reasons**

19. The scale and massing of the building is too big as it would be an unacceptable level of development on the edge of the housing settlement.
20. Doctors' surgeries in the Town are already under pressure and further development will cause even further delays in getting an appointment to see a doctor.
21. School children would not be able to walk to school because dangerous pedestrian access and this would increase traffic problems. In addition some schools in Sandy are already at full capacity which would mean that some children living on this estate might have to go to Moggerhanger Lower School or John Donne Lower School in Blunham. This would mean they would have to use cars to go to school, increasing traffic at peak times.
22. The location of the care home will lead to the isolation of the elderly people living there because of the distance to travel to access services in Sandy.
23. The site is unsustainable as car movements will be necessary to access facilities in Sandy like businesses and services.
24. The existing parking and commuter facility at Sandy station will not support the addition commuters living on the new development