

# SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

## Held at 6pm on Tuesday 2020 Via Zoom Conferencing and broadcast live on Facebook

**Present:** Chairman Councillor Tim Prater

Councillors Michael Fitch, Gary Fuller, Nabin Siwa, Tracy Stephens, Guy

Valentine-Neale, Adrian Watts and Lewis Whitnall

Clerks Clerk G Thomas & RFO S Horton (left 6.20)

There was no report from the PCSO.

## These Minutes will only be deemed to be a correct record of the meeting when approved and signed at the next meeting

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm

- **1. Apologies for absence:** Councillors Nina Bliss and Vannessa Reay.
- **2. Declarations of Interest** none at this time
- **3. Minutes of the last meeting** the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 17th November having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed on behalf of the Chairman by the Parish Clerk

Agreed by all who had been present at the meeting.

### 4. Chairman's opening remarks

The chairman wished all the council a very Happy Christmas.

It was noted that secret judging of the Light up Sandgate would take place at the weekend, with prizes for the best four windows/businesses.

It was noted that the meeting schedule had been previously circulated and that the draft budget would be presented for the council's consideration on the third Tuesday of January at Full Council. It was noted that the back windows of the library had been replaced by the landlord and that investigations into possible damp were now taking place in locations to the side of the library. CCTV- It was noted that a new graphics card had been installed and it was hoped that the system would be commissioned shortly. Residents would be informed of the opportunity to view stills of related CCTV to ensure that any potential privacy issues could be highlighted and ameliorated.

### 5. Chairman's Correspondence As above

6. AGAR 2019-20 External Auditors' report for consideration The RFO referred to the External Auditors letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November which reported on the completion of limited assurance review for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 in respect of Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR). The report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The RFO advised that the report contained no findings but did draw one matter to our attention. This was: "The smaller authority should ensure that it has regard to the level of reserves held when considering future precept requests. Any earmarked reserves should be considered and formally approved by the smaller authority"

The RFO advised that when we are completing the annual AGAR that we have to explain why our reserves are greater than twice the income we receive from Taxation/Levies. The return showed our Precept to be £78,740 and our Balances/Reserves of £520,628. A similar position was reported in the AGAR for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 but no matter for attention was raised.

The Parish Balances/Reserves were inflated by the drawdown of the £500,000 PWLB loan during the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. Whilst these funds are invested on interest bearing accounts the shortfall in servicing the loan repayments is presently being met from Balances/Reserves. We publish on a quarterly basis a detailed summary of the PWLB loan showing actual servicing costs and income received.

Having considered and accepted the AGAR report it is suggested that we enhance our reporting of reserves by creating a PWLB Liability Earmarked Reserve with a balance that matches the quarterly PWLB loan summary and that the balance is updated on a quarterly basis when the summary is published. The report has been considered by Resources Committee and is recommended for approval as is the establishing of the PWLB Liability Earmarked Reserve.

Proposed by Cllr Adrian Watts Seconded by Cllr Lewis Whitnall Approved by all

It was noted that a public consultation would be needed if the PWLB funds were to be considered for any other use than servicing the loan.

7. Letter of support for the Shorncliffe Trust It was noted that a draft letter of support had been circulation for the Shorncliffe Trust's application for heritage and other grants to develop a visitors' and education attraction around the Shorncliffe Redoubt.

Proposed by Cllr Tim Prater Seconded by Cllr Tracy Stephens Approved by all

- **8. Planning Committee** It was noted that the minutes had been circulated
- **9. Environment Committee** It was noted that the minutes had been circulated
- 10. Resources Committee report It was noted that the minutes of Resources Committee had been circulated. It was noted that the circulated draft budget was to be finalised for Full Council in line with FHDC timeline for setting of precepts and all councillors were invited to make any comment.
- 9 Library Committee report

It was noted that initial work on a specification for prospective library fitters was being undertaken. The draft specification would be put before the Library Committee for discussion and amendments in their January meeting.

- 10. KALC- It was noted that reports were regularly being circulated.
- **11. Twinning-** no information at this time, though it was noted that France was also experiencing a very difficult time due to the ongoing pandemic.
- 12. Information-

It was noted that a lot of positive comments regarding the Christmas Lights and Tree in the village and the lights in the Golden Valley Car Park, had been received. Cllr Prater offered his thanks for the efforts of Simon Horton and Harmer & Sons for getting the Golden Valley lights organised after many problems.

It was noted that a donation to Leonie Wootton for the Incredible Edible/Community Garden initiatives should be discussed. The clerk was asked to ensure that this was on the next Resources agenda.

It was noted that the Community Business Initiative should be discussed in the new year and it was agreed that this should be put on the next Resources agenda

It was noted with sorrow that the husband of one of the library's invaluable volunteers had just passed away and the parish council took a moment to express their sympathy to her and her family.

13.	<b>Date of next meeting-</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> January 6.00pm via Zoom
The me	eeting ended at 6.40 pm.
Signed	by the Chairman