



SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on 24th March 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, Gary Fuller, Peter Hickman, Simon Horton, Rosa Morris & Guy Valentine-Neale**

**Clerks: G Thomas**  
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1. **Apologies for absences: Michael Fitch & Kirsty Hogben**
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 24th February 2025 to be confirmed as a correct record and signed.**
Proposed by Simon Horton
Seconded by Hazel Barrett
Agreed by
4. **Chair's opening remarks & correspondence**

It was noted that a litter pick had been successfully carried out by the Sandgate Environmental Action Group, resulting in the removal of over 10 bags of general litter from the village and beach. Appreciation was extended to Gemma and the team of volunteers for their efforts.

Several new planting initiatives have been undertaken across the parish, including the wildflower corridor at Battery Point, which is looking promising. It is hoped that in the future, this area will flourish into a vibrant display of flowers, potentially reducing the need for hanging baskets at that location, thereby representing a significant cost saving.

Planting has also been carried out outside the library, along the High Street, and at the Sir John Moore Memorial. Special thanks were given to Susan Claris and Rosa Morris for their contributions.

The watering schedule for the parish has been submitted to the District for agreement and quotation, and the Clerk will follow up, as no response has been received yet.

It was noted that the parish's CCTV system had once again been used to assist in identifying potential criminal activities. Should the need arise, the police can request visual evidence from the parish.

Additionally, tree works, including coppicing and the removal of dead trees, have been completed in the parks. It was emphasised that the significant pruning of certain trees was carried out to promote healthy future growth.

5. Planning Committee report

It was noted that the Planning minutes from the previous meeting on 10th March had been circulated. The Chair of the committee expressed thanks to members for managing the community in his absence.

6. Environment Committee report

It was noted that the minutes of the meeting on 10th March had been circulated.

The meeting had focused on the agreed priorities:

The ‘20 is Plenty’ initiative was progressing towards publication for formal consultation, with the police content with the plans.

Regarding Sprucing, as previously mentioned, Battery Point and several other areas in the parish had benefited from planting.

In relation to Sea Water testing, confirmation had been received from the Environment Agency that, upon the successful application for the designation of Granville Parade as a beach, a sea water monitoring point would be established. It was noted that Councillors Peter Hickman and Kirsty Hogben would be presenting plans for how the necessary application information could be collected and compiled.

The Boat House project was moving forward, with scans for the roof scheduled to take place in the near future.

An application to the Consolidated Active Travel Fund was submitted on 4th March. The proposal included the installation of dropped kerbs, tactile paving, and a pedestrian refuge island at the bottom of Military Road (at its junction with Sandgate High Street). Additionally, the application outlined the creation of an alternative walking route to avoid Military Road, via Oxenden Road/Enbrook Valley, with signage and a potential leaflet. This initiative could also incorporate cycle parking in the village and aim to link up the green spaces.

A meeting had taken place with the Community Engagement Officer to discuss the Parish Highway Improvement Plan, which would include the replacement of zebra crossings. It was noted that the zebra crossing on the High Street had been repainted on 17th March. It was hoped that the crossing on the Esplanade would also be addressed in the near future.

It was noted that a meeting had taken place with Kent Highways officers and the Taylor Wimpey Operational Manager at Pond Hill Road. It was highlighted that the road at the entrance and exit of the Pond Hill site required repair, and that several speed repeaters were needed in the area, as it appeared that drivers were unsure of the speed limit, so it was recommended that increased 30mph signs be installed.

Additionally, it was noted that new council software was now available to provide up-to-date speed information for all roads. Regarding Military Road, it was noted that the data from KCC suggested average speeds well below the speed limit on the lower section of the road rising towards Enbrook Road. It was felt the perception of high speed was likely due to the narrowness, acceleration and likelihood of collision with vehicles descending towards the junction. However, it was noted that the 20 is Plenty speed limit would begin just above Gough Road, which would naturally affect the speed of cars entering or exiting Military Road.

7. Finance Committee report.

It was noted that a routine Finance Committee meeting had taken place on 17th March and minutes had been circulated.

- **Speed Watch equipment update- approval of expenditure and revision of annual budget-** document was previously circulated

Proposal for 2025/26 Budget Adjustments & Approval for Speedwatch Equipment Purchases-

Overview: During the annual budget forecasting process, assumptions are made regarding income and expenditure. To ensure transparency, the budget is updated whenever variations occur, with the goal of delivering a balanced budget by the end of the fiscal year. This year, the parish council is ahead of schedule with the proposed budget adjustments for the upcoming year.

Income Increase:

- **Item Code 79:** KCC re-charge non-property
Budget: £10,000
Revised Budget: £11,137
An additional £1,137 will be received from KCC towards the running costs of the library.

Expenditure Increases:

1. **Item Code 13:** Subscriptions
Budget: £2,000
Revised Budget: £2,150
The KALC subscription has increased by 7%, and the Clerk's SLCC membership is still to be finalised. A £150 increase should cover both costs.
2. **Item Code 128:** Speedwatch Equipment
Budget: £1,600
Revised Budget: £1,881
Due to a significant increase in the cost of the speed gun, the revised budget is necessary. Efforts to find alternative suppliers or import from the USA were unsuccessful, leaving only one UK supplier available.
3. **Item Code 40:** Toilet Maintenance & Checks
Budget: £500
Revised Budget: £956
A repair to the Boat House's toilet flush mechanism will cost £820 excluding VAT. Other faults are being investigated, and additional repairs may be required, potentially funded from the building reserve.
4. **Item Code 41:** Cleaning of Toilets
Budget: £300
Revised Budget: £550
Additional funds are needed for a deep clean of the toilet block after repairs. This will be scheduled as an annual pre-season clean.

Recommendation: The proposed budget revisions are cost-neutral and fully covered by the additional KCC income. It is recommended that the council approve these adjustments and also approve the purchase of the Speedwatch equipment. To secure one of the last available units, a purchase order should be issued on 25th March.

Proposed by Simon Horton

Seconded by Tim Prater

Agreed by all

- **Boat House solar project update – for discussion and approval of expenditure-** document previously circulated

Boat House Solar Project Update and Approval for Expenditure

A structural engineer inspected the Boat House roof earlier this year, confirming it can safely support the solar panel ballast solution. However, due to the absence of the original construction plans, the engineer cannot provide a written opinion. Despite extensive searches by both FHDC and the Parish, the plans are unavailable, as the building dates back to the 1960s.

To proceed, the engineer recommends a construction survey of the roof, covering both the FHDC-owned and UK Power Networks' portions, which we plan to purchase. The survey will assess the roof's condition, slab thickness, and reinforcement, with a small area undergoing detailed inspection. If the report is satisfactory, it will confirm the roof's ability to support the solar panels and its condition.

The construction surveyors require a safe working area, and after considering scaffolding options, we have secured a cost-effective solution through Harmers, who will provide a scaffold tower and fencing at no charge. The total labour cost is £350.

The costs for approval are as follows:

- Safety/Access Equipment: £350
- Roof Construction Survey: £895
- **Total: £1,245**

It is recommended that these costs be applied to the **PWLB Solar Loan Repayments** code (119), all costs incurred less the £4k FHDC Grant funding will be drawn from the PWLB investment monies and a formal repayment programme then put in place to replace the PWLB monies.

Recommendation: Approve the expenditure of £1,245 as detailed above.

Proposed by Simon Horton

Seconded by Tim Prater

Agreed by all

8. **Library Committee report**

It was noted that the library continued to benefit from an excellent selection of new books purchased through the S106 monies.

9. **KALC-** no update at this time

10. **Information** It was noted that 5 benches had been repainted at the parks

11. **Date of the next meeting** 28th April at 6.30pm

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