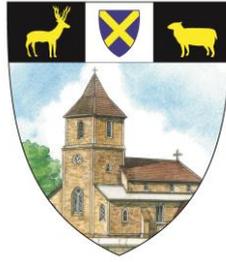


Sandridge Parish Council



Marshalswick Community Centre,
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St.Albans,
Herts
AL4 9TU

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5th November 2020

To : Councillors Janet Churchard, Geoff Churchard, Claudio Duran, John Foster, John Newton-Davies, James Lancaster, Graham Leonard, Neil Harris, John Hale (Chair), Patsy Cann, Lyn Bolton, Jennifer Roberts, Jon Hegerty

You are summoned to attend a meeting of Sandridge Parish Council, to be held via video conference in accordance with The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 on Wednesday 11th November 2020 at 7.30 pm

Simon Thwaites
Parish Clerk

Members of the public and press are invited to attend this meeting via Zoom video conferencing and using meeting reference number **839 9619 0642** and key **806687**. Alternatively, questions or concerns may be submitted to the Clerk in advance of the meeting via email using clerk@sandridge-pc.gov.uk or by post, address as above.

A G E N D A

- 1. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**
 - a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda
 - b) To receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests; and
 - c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate
- 3. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 14th OCTOBER 2020**

4. QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

- 4.1 Public Participation - An opportunity for residents to raise issues or ask Members questions.
- 4.2 Questions to the officers.

5. CLERK'S REPORTS

5.1 Monthly Accounts.

Please find attached for approval a schedule of creditor payments to be made for the period 15th October to 11th November 2020. It is;

Proposed

To approve the attached schedule for payment on 13th November 2020.

5.2 Co-option to Casual Vacancy

Members are aware of the casual vacancy left on the Parish Council left by the resignation of Julie Booth and the unsuccessful co-option held on September 9th. The vacant seat has again been advertised by the District Council, thereby giving the electorate an opportunity to call an election within the prescribed period. No election has been requested and so the vacancy has been advertised again by the Parish Office with a closing date of November 2nd.

There has been one application as contained within your agenda pack. Should the applicant elect to join the meeting electronically he/she is entitled to briefly address the Council but Members are not able to ask questions. Once the applicant has been given an opportunity to speak, Members will be asked to vote. Please refer to the Procedure for Co-opting a Councillor recently sent to Members for further information on voting.

5.3 Jersey Farm Open Space

The Clerk has been in correspondence with colleagues at the District Council regarding taking transfer of the Jersey Farm Open Space. There has previously been an option for the Parish Council to take transfer of the entire site but excluding the lagoon, the maintenance of which has been of concern. District Council officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Heritage and Public Realm are now of the opinion that it would be problematic to separate the two assets and that a transfer of the whole would therefore be the sole available option.

The Clerk is informed that it is intended to desilt the lagoon this year at a cost of circa £6,000 and with an estimate by District Council officers of fifteen years before further maintenance is required. For information, the annual cost of maintaining the entire open space is estimated to be £5,000-£6,000. For one final time it is;

Recommended

That members vote on whether to proceed with an application to take transfer of the open space and lagoon.

5.4 Members Allowances

It is a requirement of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 that any Town or Parish Council which proposes to pay a parish basic allowance and/or a travelling and subsistence allowance to any of its members must refer its proposals to a parish remuneration panel for consideration and to have regard to any recommendations which a panel may make.

Members will want to review the existing policy of a single allowance to the Chair, no allowances to ordinary Members and a travel and sustenance schedule in accordance with that used by the District Council (2018/19 rates) It is;

Recommended

That Members review the attached policy with a view to re-affirming that travel and subsistence allowances are to be paid in accordance with that used by the District Council for the forthcoming year (as per the existing policy).

5.5 **Heartwood Forrest Management Plan**

An electronic version of the draft Heartwood Forrest Management Plan was sent to councillors on October 30th. A 28 day consultation on the plan began on November 4th and the Parish Council may therefore want to submit an opinion.

6. **Matters of Note**

- A number of bat boxes have been installed in the Woodland Park and elsewhere.
- A joint venture between the Sandridge Cricket Club and the Parish Council to secure funding from Sport England to replace cricket nets at Spencer Meadow has received an agreement in principle. This carries a value of £10,000 with the remaining costs to be met by the club.
- The exercise to identify dead trees on verges throughout Marshalswick and identify locations for new trees to be planted continues through the Project Officer.
- Members of the Parish Office were given a tour of the District Council's CCTV Control Centre last month. This provided a better understanding of the purpose of CCTV in the parish and the district in general. It also informed staff of the process for retrieving data and when it was appropriate to do so.
- The Parish Council's internal audit took place on November 4th. This will be reported on at the December meeting of Full Council.
- Completion of the new planter on the Bolingbrook roundabout has been delayed pending further discussion with Herts County Council over maintenance issues.

7. **COUNCILLOR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

7.1 **Finance Committee Meeting 26th October 2020 – Proposals for 2021/22 Budget**

At a meeting of the Finance Committee held on 26th October 2020, the following matters were discussed;

7.1(i) **2020/21 Budgetary Control**

Projected outturn for 2020/21 is £305,465. This is £6,835 in excess of budget, however, budgets totaling £20,290 were brought forward from last year to fund unfinished projects such as the skate ramp. The net projected outturn for 2020/2021 is therefore £13,455 under the original budget. A prudent approach has been taken to projecting centres income for the remainder of the year, however, additional government restrictions effective from 5th November may still prove estimates to have been overstated. Please see Appendix 1 for details of variances.

7.1(ii) **2021/22 Draft Budget**

The draft budget for 2021/22 was reviewed (Appendix 1). In summary, draft net expenditure for 2021/2022 is £311,670. This is an increase of £13,040 (4%) on the current year's budget. The draft budget is a combination of ongoing operational expenditure and new capital projects including an enhanced budget for the Summer event and funding towards a cycle trail within the Jersey Farm Adventure Playground.

7.1(iii) **6 Year Model**

The attached six-year financial model gives an overview of the draft budget in Appendix 1. The Parish Council should ensure when setting budgets that the level of net expenditure will not create difficulties in maintaining reserves to an acceptable level in future years. The projection supports both the recommended precept (item 5.3(iv)) and the recommended draft budget (item 5.3(ii)).

7.1(iv) **2021/22 Draft Reserves, Precept and Funding Requirement**

Appendix 2 details the opening and projected closing position on reserves. Please note that the General Reserve balance assumes the 2020/2021 budget is spent with no over/under spend, i.e. without adjustment. It is also assumed that a 2.5% increase on the 2020/2021 precept is applied and that general reserves of £27,161 will be used to support the 2021/2022 budget (includes £18,000 towards the pension deficit).

It should be noted that Sandridge Parish Council continues to raise one of the lowest precepts in the district and economic challenges in future years will impact more if we fail to maintain balances reduced by the pension deficit (see Appendix 3).

The Finance Committee;

Recommends

1. That an increase on the 2020/21 precept of 2.5% is approved.
2. That the draft 2021/22 budget as attached is approved by Full Council.

7.2 £3,000 Bequest

Councillor Roberts to provide an update on ideas provided by Members of how to best use this bequest, left to the Parish Council towards the provision of a bench/trees.

7.3 Neighbourhood Plan

A verbal update from Councillor John Hale.

7.4 School Admissions Policies

Please see attached a report and recommendation by Councillor John Hale on school admissions policies.

7.5 Christmas Tree in Marshalswick

Please see attached a report and recommendation by Councillor John Hale.

8. Grant Applications

There have been no applications this month.

9. Meetings of Committees (all held remotely):

- Finance Committee 26th October 2020
- Planning Committee 29th October 2020

10. MATTERS OF NOTE ARISING SINCE THE CIRCULATION OF THE AGENDA

The Council may not make decisions under this item

11. PLANNING MATTERS

Sandridge Parish Council's Planning Committee meets every three weeks to review and respond to planning applications received from the Planning Authority, St. Albans District Council.

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.

Planning applications objected to since the last Full Council meeting are as below;

- 49 Villiers Crescent, St Albans - Planning Application: 5/2020/1742
- 159a St Albans Road, Sandridge - Planning Application 5/2020/1785.

12. SUGGESTIONS AND/OR MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

Note: In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, the Parish Council meeting will be open to the Public unless the Parish Council resolves otherwise

Next meeting date – Wednesday 9th December 2020