



PARISH COUNCIL OF SANDHURST, KENT

Please reply to Julie Horan, Parish Clerk, Old School, Back Road, Sandhurst, Kent TN18 5JS 01580-850273

Approved Minutes Parish Council Meeting 12 September 2023

In Attendance:

Clr M Phillipson (Chairwoman) (MP)	Mrs J Horan (Clerk & Proper Officer) (JH)
Clr A Kerry (AK)	Clr G Bland
Clr D Rogers (DR)	Clr S Holden (Arrived 8.25pm)
Clr K O'Neil (KO)	
Clr P Phillipson (PP)	Members of Public - 2

1.	Apologies Apologies received from Cllr Griggs (Vice Chairman) (MG), Cllr C Robinson (CR)
2.	Declarations of Interest Councillors were reminded that they must inform the Monitoring Officer of any changes to their Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. None
3.	Approval of Minutes To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13 July 2023 are a true record of the meetings. The only issue relating to the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy. <ul style="list-style-type: none">PP proposed; DR seconded - Agreed by those present that the minutes were a true record of the meeting. To resolve that the Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 31 May 2023 are a true record of the meetings. The only issue relating to the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy. <ul style="list-style-type: none">PP proposed; DR seconded - Agreed by those present that the minutes were a true record of the meeting.
4.	Councillor Intervention Cllr Godfrey Bland: A decision on the planning application associated with the new doctors surgery in Hawkhurst has been put off until October.

	<p>Having had no planning enforcement officers for some time, the planning enforcement department is now back to full strength and working through the backlog. There are new bus lane arrangements in Tunbridge Wells, and there are some really rotten road markings so drivers should be wary when driving around the Town Hall.</p> <p>KO asked whether, re the money pot in TW for local projects, we have attempted to get any for Sandhurst as the Parish could benefit from that for the playgrounds.</p> <p>Cllr Sean Holden: There is a new cabinet member for transport, Neil Baker, whom SH will shortly be meeting to ask question re growth in temporary road closures. SH stated that road closures have increased across the county from 4,000 to 12,000 in the last four years. There are 5,500 miles of road in the county and each mile of road is being closed twice a year on average, which SH called ridiculous. SH will request an explanation for that and ask how it can be brought back to the same level as four years ago.</p> <p>Reference to Birmingham City Council having issued a s.114 notice (meaning that it is bankrupt and unable to meet its expenditure for coming year). KCC also has quite vigorous finance difficulties itself: there was an overspend of around £50 million on the previous budget which is being met by £25 million set aside for contingency and £25 million from reserves. KCC will therefore be looking to reduce its non-statutory/discretionary services.</p> <p>One of the reasons KCC are in financial difficulty is the huge burden on the budget for Adult Social Care which keeps increasing in cost, and also the cost of special educational needs (SEN), particularly transport for pupils to and from SEN schools, in particular the use of taxis at £80 per day: KCC needs to get a grip on that. Another factor is the cost of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and refugees generally. It has taken some years for the government to accept that that is not just a Kent problem but a national problem, and the govt have actually returned £5 million to KCC after years of chasing funds. KCC needs the country and local authorities as a whole to share the burden. The govt has created a system for sharing and allocating refugees to other authorities, but that scheme is not compulsory and has had a limited uptake from other authorities. KCC is now in the position where it is caring for more unaccompanied asylum-seeking children than native Kent children, which SH stated was a ridiculous situation to be in, and that there was continuing discussion with government.</p> <p>On a positive note, Kent's Plan Bee, which started 10 years ago, has just won a national award from government as "Bees Knees Champion".</p>
5.	Matters Arising Phonebox repurposing - The work to repurpose the phonebox has been completed and is already being used. Fencing around Playing Field Carpark - All completed.
6.	Finance & Accounts <u>Accounts</u> To approve accounts retrospectively for payment from 01 July to 31 July 2023. To receive details of receipts in from 01 July to 31 July 2023. To approve accounts retrospectively for payment from 01 August to 31 August 2023. To receive details of receipts in from 01 August to 31 August 2023.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DR Proposed ; KO Seconded and those present approved the payments & Receipts from 01 July to 31 July 2023 & 01 August to 31 August 2023.- all present agreed. <p>To note the bank reconciliation at 31 July 2023 - Carried forward to the October meeting.</p> <p>To note the bank reconciliation at 31 August 2023 - Carried forward to the October meeting.</p> <p>The external auditor queried 3 blank boxes (10, 11a & 11b) on Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2022/23 - It has been confirmed verbally with the external auditor that box 10 is zero and box 11a and 11b confirmed that there are no trust funds.</p> <p>Parish Council Insurance for 2023/24 quote from Zurich is £1,989.01 (£50 increase on the last year).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KO Proposed to accept quote ; PP Seconded - all present agreed.
7.	OSH In MG's absence MP had notes from MG regarding the OSH: Barbara Simmons has replaced Rosie Broadbent on the OSH Sub Committee. MG asked if JH would be willing to serve on the Sub-Committee, JH agreed. The water heater has broken down again, MG has been in touch with Aqua Aid and has been told the machine is beyond repair. Previous quotes obtained were in the region of £2,000. There is an urn available for use but PC will discuss repairs to water heater when setting budgets for next year to see if that is viable. MG is meeting Mr Page at the beginning of October regarding the possible reorganisation of the OSH. MG has spoken with Academy Flooring about sanding and repolishing the floor.
8.	Allotments KO reported that the allotments subcommittee have requested the PC to reconsider the strimming of the edge under the hedge, pointing out that when the PC asks residents to cut back their hedges it is expected that the undergrowth beneath the hedges be dealt with at the same time. AK will speak to the hedge cutters about this ahead of the next hedge cutting. The subcommittee requested clarification or confirmation re the strimming of the vacant plots. PC presently intends to issue any bill for clearing plots to the outgoing tenant, but an alternative was suggested whereby an incoming tenant would themselves clear the plot in return for a discount on the rent of the first year of the tenancy. Teresa Breckon has been in contact with Home and Country regarding the fence at the end of Old Orchard and has been assured they will do something. A price of £25 has been quoted for a replacement sign for the allotments stating that if anyone wants more information regarding the allotment they should contact the Clerk. • MP Proposed to accept the quote of £25 : PP Seconded - all present agreed
9.	Neighbourhood Plan KO reported that funding has now been allocated and it has been recognised that Sandhurst is eligible for the remaining £12,340.82 of the possible £18,000 total. KO has requested that the PC make provision for approximately £5,000 to allow for completion of the Neighbourhood Plan when planning the budget for the coming year. KO met with neighbourhood planning consultant Alison Eardley (AE) for a detailed visit and tour around the village. The NP steering committee's groups are in the process of submitting their objectives and policies with projects to AE for her to review them. The NP steering committee is planning a meeting to get her feedback in October. Once that happens, the committee will be in a position to start producing the draft plan.

10.	Termination of No 5 Bus to Sandhurst Following the meeting between the Parish Council, Neighbourhood Transport Group, KCC, Arriva, TWBC and a representative from Greg Clark MP's office regarding the termination of the No 5 bus service to Sandhurst, Arriva invited the Parish Council to put forward some possible turning areas for the No 5 bus. A number of detailed solutions were submitted and Arriva have finally conducted their risk assessment on the solutions put forward. It has concluded that none of the options put forward are better or safer than where the bus presently turns at the Moor in Hawkhurst. There is nothing further we can do, and MP suggested that our efforts were a forlorn hope in that Arriva had made their mind up about that a long time ago.
11.	Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) for Sandhurst There have been traffic monitoring strips in place at two locations in the village. Once the monitoring strips have been removed MP will contact Nigel Rowe at KCC to see how long we will have to wait for the information gained.
12.	Playground Marsh Quarter Lane The work has been completed and new items installed. CR, KO, Dennis O'Neil and MP worked very hard to weed the area and replace the bark.
13.	Soldier Silhouette The Tommy Silhouette at the church has been damaged beyond repair by vandals. The cost of replacement would be £175 from the Royal British Legion, with the wording 'Lest We Forget'. <ul style="list-style-type: none">MP Proposed the Silhouette sign be purchased/replaced ; AK Seconded - all present agreed
14.	Parking on Grass Verge - Church Road The contractors that cut the grass verges have said that there are cars parked on the grass verge opposite St Nicholas Cottage and Loch Pond which is preventing them from cutting the grass. It has also been noted that when the ground is wet the verge gets very churned up by vehicles parking on the verge which looks unsightly. JH to write a note to the households on Church Road to request that they refrain from parking on the verges.
15.	Website Redesign of the website was discussed - JH to speak with local web designer
16.	Old Orchard Play Area A proposal was circulated for discussion at next meeting. KO suggested that it might be a good idea to include the children when asking/deciding what equipment should be included.
17.	Planning Applications Application: 23/02209/FULL Proposal: Conversion and extension of existing barn to create no. 2 new dwellings Address: Boxhurst Farm , Boxhurst, Sandhurst, Kent, TN18 5PE No comments/observations were made. Application: 23/02363/FULL Proposal: Conversion of detached garage into bedroom and link to dwelling

	<p>Address: Lower Green Cottage , Back Road, Sandhurst, Kent, TN18 5JS No comments/observations were made.</p> <p>Application: 23/01504/FULL</p> <p>Proposal: Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of replacement single storey rear extension</p> <p>Address: 25 Stream Pit Lane, Sandhurst, Kent, TN18 5LB No comments/observations were made.</p>
18.	Correspondence to the Clerk Email received regarding lack enforcement on Appeal A Ref: APP/M2270/C/20/3246942 Appeal B Ref: APP/M2270/C/20/3246943 Land south of Oakland's Farm, Bodiam Road, Sandhurst, Kent TN18 5LE Email received regarding Wealden Wheels Community Transport Group - more information regarding costs would be needed before a decision could be made re PC's support.
19.	Public Intervention One member of the public commented on inconsiderate parking in the village.
16.	Date of Next Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 October 2023 • 14 November 2023 • 05 December 2023 - Precept Meeting • 12 December 2023

Julie Horan

Clerk to Sandhurst Parish Council

CC: For Information

County Cllr Seán Holden
Borough Cllr Godfrey Bland
Borough Cllr Ellen Neville