



**SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 6.30pm**

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

**Present**

**Chair: Cllr Tim Prater**

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

**Clerks: Gaye Thomas**

1. **Apologies for absences: Peter Hickman & 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 23rd June 2025 to be confirmed as a correct record and signed.**  
**Proposed by Simon Horton**  
**Seconded by Hazel Barret**  
**Agreed by all**
4. **Chair's opening remarks & correspondence**

It was noted that parking issues at Radnor Cliff have persisted over the years, particularly during the summer months. To help mitigate these challenges, the double yellow lines at Marine Point and within the turning circle will now be replaced with "No Waiting" signage.

It was also observed that the maximum parking enforcement charge is £50.00, reduced to £25.00 if paid promptly. Some individuals appear to consider this a reasonable cost for all-day parking, which may be contributing to the ongoing problem.

New suggestions and proposals for addressing the parking situation are welcomed and encouraged.

It was noted that private clamping firms are not permitted to operate on the public highway.

A newsletter is scheduled to be produced soon, which will promote the upcoming Sea Festival and Farmers Market. Members were encouraged to contact the Clerk with any ideas for inclusion. It is hoped that two to three newsletters will be published each year, with one planned ahead of the Christmas Lighting event.

Thanks were extended to Vinci, MOD contractors, for painting the planters, bins, and railings in the parish last Thursday. They have indicated plans to refurbish the benches next year.

It was also noted that the maintenance and enhancement of planters and flower beds has been, and continues to be, carried out by Susan Claris, Rosa Morris, and Nicola South among others.

## 5. **Planning Committee report**

Gary Fuller and Guy Valentine-Neale offered apologies for arriving slightly late, as they had been attending the Folkestone & Hythe District Planning Forum. They reported that the session was both informative and, at times, somewhat disheartening.

Key points from the forum included concerns around the government's underperformance in meeting national housing supply targets. Changes to planning legislation were also discussed, with an emphasis on how new policies affect local consultation. It was noted that developments classified under the banner of "sustainable development" are increasingly difficult to oppose, due to the strong policy presumption in their favour.

A significant topic at the forum was the **Folkestone & Hythe Heritage Strategy**, and local lists were highlighted which are local heritage assets not included on the statutory national lists (e.g. not Grade I or II listed) of historic or architectural interest. In the case of Sandgate, several such assets have been identified in *Appendix A of the Sandgate Design Statement*.

However, it was noted that while these local lists are valuable for community identity and planning context, there is currently **no formal process or dedicated funding** within the district to assess, adopt, or maintain them. As a result, when such locally important assets are referenced in planning objections, their impact on decisions can be limited unless supported by robust evidence or a formal local listing process.

The forum also reinforced that planning decisions are made through a **balancing exercise**, weighing the potential harm of a proposal against its public benefits, with final judgments generally led by the Planning Officer's recommendation.

## 6. **Environment Committee report**

It was noted that a meeting of the Environment Committee had taken place two weeks prior.

### Designation of Granville Beach as a Bathing Beach

An online consultation regarding the designation of Granville Beach as a Bathing Beach had been ongoing for the past five weeks. There was unanimous support for the proposal. Letters have now be delivered to local stakeholders as part of the next phase. The subsequent stage involves conducting two four-hour surveys to record the number of individuals entering the sea. These surveys must be completed before the end of the bathing season on 30th September.

### Solar Panels on the Boat House

Kingsfords Solicitors have been instructed to act on the proposed purchase of the UK Power Networks section of the Boat House. All necessary identification documents have been submitted and contact details for UKPN have been provided.

Simon Horton gave further information that members were able to carry out a visual inspection of the premises, focusing on signs of damp and structural condition. The building appeared to be dry and in good repair. The District Council had been approached regarding project grant funding, and it was noted that the Council has indicated a flexible and supportive approach to the project.

## 7. **Finance Committee report.**

It was noted that the Finance Committee had met the previous week.

It was noted that current interest rates remain below the 4.44% required to service the PWLB loan. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) continues to monitor the market for any competitive rates worth pursuing. A bond offering 4.3% interest over a five-year term with Hampshire Trust Bank has been identified. While the Finance Committee holds delegated authority to approve a two-year bond, Full Council approval is required for a commitment of five years.

Given that the PWLB loan has a remaining term of 40 years, it was considered prudent to secure this bond at the current rate. The proposed investment relates to a single tranche of £85,000, and it was felt that the potential risk of future rate increases was minimal and acceptable considering the bond's value and term.

Additionally, it was noted that securing a five-year bond would reduce the administrative burden associated with frequent renewals, which require significant staff time. It was felt that, particularly in the short term, it is unlikely that a more favourable rate would become available.

It was noted that, even if a more favourable investment opportunity were to arise in the short term, the potential loss of interest would be an acceptable risk.

**Proposal to invest £85k into Hampshire Trust 5-year bond**

**Proposed by Simon Horton**

**Seconded by Tim Prater**

**Agreed by all.**

**Parish Insurance Renewal**

It was noted that the Parish Council's insurance renewal is due on 1st September. The renewal premium had not yet been received at the time of the meeting. As it is desirable to avoid holding meetings during August, it was agreed that the RFO/Clerk may proceed with the renewal under delegated authority, with retrospective approval to be sought at the September meeting. Details of the renewal will be circulated to all councillors in advance.

**8. Library Committee report**

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

**9. Sandgate 20mph Zone-to consider and approve Sandgate contributions up to a maximum of £6K**

It was noted that a complete cost estimate for the scheme had not yet been received. However, £4,400 in funding is available from District Members' Grants held by the Sandgate Society, with an additional £6,000 allocated in the parish's 2025/26 budget.

Initially, the total cost of the scheme was estimated at approximately £15,000. Kent County Council (KCC) has covered the costs for signage, consultation, and traffic regulations, reducing the outstanding amount to around £10,000. This shortfall is expected to be met by the District Members' Grant and the £6,000 budget allocation.

**A proposal was made to approve a parish contribution of up to £6,000 towards the scheme.**

**Proposed by Tim Prater**

**Seconded by Simon Horton**

**Agreed by all**

**10. Information**

It was noted that an online consultation on beach water quality testing is currently underway, and all members were encouraged to participate. Members were also invited to volunteer to assist with counting sea users during the upcoming surveys.

It was noted that Sea Festival planning was now having a burst of activity.

Saga kindly agreed to the use of their car park and provided walkie-talkies for car park volunteers to communicate with security staff, as well as access to toilet facilities.

There had been a sharp increase in road closure charges by£1,300; however, after contacting the District Council, it was agreed that the charge would remain at last year's level. This ensured that the charitable contribution to the RNLI was not jeopardised. Historically, any surplus funds raised by the Sea Festival have been donated to the RNLI.

The fireworks provider for this year remains the same as last year, as previous regular providers are no longer available. Stages have been booked, and Harmer and Sons have been contacted regarding hay bales, cones, and other necessary items.

Volunteer recruitment continues to be a challenge; Saga and Border Force have both been approached for assistance.

A spreadsheet for next year's event has already been created, and planning will begin with the first post-event meeting scheduled for September. This meeting will gather feedback and reflections from participants, stall holders, and other stakeholders.

It was noted that clipboards, waterproof packets, lanyards with identification, and other materials will be available at this year's event.

It was noted that a number of assaults had recently occurred in the local area, involving residents being struck by eggs thrown from passing vehicles. Efforts are being made to identify the vehicle involved and determine whether the same individual(s) are responsible, reviewing available CCTV footage. A record of reported incidents is being maintained, and victims are being advised to report the matter to the police.

11. **Date of the next meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025**

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