



**SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 6.30pm**

**At Sandgate Parish Council/Library Offices**  
**James Morris Court, Sandgate High Street, Sandgate.**

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**Present**

**Chair: Tim Prater**

**Councillors: Hazel Barrett, Susan Claris, Michael Fitch, Gary Fuller, Peter Hickman,  
Simon Horton, Rosa Morris, Nicola South & Guy Valentine-Neale**

**Clerk: G Thomas**  
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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.**

1. **Apologies for absences: Tracy Stephens.**
2. **Declarations of Interest Members** are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Council's Code of Conduct and by the Localism Act 2011.- **Simon Horton declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 7 (Solar Panels) and 10**
3. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd October 2023 to be confirmed as a correct record and signed.**  
**Proposed by Guy Valentine-Neale**  
**Seconded by Hazel Barrett**  
**Agreed by all.**
4. **Chair's opening remarks & correspondence**  
It was noted that there would be the Christmas Lights event on 1<sup>st</sup> December and that two grottos would take place in the parish; one at the Golden Arrow in Enbrook Valley from 4.00pm-4.45pm and the other at the library from 5.00pm-6.00. There would be a Craft Fayre in the Chichester Hall from 5.30pm-7.30pm and the FSG a cappella choir would be singing Christmas songs from 6.16pm-6.30pm in the hall.  
It was noted that volunteers were required to assist Simon Hill the local Speed Watch organiser, in the provision of regular sessions of the Speed Watch initiative. This was a voluntary led project targeted to decrease the speed of drivers in the parish. Full online training would be available, and an online link would be provided to enable volunteers to enrol.
5. **Planning Committee report** – minutes of meetings had been circulated.

It was noted that an email which had previously been sent to the Chief Planning Officer, Llywelyn Lloyd, conveying the concern and disappointment that many planning applications fail to include a reference to the Sandgate Design Statement, had unfortunately not been received. However, further

communications had resulted in a meeting with Tim Prater and Guy Valentine-Neale. It was highlighted that all planning officers are aware of the SDS and that it formed part of their deliberations. It was noted that it was more problematic to make applicants consider it as part of their applications, but this recommendation formed part of the pre application advise. An improved website with links to planning policies included the SDS.

It was noted that when planning officers consider applications, they would always consider all policies including SDS, give a balance view of the possible benefits to the applicant and possible harm to the parish.

It was noted that the parish's planning committee's approach regarding SDS, as an important and relevant part of any application, was a correct one, but an objection could not be prefaced solely on an absence of mention of this policy.

It was noted that the works at Military Road were still not ongoing, due to the presence of the archaeological remains of a building. It was further noted that works on the site of Hillboro had not yet started, however on Sandgate Esplanade near the Clarendon, works appear to have commenced, although the land was still available for sale.

## 6. **Environment Committee report**

It was noted that a committee meeting minutes had been circulated.

It was noted that a Environment Committee six-monthly report had been circulated. This provided a clear overview of actions, priorities, and financial expenditure since the formation of the committee on 15<sup>th</sup> May.

It was noted that the sea testing continued, and that Peter Hickman had provided an interim report.

It was noted that a decision whether to apply for this year's Seaside Aware had not been made, but the data received from the sea testing would play a decisive factor in this.

It was noted that in Sandgate Park a tree had fallen into a neighbouring garden with a resultant high financial cost for its removal and further costs to be accrued for the repair of the garden fence. Whilst the tree had not been highlighted in the tree inspector's report, it was noted that the combinations of storms and very wet soil conditions inevitably could cause this kind of unpredictable occurrence.

It was noted that the drainage under Military Road continued to improve conditions and there was now a grid over the culvert.

It was noted that the hole which had been dug originally for the memorial tree was still full of water and this needed to be further investigated.

**Action: Clerk to meet with Vic Harmer**

## 7. **Finance Committee report**

It was noted that the minutes had been circulated, and that the next meeting of the committee would be on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

- **Budget 2024-25 – update**

It was noted that the budget was now in its sixth iteration, and it would be unlikely to be the hoped-for neutral budget because of several as yet unknown fiscal factors, including the precept, increases to the electricity charges for CCTV, and anticipated increases to the to be renewed Grounds Maintenance

contract. However, it was further noted that there were 200 occupied new units at Shorncliffe which should provide some uplift in the precept.

- **Alarm system in library**

It was noted that the library alarm system had reached the end of its natural life and needed to be replaced. Three local companies were contacted and two provided quotations from which the clerk had provided a recommendation, which was agreed for proposal by the Finance Committee.

It should be noted that the actual cost to the parish would be 50% of the cost of the alarm, Libraries, Registration and Archives meeting the other 50%, and KCC would provide free monitoring of this.

Additionally, the cost of four Panic Alarms would be met from COVID grant monies which are held within designated reserves, and which could legitimately be drawn down as the grant was provided for expenditure for safeguarding purposes. The cost of the Panic Buttons would not be included within the cost of the alarm system, but this would be a good opportunity whilst the works are being undertaken to install some further enhancements.

It was noted that an additional alarm system budgetary line would be included on the budget forecast.

**It was proposed to agree with the recommendation of the Finance Committee,**

**Proposed by: Simon Horton**

**Seconded by: Tim Prater**

**Agreed by all.**

- **Solar Panels on the Boat House**

It was noted that the solar panel project could be legally funded from PWLB monies that that it was predicted that this initial financing would be repaid within a four /5-year period.

Simon Horton was thanked for his assistance in obtaining helpful advice into the complexities of different solar systems.

The installation of solar panels on the Boat House has been investigated by the clerk, and three companies have tendered for this project. It was noted that the clerk recommended the smallest of the companies who it was felt provided the most suitable system within the structural restrictions of the Boathouse roof, which was agreed for proposal by the Finance Committee.

It is estimated that this system will produce 50% of the running costs of the Boathouse/Toilets. The quotation included two six monthly visits to the system to clean the product, and undertake safety checks, particularly as the system would be positioned above several chairs and tables outside the café. If this company were to be approved, it is the suggestion that the service checks be continued after the 12-month period would be reached.

The proposed system allowed full access for both the parish and the company to monitor the system. It should be noted that whoever gained the contract, additional costs would be accrued for the system to be run at its optimal capacity in terms of monitoring and data gathering. There would also be significant costs to obtain an amendment of the lease from FHDC and possibly for a planning application.

It was proposed to agree with the recommendation of the Finance Committee and to progress with this project.

**Proposed by: Tim Prater**

**Seconded by: Susan Claris**

**Agreed by 9**

**Abstention from vote: Simon Horton**

It was noted that progress with the project was subject to the obtaining of a grant for planning and the agreement for the lease amendment from FHDC. It was further noted that a grant application was at present with FHDC which, if successful, would result in a 40% contribution to the costs of the panels and their installation.

**8. Library Committee report**

It was noted that the Christmas event would take place in the library on 1<sup>st</sup> December. Additional activities in the library included the commencement of a Games Club on a Tuesday Morning.

It was noted that the works to the lintels and new windows in the library was at present stalled until a structural engineer had performed a survey of the areas involved. It was noted that this was greatly disappointing as the library's refurbishment had occurred over a year ago and the new carpets for the children's area remained in storage because of ongoing leaks from the courtyard area above.

**9. Sea Festival / Events report**

It was noted that plans for next year's Sea Festival were underway and that there would be some different acts and entertainment, it was also hoped that venues along the High Street might host entertainment.

Alex McNeice and John Barbar amongst others had been consulted about acts and stalls and the complexities of health and safety, and different avenues for sponsorship and funding were being investigated.

**Action: Clerk to consult with the organisers of the Hythe Food Festival**

**Action:** Clerk to investigate purchase of Hi Vis jackets for stewarding

**10. Grant Application**

It was noted that the parish had received an application for grant funding for £250.00 to support the work of the Folkestone and Dover Community First Responder Team. It was noted that Community First Responders (CFR's) are unpaid volunteer members of their respective communities who are trained to respond to emergency calls in conjunction with Southeast Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SECAMB). CFR's respond to emergency calls in the areas where they live and work and as such can attend the scene of an incident within a few minutes, and often before an emergency ambulance arrives. They can offer lifesaving first aid provision - including immediate access to a defibrillator, oxygen, and other drugs / equipment.

It was proposed to approve this application and make a grant of £250.00, and the applicant Mr Simmon Hammett should be thanked for his work and that of his colleagues on behalf of SPC.

**Proposed by Peter Hickson**

**Seconded by Nicola South**

**Agreed by 9**

Simon Horton abstained declaring a personal interest as being a friend and neighbour of Mr Hammett

**11. Information**

It was noted that Julie Tugwood would be retiring on 30<sup>th</sup> November and the parish wished to give her their thanks for her hard work and enthusiasm over the last two years.

It was noted that SEA would be leading on the Hedgehog Highway, and it was hoped that SPC would provide half of the costs.

Peter Hickman noted his concerns about parking problems in the parish and it was agreed that this would be included on the January agenda of the Environment Committee.

**12. Date of the next meeting 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Signed by the Chair.....Date.....