



**SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 6.45pm**

**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, Peter Hickman, Simon Horton, Rosa Morris & Nicola South**

**Clerks: Gaye Thomas**

---

**1. Apologies for absences: Guy Valentine-Neale**

**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 November 2025 to be confirmed as a correct record and signed.**

**Proposed by Susan Claris**

**Seconded by Michael Fitch**

**Agreed by all**

**4. Chair's opening remarks & correspondence**

It was noted that the 20 mph roundels and associated signage would be installed on the High Street overnight on 5 and 6 January. It was further noted that banners would be erected shortly after this date on the Royal Norfolk and on the fence of the property located on the corner of Wilberforce Green and the High Street; these were expected to remain in place for one month only.

It was noted that the consultation regarding the proposed overnight parking ban for camper vans closed on 5 December, and it was considered likely that the ban would be approved by FHDC. It was also noted that CPZ residents can use visitor parking permits for camper vans parked within the CPZ. During the winter months, camper vans may legally park on Princes Parade; however, this will not be free during the summer period.

It was noted that the Christmas Lights event was exceptionally successful. The Christmas event held in the High Street as part of the Christmas Lights celebrations was also reported to be highly successful, with many local businesses, restaurants, and cafés taking part. Thanks were extended to the Clerk for arranging the library event, with appreciation also expressed to members, staff, volunteers, and the festive character in attendance. It was further noted that the Christmas volunteer thank-you event had been postponed until January, and that all members would be invited once the new date is confirmed.

**5. Planning Committee Report**

It was noted that the minutes of the previous Planning Committee meeting had taken place just prior to the Full Council and sadly the clerk had not yet produced minutes 😊

**6. Environment Committee Report**

Sandgate Sprucing and Greening

It was noted that a substantial number of bulbs have been planted throughout the parish, which are expected to enhance these areas attractively in the spring. Thanks to Simon for buying many of them for the Parish, and Rosa for leading / mainly doing the planting!

It was agreed that additional bulbs would be purchased from the Environmental Improvement budget for around £110.00.

## 7. Finance Committee Report

Discussion and approval for the 2026/27 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 15<sup>th</sup> December and recommended for approval by Full Council.

The draft budget and proposed increase in precept to £122,446 were considered following the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

The budget seeks a 2.98% increase in the precept to £52.11 (Band D equivalent) based on the Sandgate Tax base figure of 2,349.77 for 2026/2027. 2.98% is a rise of Band D equivalent Precept from £50.60 to £52.11 a rise of £1.51 a year, around 2.9p per week. With that precept income and the draft budget, there is a predicted break-even budget despite allowing funding for a possible concrete table tennis table in Fremantle Park and an increase in the budget for the Sandgate Sea Festival.

Proposed: To accept the recommendations of the Finance committee that the draft budget as circulated, and proposed precept figure of £122.446 (based on a 2.98% increase in Band D equivalent Council Tax to £52.11) for 2026/27 be approved.

**Proposed Tim Prater**

**Seconded by Simon Horton**

**Agreed by all.**

It was noted that Council Tax is set annually and is made up of several separate charges from different authorities. Each organisation sets its own **precept**, which is then combined into a single Council Tax bill for residents.

In Kent, Council Tax typically includes:

- **Kent County Council (KCC)** – responsible for services such as education, social care, highways, and libraries. This usually makes up the largest portion of the bill.
- **District Council** (e.g. Folkestone & Hythe District Council) – responsible for services such as housing, waste collection, planning, and environmental health.
- **Parish or Town Council** – sets a local precept to fund community-level services and facilities.
- **Police and Crime Commissioner** – funds policing services across Kent.
- **Fire and Rescue Authority** – funds fire and emergency services.

### **Parish Precepts and the Folkestone Parks and Gardens Levy**

Parish and town councils set a **precept**, which is the amount they require to fund local services. This is approved annually and collected on their behalf as part of the Council Tax bill.

In Folkestone and Sandgate, the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Special Expense is also levied additionally to the Town / Parish Council precept. This special expense is set by the FPPG Charity trustees (who are appointed by the district council) and funds the maintenance and improvement of the Charity's lands (parks and gardens within the area of the old Borough of Folkestone). The charge is ring-fenced for this purpose and cannot be used for other services.

Once all precepts are set, the District Council calculates the total Council Tax due for each property band and issues bills to residents.

8.      **Library Committee Report**

Thanks were extended to Paul Butler for the loan of PR equipment for the Christmas Lights event, and to Mike Hazell, CEO of SAGA, for visiting the library and meeting with members, volunteers, staff, and residents.

It was noted that the Clerk has now fully spent this year’s S106 allocation for book purchases, and that her colleagues produced eye-catching displays featuring the new items. These displays were well received by library users, resulting in an increase in borrowing figures.

9.      **Information**

It was noted that an enquiry had been received from the mother of a local resident of Redmill Close regarding a damaged fence and concerns about youths gaining access to residents’ gardens and communal outdoor spaces. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with the Coordinator from Places for People to discuss the issues in the area and to clarify any responsibility of the Parish in relation to fence repairs.

However, as a gesture of neighbourly goodwill and without accepting liability, it was agreed that the Parish would undertake repairs to the fencing along the boundary of Fremantle Park to help resolve the current issues.

10.     **Date of the next meeting 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

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