

SANDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL



SANDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL	Met at Marshalswick Community Centre on Wednesday 9 th October 2024 at 7.30pm
PRESENT:	Councillors Jenny Roberts, John Hale, Graham Leonard (Chair), Mary Ternouth, June Reid, Adam Twidell, Raihaanah Ahmed, Debbie Chachulski, Maurice Wells and James Lambert
OFFICERS:	Simon Thwaites, Parish Clerk, Stef Hayes, Community Centres Manager, Emma Hostler, Deputy Parish Clerk, Rebecca Pannese, Project Amenities and Community Engagement Officer
ABSENT:	Councillor Luke Sieger
IN ATTENDANCE:	There were no other attendees

5816 TO RECEIVE AND FORMALLY ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Carol Chalkley, Mike White and Julie Oakley.

5817 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS
There was none.

5818 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 11th SEPTEMBER 2024
The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11th September 2024 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

5819 Questions to Officers
There was none.

5820 Public Participation
There was none.

CLERK'S REPORTS

5821 Monthly Accounts
Members reviewed a schedule of creditor payments for the period 12th September 2024 to 9th October 2024. It was unanimously;

Resolved

That Members approve payment of this schedule on 11th October 2024.

5822 Protocol for pre-planning application consultation

Members reviewed the Protocol for pre-planning application consultation and proposed the following amendments:

(Paragraph 4) change reference to drafting of the Neighbourhood Plan to ‘.in connection with the provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan.’

(Paragraph 6) insert at the end of the paragraph ‘...or the planning committee for smaller developments.’

(Paragraph 7) insert ‘timely’ before ‘record’.

It was unanimously;

Resolved

To readopt the Protocol for pre-planning application consultation subject to the above amendments.

5823 Members Allowances

Members were required to review the Parish Council’s policy on Member’s Allowances, and the Clerk to confirm with St Alban’s District Council’s (SADC) remuneration panel that this has taken place. Some discussion followed on reimbursement rates for electric vehicles. Following a proposal from Councillor Hale, seconded by Councillor Lambert, it was;

Resolved

To ask that the Clerk check with SADC the reimbursement rate for electric vehicles and amend the policy accordingly. All other rates were formally agreed to remain as current.

(Councillor Ahmed joined the meeting at this point.)

5824 Committee Room Meeting Tables

The Clerk and Community Centres Manager have discussed the configuration of tables in the Committee Room at Marshalswick Community Centre and how the current set up can impact lettings. There are examples of groups who would be able to use the space if the facilities were more flexible. This would probably involve a move to;

- Quality stackable or foldable tables
- Tables that can be configured to form squares, a rectangles or an oval.
- Tables that can line the walls of the Committee Room
- Tables that can easily be moved to the Hall, outdoors or to Jersey Farm if required.

The existing tables are cumbersome to move and very difficult to take through to the Hall. The disposal of the existing round table has been discussed before with a firm intention to revisit the matter in the future. Members were informed that the increase in lettings and enquiries to use the room suggest this may be a good time to review the use of the space. Questions were asked and answers given by the Centres Manager. Following a proposal by Councillor Roberts, and seconded by Councillor Chachulski, it was unanimously;

Resolved

To allocate a budget of £1,750 in 2025/26 to replace the existing table with new furniture. A recommendation of what furniture would be most suitable will be brought back to Full Council in the coming months.

5825 Maximum Spend using a Debit Card – Financial Regulations

Current Financial Regulations allow the Parish Council’s Debit Card to be used for purchases up to £500 unless authorised in advance by the Council or the Finance Committee. There is a rising expectation that online orders are paid for on being placed and consequently the current ceiling of £500 can be restrictive. On September 23rd the Finance Committee resolved to approve an increase to the ceiling from £500 to £1,000. Following a proposal by Councillor Reid, and seconded by Councillor Lambert, it was unanimously;

Resolved

That Full Council ratify an amendment to the Financial Regulations to this effect.

5826 Community Centres Biannual Report

The Centres Manager provided a written report to the Full Council on all recent centre related activity. Members gave positive feedback both on the quality and usefulness of the report and the on-going management of the centres. The Chair asked that thanks were formally noted to the Centres Manager Stef Hayes for her work in this regard. The report highlighted the problem with parking availability for hirers of Marshalswick Community Centre and Members were asked to consider the allocation of dedicated spaces in the car park for hirers. It was suggested by Councillor Hale, and agreed by Councillors, that this decision is deferred until such time as some Councillors have met separately at a meeting scheduled for 18th October to discuss parking and bring a recommendation on this matter to the Full Council no later than the December meeting.

5827 A verbal update from the Project, Amenities and Community Engagement Officer

The Project, Amenities and Community Engagement (PACE) Officer provided a verbal update on on-going sports and play equipment installations. This included installation of the spider climber and football wall in Sherwood Park. The PACE Officer was pleased to report that some 17 wooden sleepers from the discarded wall had been collected for use by the Hornbeam Hedgehog Sanctuary. The accessible see-saw for the William Bell playground is due to be installed imminently and it is hoped that work will begin on the installation of a hard surface footpath at Harness Way open space this week, subject to weather conditions. The maintenance or replacement of other smaller pieces of equipment is on-going. Resurfacing of the basketball area in Sherwood Park has been deferred until the spring.

5828 2024/25 Budgetary Control

The Finance Committee reviewed a budgetary control report showing projected net expenditure for 2024/25 of £366,128 against the budget of £360,305. This gave a projected overspend on budget of £5,823. It was noted that this is an early projection, subject to a number of uncertainties. To give the projection context, the Sports and Recreation Committee are projecting an overspend on budget of £28,006. This is approved expenditure following the release from reserves of funds earmarked for the pump track. Without this the projected outturn would be an underspend of circa £22,000. The following are contributory to the projected outturn:

Higher than budgeted Hall hire income (£8,990)

Higher than budgeted interest received (£1,789)

Reduced community event costs (£3,910). Some expenditure charged to 2023/24

Smaller number of new items expected on the Grounds Maintenance contract (£4,125)

Approved overspend on Sports facilities & Playgrounds £28,006 - funded from money earmarked for the pump track

This was noted by Full Council.

5829 Review of task schedule.

Members reviewed the previously circulated schedule of actions points following Full Council meetings.

5830 Matters of Note

- The road name suggested by Councillor Wells for the new development off Sandridge High Street has been approved by the developer/District Council. The street shall be known as Warner Close after Edward Warner VC, a local man and soldier in WW1. Councillor Wells has also drafted an article about the life of Edward Warner for the next issue of Neighbourhood News magazine.
- An information evening promoting the Parish Council's Swift initiative shall be held at Marshalswick Community Centre on November 14th. Mr Tim Hill of the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust will be speaking. Members of the public are very welcome to attend.
- Filming of the ITV drama Code of Silence at Marshalswick Community Centre went very well with minimal disruption to hirers other than the loss of the two car parks for 24 hours.

COUNCILLOR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

5831 Grant Applications

There were no grant applications this month.

5832 Local Plan – Regulation 19 Consultation

The draft St Albans Local Plan 2041 has now been published for its Regulation 19 consultation. The Plan will be available for representations to be made between 26th September 2024 and 8th November 2024. Members received a written report from Councillor Hale providing further information on the consultation and guidance on representations that can be made. It was noted that the Parish Council is not due to meet again until 13th November 2024, which is after the end of the consultation period, but the Planning Committee is due to meeting on 14th October and 4th November. Following a recommendation from Councillor Hale it was unanimously;

Resolved

That Parish Councillors provide comments on the draft Local Plan to the Planning Committee by 15th October 2024, such comments to meet the guidance provided in the above report. The Planning Committee to then prepare and submit a response to SADC.

5833 MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES:

- Jersey Farm Woodland Park Committee 16th September 2024
- Committee for Sustainability 17th September 2024
- Sports and Recreation Committee 18th September 2024
- Finance Committee 23rd September 2024
- Planning Committee – see below

5834 MATTERS OF NOTE ARISING SINCE THE CIRCULATION OF THE AGENDA

- Concerns were raised by Councillor Roberts regarding lack of lighting causing dangerous conditions at Sandridge Village car park, despite fault reporting to Herts County Council (HCC). Cllr Hale informed Members that HCC Councillor Wren is aware of the problem and will follow up.
- Councillor Roberts also reported that with help from Councillors Wells and Twidell vegetation has now been cleared from around the Lychgate at St Leonard’s Church exposing the decorative wall.
- Councillor Twidell reported on a positive first meeting to recruit volunteers to the Parish Council Park Rangers scheme. Some 6 potential volunteers attended.
- Councillor Twidell also reported that he had attended a meeting of the Herts County Armed Forces Covenant Board and would be seeking to promote this organization to other parish councils in the district.
- The Clerk reported on behalf of Councillor Chalkley that the new bus shelter and bench on The Ridgeway opposite the Library are due to be installed mid-November.

5835 PLANNING MATTERS

The Planning Committee met on 23rd September 2024.

Planning applications commented on since the last Full Council meeting are;

- 8 Kingsmead AL4 9JG 5/2024/1567
- 16 Chiltern Road AL4 9TE no application reference yet created

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.

5836 SUGGESTIONS AND/OR MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

Use of the Marshalswick Community Centre car park.

Next meeting date – 13th November 2024 at 7.30pm – Marshalswick Community Centre

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.39 pm

Chair **Date**