



**SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026 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, Peter Hickman, Simon Horton, Rosa Morris & Nicola South**

**Clerks: Gaye Thomas**

It was noted that a local resident had raised a concern regarding the visibility of the 20-mph sign near Wilberforce Green. It was observed that the Tamarisk tree may partially obscure the sign during the growing season. It was agreed that the Parish Council would arrange for the tree to be pruned at their expense to ensure the sign remains clearly visible.

1. **Apologies for absences: Michael Fitch, Peter Hickman, Kirsty Hogben and 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 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025 to be confirmed as a correct record and signed.**  
**Proposed by Simon Horton**  
**Seconded by Hazel Barrett**  
**Agreed by all**
4. **Chair's opening remarks & correspondence**

It was noted that the 20-mph signage was in place, along with accompanying banners. Thanks were expressed to Hazel, Susan, Betsey, and Nicola for their efforts in installing the banners.

**.5. Planning Committee Report**

It was noted that the planning application for 32 Radnor Cliff would be discussed at next week's meeting. It was observed that there did not appear to be any significant changes in the revised application.

It was further noted that a premises licence (for the sale of alcohol) had been received for the former Christopher Buck business location. The Parish Council confirmed that did not comment on these types of applications.

**6. Environment Committee Report**

Sandgate Sprucing and Greening

It was noted that a substantial number of bulbs have been planted throughout the parish, including at Wilberforce Glen, including ferns and Siberian irises, thanks to Rosa and her team. Sprucing of Fremantle Park is scheduled to take place on Friday, 13th February.

**7. Finance Committee Report**

Retrospective approval was sought for.

- payment of £31.28 for batteries for library alarm
- payment of £80.00 for toilet block repairs
- payment of £250 to Kingsfords Solicitors for preparation of lease
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**Proposed by Simon Horton**

**Seconded by Gary Fuller**

**Agreed by all**

7.1 To receive the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding the updated Precept tax base.

It was noted that at the last meeting the 2026/27 Precept and draft Budget were circulated, and a proposed increase in precept to £122,446 were considered and accepted:

*'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.'*

Following the Cabinet meeting held on 10 December 2025, Cabinet Members agreed to adopt a replacement Council Tax Reduction Scheme from 2026/27. This revised scheme increases council tax support from 75% to 100%, providing additional assistance to low-income and vulnerable households.

As a result of this decision, the overall tax base has been reduced from that set out in the precept demand form issued on 8 December 2025.

Consequently, the precept request for Sandgate Parish Council has increased to 4.26%, rather than the originally anticipated 3%, to achieve the same total precept of £122,446. In practical terms, this equates to an increase of approximately 3 pence per week per household.

In Folkestone and Sandgate, the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Special Expense is also levied additionally to the Town / Parish Council precept.

7.2 To receive the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding the transfer of reserves.

It was noted that the cost of repairs to the washer/dryer unit in the toilet block had initially been met from the Major Projects Reserve.

It was proposed that half of the amount be transferred from the General Reserve to the Major Projects Reserve in the current financial year, and the remaining half in the following financial year. Accordingly, it was proposed that £2,785.00 be transferred from the General Reserve to the Major Projects Reserve during the current fiscal year.

**Proposed by Councillor Simon Horton**

**Seconded by Councillor Tim Prater**

**Agreed by all**

7.3 Approval of purchase of an outdoor, concrete table tennis table for approximately £2900.00 from grants from Sandgate Society and District.

It was noted that Gary Fuller would provide £2750.00 of the £2900.00 for the outdoor concrete table from his Ward Members Grant. Initially it would have a concrete footing but if required, in the next year, a soft play surrounding area would be put in place. It was noted in Hythe that there had been no requirement for this soft footing after a year of a similar item being in situ.

It was proposed to purchase the concrete table tennis table.

**Proposed by Simon Horton**

**Seconded by Susan Claris**

**Agreed by all**

## **8. Library Committee Report**

It was noted that the library continues to purchase new books from the S106 funding. It was further noted that the library, as a so called 'Baby branch' was the only one of this type in Kent offering opening hours of six mornings a week and two afternoons. It was noted that this had only been possible with the support of the council.

**9. Sea Festival Committee**

It was noted that preparation was ongoing, and it was thought the parish was in a good position to provide an excellent event again this year.

**10. Information**

The Council noted that the Internal Auditor is scheduled to carry out the initial review of the accounts on Friday.

It was noted that the bench project would now be launched. A bench was already in place, with a commemorative plaque for Robert Bliss installed; the cost of this plaque would be met from the Chair's Allowance. It was proposed that the remaining plaque spaces be made available at a cost of £200.00 per plaque. It was further noted that, once all seven plaques had been purchased, the total cost of the bench and its installation would be fully covered.

It was noted that Simon Horton would be meeting with Nicola Webb Community Housing Manager regarding an issue with a fence at Fremantle Park/Redmill Close and would report back.

It was noted that Harmers would be providing a quote for smoothing the tarmac at the Sir John Moore Memorial.

Thanks were given to all those who helped in the clean-up operation after Storm Goretti, all residents and the parish council very much appreciated their efficiency and skill.

The meeting noted reported concerns on the flying of flags locally. It was further noted that the Parish had been flying the Union Flag since 2016 on its flagpole on the Village Green (with other flags on specific days such as the Pride Flag and Armed Forces Day flag as allowed by <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flying-flags-a-plain-english-guide/flying-flags-a-plain-english-guide>), in common with many other Councils and Government organisations.

The meeting noted a request for an additional speed indicator at the foot of Sandgate Hill. This has been discussed previously, but noted they cost around £10,000, there is no budget to do so, and other priorities have been seen as more pressing.

**11. Date of Next Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

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