***SANDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL***

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**SANDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL** Met at Marshalswick Community Centre on Wednesday 8th October 2025 at 7.30pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors John Hale, Maurice Wells, Graham Leonard (Chair), June Reid, James Lambert, Carol Chalkley, Debbie Chachulski, Jenny Roberts, Raihaanah Ahmed, Mary Ternouth

**OFFICERS:** Simon Thwaites, Parish Clerk

Emma Hostler, Deputy Clerk

Rebecca Pannese, Project, Facilities & Community Engagement Officer (PACE)

Stef Hayes, Community Centres Manager

**ABSENT:**  There was none

**IN ATTENDANCE:** A member of the public

**6021** **TO RECEIVE AND FORMALLY ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Mike White, Anne Thomas, Adam Twidell and Julie Oakley.

**6022 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

There was none.

**6023 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 10th SEPTEMBER 2025**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10th September 2025 were reviewed. They were agreed to be a correct record and it was unanimously;

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting be approved and signed by the Chair.

**6024 QUESTIONS TO OFFICERS**

There was none.

**6025 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

**CLERK’S REPORTS**

**6026** **Monthly Accounts**

Members reviewed a schedule of creditor payments for the period 11th September to 8th October 2025. It was unanimously;

**Resolved**

To approve payment of the online transfers on this schedule on 10th September 2025 and to ratify the payment of standing charges and debit card payments already made.

**6027** **Benches at Jersey Farm Community Centre**

At Full Council in September a request to install benches outside Jersey Farm Community Centre was discussed.Councillor Wells visited the location to assess suitability for the placing of a bench(es) and provided a plan of such which was previously circulated to all Members. Following discussion it was, unanimously;

**Resolved**

To purchase and install one 3 metre bench, at the agreed location adjacent to the southern facing exterior wall where the ground runs flat.

**6028 Use of Electronic Tablets at Full Council Meetings**

Members were informed that the Committee for Sustainability recently discussed moving from hard copy agendas and minutes for Full Council to issuing electronic tablets for Members to receive their papers electronically. Councillor Lambert found some research strongly demonstrating that the quantity of paper currently printed in the production of agendas, minutes etc produced significantly less CO2 than the production of an electronic tablet, even when measured over a life of four years. As a result, it was agreed that three Committee for Sustainability members would receive all future documents electronically as a trial. This would be using their own existing tablets/laptops. It was noted that the option to also use the television screen on occasions was potentially helpful for some documents. No recommendations were made to Full Council at this time.

**6029 External Audit**

It was reported that the Parish Council’s External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn, has finalised the 2024/25 external audit. A query raised by them in August was subsequently found to be an error on their part. A copy of the auditor’s report with one reference to an unchecked box on Section 1 (box 8) of the return (an error by The Clerk) was circulated. There were no matters arising. The Finance Committee reviewed this report at a meeting held on September 22nd. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit notices have been published in accordance with legislation. It was;

**Resolved**

That Full Council formally note the external auditors report as circulated.

**6030 Community Centres Biannual Report**

A copy of the Centres Manager’s biannual report on the community centres was circulated to all members. The Centres Manager also reported on two recent amendments to the hire agreement concerning additional cleaning and overrun charges. Some discussion ensured before the Centres Manager was thanked for her report.

**6031 CCTV Policy**

A copy of the Parish Council’s CCTV Policy was circulated to all Members for review. It was;

**Resolved**

To re-adopt the existing policy.

**6032 A verbal update from the PACE Officer**

The PACE officer informed Members of recent improvements in the parish play facilities including:

* Two new ground trampolines installed at Harness Way
* A second mini goal installed at Sherwood Park
* Waiting on the imminent installation of a replacement swing set at William Bell Open Space
* The Sports & Recreation Committee is considering scope for an adventure trail aimed at older children/adults from potential future S106 funding.

Members were also informed that following the recent closure of the Sandridge Village Store, the Spencer Meadow sports courts are now booked out of the village café.

**6033 2025/26 Budgetary Control**

Members were informed that on September 22nd the Finance Committee reviewed a budgetary control report showing projected outturn for 2025/26 of £343,838 against an approved budget of £377,832. This has since been updated to show a projected net expenditure of £349,038 leaving a projected saving on budget of £28,794 (a copy was circulated). Material variations were summarised as;

* New doors at Marshalswick Community Centre
* New tables at Marshalswick Community Centre
* No Parish Event
* Storage Container at the Woodland Park
* Increased Community Centre income/court hire
* Football goals/rugby posts at Jersey Farm Open Space

Since the above, the Finance Committee approved the funding of air source pumps at Marshalswick Community Centre in the sum of £12,734. This installation had already been approved at September Full Council subject to the Finance Committee’s approval.

**6034 Funding for the Jersey Farm Woodland Park Pond**

Members were informed that on 8th September the Jersey Farm Woodland Park (JFWP) Joint Management Committee resolved to proceed with the installation of a pond, with bee and butterfly mounds built from the spoils, on the eastern corner of the Woodland Park adjacent to the Jersey Lane entrance. However, as the original concept was for a much smaller pond, since made larger following encouragement and advice from wildlife experts, the earmarked funding in the annual JFWP budget of £3,500 is not sufficient. Funding from external sources has been secured, including a contribution from the Committee for Sustainability (£4.25k), and external grant providers including Affinity Water (£4k), Herts County Council (HCC) Countryside Management Services (£3k), Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust (£2k) and a HCC Locality Grant (£500). A further request to the charity Rebel Restoration (£500) remains outstanding. Despite these extra funds a shortfall remains. It was explained that total project costs including drainage are quoted at £24,807.90 + vat whilst funds raised currently total £17,250. The JFWP Committee resolved to approach Full Council to request a further £10,000 towards the project which will meet costs plus provide a contingency to cover any unforeseen expenses that may occur. A question was asked and responded to, following which a proposal was made by Councillor Wells, seconded by Councillor Chalkley, and it was;

**Resolved**

That the Parish Council provide a contribution of up to £10,000 towards the costs of installing a pond, and bee and butterfly banks, on the Jersey Farm Woodland Park. This includes up to £7,337 of project costs and the remainder for use as contingency.

**6035 Shottfield Close Development Section 106 Projects**

Members were notified that an outline planning application for a development of 84 dwellings in Sandridge has now been submitted and can be viewed on the SADC planning portal reference 5/2025/1556. The Parish Council has been approached by SADC to submit suggestions for any Section 106 funded projects for play areas, open spaces and leisure/cultural centres that would serve the locality of the area. A variety of suggestions have already been submitted to the PACE officer for use of funds across all of the above categories. Discussion ensued following which it was agreed that the Planning Committee would draft a formal response to SADC at the next meeting on 13th October. This will include a list of general suggestions as discussed but will also emphasise the need to ensure that all future funding is used to benefit Sandridge village and is not diverted elsewhere.

**6036 Matters of Note**

* Councillor Roberts has joined the Finance Committee and Councillor Wells has joined the HR Committee. Two places remain on the Planning Committee.
* At a meeting held on September 22nd, the Finance Committee approved the release of funds to allow air source heat pumps to be installed at Marshalswick Community Centre as approved (subject to funding) at Full Council in September.
* The Ollie Foundation has notified the Parish Council that it will no longer be involved with the community garden. One of their volunteers will continue to manage one of the beds on an informal basis.
* The Sandridge Cemetery (churchyard extension) water tap has been completely overhauled at the Parish Council’s expense.

**COUNCILLOR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**6037** **Grant Applications**

There were no applications this month.

**6038** **MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES:**

Committee Chairs spoke briefly on committee meetings as below.

- Committee for Sustainability 16th September 2025

- Sports and Recreation Committee 17th September 2025

- Finance Committee 22nd September 2025

- Planning Committee – see below

**6039 MATTERS OF NOTE ARISING SINCE THE CIRCULATION OF THE AGENDA**

The Clerk has been informed of delays in delivery of the Neighbourhood News magazine to a couple of addresses. This will be monitored with future issues.

The Clerk provided an update regarding on-going efforts to establish St Albans Community Pantry (SACP) as a long-term hirer of Spencer Hall from which to run its operations. This requires coordination with existing SYSCA members, in the first instance to ensure conditions on the ground are appropriate for SACP’s residency, before looking to review and update the current SYSCA constitution to ensure clarity of arrangements going forward.

**6040** **PLANNING MATTERS**

The Planning Committee met on 1st September and 24th Sept 2025. The Committee meets

every three weeks to review and respond to planning applications received from the Planning Authority,

St. Albans District Council.

Planning applications objected to/commented on since the last Full Council meeting were;

* 159 St Albans Road AL4 9LN 5/2025/1501
* 27 Highfield Road AL4 9BX 5/2025/1414
* Land at Ardens Rise AL4 9HE 5/2025/1537

Please note: Planning applications received at the Parish Office from the Planning Authority *after* the Parish Council agenda has been published may also be discussed at the meeting as may applications of complexity or applications likely to impact heavily on the Green Belt.

**6041 SUGGESTIONS AND/OR MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS**

Meeting with County Highways team – Councillor Hale will arrange a meeting before end of December.

Update on the larger building development applications: Oaklands/Taylor Wimpey, Shottfield Close, Sandridgebury Lane.

**Next meeting date – 12th November 2025 at 7.30pm – Marshalswick Community Centre.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.41pm.

**Chair ………………………………………. Date …………………………......**