



SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on 16th December 2024 at 6.30pm

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

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**Present**

**Chair: Cllr Tim Prater**

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

**Clerks: G Thomas**  
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1. **Apologies for absences: There were none.**
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 – there were none.**
3. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 25th November 2024 to be confirmed as a correct record and signed.**
Proposed by Guy Valentine-Neale
Seconded by Simon Horton
Agreed by all.
4. **Chair's opening remarks & correspondence**

The success of the parish over the past year was the result of the collective efforts of numerous individuals. Special recognition was given to all Library Staff and Volunteers, as well as Michael and Melanie, for delivering an exemplary library service and facility that set a benchmark for other libraries within KCC. Notably, it was the only library in the county with extended operating hours.

Chani was commended for her valuable contributions throughout the year and for achieving the CiLCA qualification. Vic Harmer and Tony Bates were acknowledged for their dedication to maintaining the parish's parks and greens, ensuring their safety and excellent upkeep. David Lewis was praised for his continued management of the highly successful Boat House Café, while Simon Hill received recognition for overseeing the Speed Watch initiative, which proved to be well-organised and effective throughout the year.

Garry Filmer-Porter, Major Works Surveyor, was thanked for his steadfast support of the library, leading to the building being made watertight and the installation of new windows. The latter had been the result of his nomination of the library for a community business project.

The success of the Sea Festival was also highlighted, with particular thanks to all volunteers and emphasis on the critical role of the Saga Car Park in facilitating the event.

The Parish Clerk/Librarian was recognized for her dedicated contributions to both the parish and the library. Her attendance at the funeral of Judy Murray, on behalf of the parish, was deeply appreciated. Additionally, Gary Fuller was congratulated on achieving a First-Class Honours Degree in Computing and IT, marking a significant personal accomplishment.

5. **Planning Committee report**

The minutes of the previous Planning Committee meeting had been circulated. It was noted that two new businesses would be opening in the new year in the buildings previously run as Tik Luks and the Vaults.

6. **Environment Committee report**

There had been no meetings since the previous Full Council meeting.

7. **Finance Committee report.**

It was noted that the proposed Council Tax Base figures had been received, indicating a 7.92% increase for Sandgate. This rise is attributed to the growing occupancy of Taylor Wimpey properties and the increase in council tax for second homes, effective from April 2025. The initial budgetary expenditure projections have been prepared, factoring in essential priorities such as increases in the minimum wage, National Insurance contributions, and necessary maintenance costs. The budget will be presented at the Finance Committee in January, with the proposed Precept to be agreed upon at the Full Council meeting on 27th January. A 3% increase in the Precept is the anticipated projection.

7.1 Approval for the purchase of hi-vis jackets up to £150.00.

Approval was sought for the purchase of hi-vis jackets up to a cost of £150.00. It was noted that these jackets were necessary to enhance the visibility and awareness of parish-approved volunteers and staff during events and activities. The jackets would be purchased in various sizes and would feature the parish name, and possibly the logo. It was therefore proposed to purchase 15 jackets, not exceeding the cost of £150.00.

Proposed by Guy Valentine-Neale

Seconded by Tim Prater

Agreed by all.

8. **Library Committee report**

It was noted that the Library Committee had not met recently but it continued to be well run and highly successful.

9. **To confirm the appointment of Internal Auditor**

It was noted that the appointment of an Internal Auditor is a formal requirement of the parish on an annual basis. Lionel Robbins was recognized for his exceptional skills, reliability, and approachability, having successfully conducted the internal auditing of the parish accounts for several years.

It was therefore proposed that Lionel Robbins be reappointed as the Internal Auditor for the 2025/6 period.

Proposed by Tim Prater

Seconded by Simon Horton

Agreed by all.

10. **To confirm the donation of £1500.00 to RNLI from Sea Festival**

It was noted that the funds raised during the Sea Festival, from proceeds from the Barrow of Booze and other raffles, along with a small contribution from the surplus income of the event, totalled £1,500.00.

This amount was proposed as a donation to the RNLI at Dungeness

Proposed by Tim Prater

Seconded by Simon Horton

Agreed by all.

11. **Christmas event**

It was noted that the Santa event at the library had been, as always, a great success, and appreciation was extended to Adrian Watts for his participation in the event. It was also acknowledged that, due to circumstances beyond the parish council's control, there had been no Christmas Fayre or choir performance at the Chichester Hall. However, it was noted that several local businesses had purchased small Christmas trees, which contributed to a charming festive display along the High Street. Looking ahead, it was suggested that battery-operated lights would be a preferable option for next year, as they would provide a longer-lasting display than that of solar panels.

12. **Information**

It was noted that works were currently being undertaken on the steps leading to the beach from the Esplanade near to the junction with Sunnyside Road. Additionally, it was observed that the lights in Castle Road Car Park had been illuminated once again. A compromise had been reached to balance the need for adequate lighting to ensure the safety of car park users, while minimising light pollution to avoid disturbing nearby residents.

It was also noted that work had commenced next to 122 High Street.

Furthermore, the Clerk had contacted the builder and architects responsible for the works at the former Kirby Arcade after observing that a digger was in operation prior to the agreed start time of 8:00am.

This activity was immediately halted, and the builders offered their apologies. It was confirmed that this issue had not recurred.

13. **Date of the next meeting** 27th January 2025 at 6.30pm

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