



SANDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Met at Marshalswick Community Centre on Wednesday 11th October 2023 at 7.30pm for a meeting of the Parish Council

PRESENT:

Councillors Jenny Roberts, Graham Leonard (Chair), June Reid, James Lambert, Mary Ternouth, Adam Twidell, Maurice Wells, John Hale, Carol Chalkley, Julie Oakley

OFFICERS:

Rebecca Pannese, Project, Amenities and Community Engagement Officer, Stef Hayes, Community Centres Manager, Simon Thwaites, Parish Clerk, Emma Hostler, Deputy Parish Clerk

ABSENT:

Councillor Luke Sieger

IN ATTENDANCE:

District Councillor Sharon Hollingsworth

5574 TO RECEIVE AND FORMALLY ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors White, Chachulski and Ahmed.

5575 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There was none.

5576 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 13th SEPTEMBER 2023

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13th September 2023 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.

QUESTIONS TO OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

5577 Questions to Officers

There was none.

5578 Public Participation

There was none.

CLERK'S REPORTS

5579 Monthly Accounts

Members reviewed a schedule of creditor payments for the period 14th September 2023 to 11th October 2023. A question was asked and responded to before it was unanimously;

Resolved

To approve the schedule for payment on 13th October 2023.

5580 New Website

The Project, Amenities and Community Engagement Officer presented the Parish Council's new website to Members. The session was informative and the new website seen to be a huge improvement on the current version in terms of accessibility and informing residents of The Council's business in a bright and user-friendly way. Members showed their appreciation for the work that went into producing it. A launch of Friday 13th October 2023 is expected. It was proposed by Councillor Leonard, seconded by Councillor Hale and unanimously;

Resolved

To display future draft committee and council minutes on the website.

5581 Members Allowances

Members reviewed the Parish Council's policy on Member's Allowances. It was unanimously;

Resolved

That rates remain as current.

5582 External Audit of the 2022/23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

It was noted that the Parish Council's external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, has again returned an unqualified audit of the Parish Council's AGAR. The period for the Exercise of Public Rights produced no enquiries from members of the public and the audit certificate has been displayed along with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit on the Parish Council's website and noticeboards. It was unanimously;

Resolved

To formally note the conclusion of the external audit of the Annual Return.

5583 RAAC Surveys at Community Centres/Parish Office

Following discussion on the risks of there being reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in the fabric of the Parish Council's two community centres, it was unanimously;

Resolved

To have surveys carried out at each centre with a combined cost of approximately £1,500.

5584 Remembrance Day Representation

It was agreed for Councillors Roberts and Leonard to lay wreaths at St Leonards Church.

5585 Budgetary Control

Members were informed that there is projected net expenditure for 2023/24 of £306,453 against the budget of £343,095, a projected underspend on budget of £36,642. It was noted that this is an early projection, subject to a number of uncertainties.

5586 Matters of Note

- Further to Councillor Lambert's kind offer last month, a Climate Fresk sustainability session has been arranged for October 23rd for those councillors and staff who expressed an interest.
- The District Council continues to review options for the Sandridge village public toilets in the Village Hall car park. For this year, the likely solution will be to fully modernise the Accessible Toilet only to be available to all users, thus ensuring at least one facility in the village. The timescale for this is likely to be weeks, not months.
- The new clothing banks in the Parish Office car park are being emptied frequently and no fly tipping has occurred. If this continues the Clerk will bring a recommendation to Full Council to expand the facility to other car parks.
- Sally Evans, one of the community garden's founding volunteers has sadly moved away. Sally's horticultural knowledge and common sense approach proved invaluable and many of the garden's plants were generously donated from those she had grown at her Ridgeway home from seed.

- A traffic consultant has been employed through the Sports and Recreation Committee in respect of Highways concerns relating to the proposed pump track. It is hoped that this will move the project forward from its current position.

COUNCILLOR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

5587 Grant Applications

There have been no applications this month.

5588 New Bike Rack for the Community Garden and Library

It was noted that Councillor Wells and the Marshalswick Library Manager are in continued discussions regarding gaining approval to install a planter/bike rack at the front of the library building. It is hoped that, subject to approval of the design, this may still be achievable. Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Reid, seconded by Councillor Twidell and unanimously;

Resolved

That if the Library is unable to accommodate the rack, the £1,000 funding already approved be used instead to accelerate an installation on the Woodland Park (subject to committee approval of design and location).

5589 Lych Gate

Councillor Roberts gave a verbal update on the St Leonard's Lych Gate restoration project, work on which is to commence soon.

5590 Bentsley Spinney

A written report by Councillor Chachulski on a meeting held at Bentsley Spinney with the District Council's Green Spaces Manager was tabled. It was noted that there may be scope for interested residents, the District Council and Sandridge Parish Council to work together in enhancing this woodland.

5591 St Albans District Association of Local Councils (SADALC)

Members received a verbal update from Councillor Hale on a meeting held on October 2nd 2023. Councillor Hale told Members he considered the meetings to be useful in knowing what other councils are currently involved in and sharing knowledge.

5592 Meetings of Committees:

Members noted this month's committee meetings with updates from the Chair of each;

- Jersey Farm Woodland Park Committee 18th September 2023
- Sports and Recreation Committee 20th September 2023
- Finance Committee 25th September 2023
- Community Centres Committee – re-scheduled to October 2nd 2023 - cancelled
- Planning Committee – see below

5593 MATTERS OF NOTE ARISING SINCE THE CIRCULATION OF THE AGENDA

Councillor Hale updated Members on matters relating to the following footpaths;

- Oaklands Grange to Oakwood School
- Within the CEMEX quarry
- Along the B651 from Sandridge to Wheathampsted
- Through Oaklands College

Councillor Roberts informed members that the St Leonard's Flower Festival had been a great success.

5594 PLANNING MATTERS

It was noted that the Planning Committee met on 25th September 2023.
Planning applications commented on since the last Full Council meeting are;

- 2A St Helier Road AL4 9LG 5/2023/1907
- 29 Wheat Close AL4 9NN 5/2023/1937

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.

5595 SUGGESTIONS AND/OR MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

Councillor Hale may bring a proposal in respect of the Oaklands College footpath closure, dependent on progress in resolving the issues there.

Next meeting date – 8th November 2023 at 7.30pm – Marshalswick Community Centre

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.51pm

Chair **Date**

Cllr Graham Leonard (Chair)