



SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on 27th January 2025

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, Peter Hickman, Simon Horton, Rosa Morris, Nicola South & Guy Valentine-Neale**

**Clerks: G Thomas**  
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1. **Apologies for absences: Gary Fuller**
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 16th December 2024 to be confirmed as a correct record and signed.**
Proposed by Simon Horton
Seconded by Susan Claris
Agreed by all.
4. **Chair's opening remarks & correspondence**
 - The Defib that we had hoped to go into the Sandgate Hotel is now at the BP station / Budgets on the Esplanade, and our thanks for them taking it. It is now on the key Defib maps.
 - 20mph zone consultation closes on Friday. To date 257 in favour (of which 87 want to see a larger zone) and 12 opposed.
 - New voluntary 20mph zone in Coolinge Lane is now in place, and "No waiting" road markings to "upgrade" the current double yellow lines are urgently awaited.
 - Forthcoming new Green grant scheme - potential to both bid and support local groups in their own applications. Plan to circulate widely when its launched, and suggest a working group of Chairs of Environment, Finance, myself, and the Clerk review and bring proposals for any potential projects to respective committees.
 - Gas Canisters
 - New barrel planters for 49-53 SHS gardens being transplanted tomorrow: help welcomed!
 - Extraordinary meeting next Monday 3 Feb, with Planning at 6.30

Gas Canisters:

On Saturday I was told by a local resident they had found 11 1kg NOx canisters by a bin in Enbrook Road. They were concerned about the risk as they did not know if they were empty or not and so took them home for safekeeping and disposal. Independently a second resident told me they had seen a number of the same canisters on the seafront that morning.

And finally, today, there are a 10 more such canisters by a bin at the foot of Brewers Hill on Sandgate Esplanade.

There are many legal reasons to use NOx canisters, but that seems to be a LOT of them in a few days. The sheer size of them means that if they are being used for the wrong reasons, there could be substantial risk to health.

We have notified the Council Environmental Health, and updated our local Police Officer, and are confirming what more is useful to do. However, if you and residents can keep an eye open for any more canisters, and especially use of them, and feed that back to the Clerk that could be helpful. I am not a puritan, but Nitrous Oxide delivered directly from cans of that size could cause considerably more than a sudden headache, and any information we can feedback will help clarify what is happening here, and on what scale.

5. **Planning Committee report**

The minutes of the previous Planning Committee meeting had not yet been circulated.

6. **Environment Committee report**

It was noted that at the earlier meeting prior to Full Council that the Key Priorities of the Environments Committee including 20's plenty, Solar Panels on the Boat House, Sea Water testing and Sprucing had all been discussed and as had the updated Highway Improvement Plan.

7. **Finance Committee report.**

Discussion and approval for the 2025/26 Precept and Budget as proposed by Finance Committee

It was noted that the draft budget had been discussed and approved by the Finance Committee on 20th January and recommended for approval by Full Council.

The draft budget and proposed increase in precept to £120,668 were considered following the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

The budget seeks a 2.78% increase in the precept to £50.60 (Band D equivalent) based on the Sandgate Tax base figure of 2,384.65 for 2025/2026. 2.78% is a rise of Band D equivalent Precept from £49.24 to £50.60 a rise of £1.35 a year, around 2.5p per week. With that precept income and the draft budget, there is a predicted break-even budget despite allowing funding for a contribution to a new Sandgate 20mph zone, rewinding part of Battery Point and new Speedwatch equipment.

Proposed: To accept the recommendations of the Finance committee that the draft budget as circulated, and proposed precept figure of £120,668 (based on a 2.78% increase in Band D equivalent Council Tax to £50.60) for 2025/26 be approved.

Proposed Tim Prater

Seconded by Simon Horton

Agreed by all.

8. **Library Committee report**

It was noted there was a continuing and very satisfactory influx of new books purchased from S106 monies.

9. **Tree Report**

It was noted that several quotations had been obtained for the works outlined in the September Tree Officer's report. All the companies providing quotes were highly accredited local contractors. There was a significant disparity between the highest two quotations and the lowest one. Following a thorough

review to ensure that the lowest-priced contractor held the appropriate credentials, testimonials, and was able to commence work promptly, the Clerk recommended awarding the contract to this contractor.

Proposed by Tim Prater

Seconded by Hazel Barrett

Agreed by 7

1 abstention

It was noted that the successful contractor was Spearpoint Tree Services.

10. Re-wilding at Battery Point

It was noted that the re-wilding of approximately 500m² at Battery Point was (the actual area will be confirmed once the Contractor is instructed).

This was discussed previously at the council meeting on 25th November 2024 when the following was resolved:

12. Sandgate Esplanade Wildflower and Bee Corridor-

It was noted that a wildflower strip along Battery Point wall could be seeded and planted with the green verge remaining in front and that over time this would become a self-seeding and attractive addition to the area.

It was proposed to confirm council support and agreement to budget for a wildflower corridor along the SPC maintained grass verge alongside the Battery Point.

Proposed by Tim Prater

Seconded by Susan Claris

Agreed by all.

Following the resolution, discussions were held with the Grounds Maintenance contractors to assess the site and recommend an appropriate seeding mix tailored to the challenging conditions at the Battery Point seafront area.

It is proposed to initially rewild a two-meter-wide strip along the back of the site, as outlined in the accompanying site plan, using a seed mix suited to the area that will also maximize the seasonal floral display.

Assuming the area is 500m², the total cost for undertaking the works will be £2,810.00 + VAT (£5.62 per m² + VAT). This cost covers ground preparation, seed supply, and broadcasting.

To cover the proposed cost, it will be necessary to vire funds from unspent budget codes within the current financial year and also utilise a specific wildflower budget allocated in the proposed 2025/26 budget.

The contractors have agreed to invoice for a portion of the works prior to the financial year-end on 31st March, with the balance due for payment in early April.

Proposed virements:
Budget Code 6 Book fund £1,000.00
Budget Code 95 Replacement Waste Bin £803.00
Budget Code 18 Training £7.00
Total £1,810.00
To Budget Code
Budget Code 38 Grounds Maintenance other

From 2025/26 budget.
Budget Code tbc Wildflower Planting £1,000.00
Total £2,810.00

Proposed by Tim Prater
Seconded by Simon Horton
Support: 8
Object: 1

11. KALC

It was retrospectively proposed that Simon Horton be the parish representative on the Shepway Area Committee.

Proposed by Tim Prater
Seconded by Susan Claris
Agreed by All

Simon Horton provided a short update of the KALC - Shepway Area Committee meeting held on 19th December 2024. The minutes of that meeting were circulated on 7th January. Simon Horton requested that the Clerk contact KALC for guidance on:

- 1/ The proper approach for a Councillor to raise a point of order in a meeting of KALC.
- 2/ Best practice for recording that a point of order has been raised in a meeting and how much information regarding the matter should be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Additionally it was agreed that a copy of the Standing Order of the Area Committee be obtained for Simon Horton.

12. Information it was noted that the highly successful Speed Watch programme would benefit from additional volunteers

13. Date of the next meeting 24th February 2025 at 6.30pm

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