



SANDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Met at Marshalswick Community Centre on Wednesday 9th June 2021 at 7.30pm for a meeting of The Council

PRESENT:

Councillors John Hale (Chair), Neil Harris, Jenny Roberts, Janet Churchard, Geoff Churchard, Graham Leonard, June Reid, Jon Hegerty, John Foster, Claudio Duran

APOLOGIES:

Councillors Lyn Bolton, John Newton Davies, Patsy Cann

OFFICERS:

Simon Thwaites, Parish Clerk
Emma Hostler, Deputy Clerk
Rebecca Pannese, Project and Amenities Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

District Councillor Raj Visram, One member of the public

5120 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There was none.

5121 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 5th May 2021.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5th May 2021 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

5122 Questions to the Officers

There was none.

5123 Public Participation

Ms Georgina Cooper, a resident of St Albans Road, raised the urgent issue of traffic calming from The King William PH, through Sandridge village and beyond.

Several potential calming measures were discussed. Ms Cooper agreed to send the Parish Clerk details of preferred solutions. She also informed the council of a public meeting to be held at Carpenters Nursery on June 18th at 5pm which Bim Afolami MP and County Councillor Annie Brewster were attending. It was agreed that a letter should be sent from the Parish Council to the CEO and Leader of Hertfordshire County Council copied to County Cllrs Brewster and Hale with the local county councillors to be asked to provide an update on progress to Full Council in September.

CLERK'S REPORTS

5124 Monthly Accounts

Members reviewed a schedule of creditor payments due for the period 6th May 2021 to 9th June 2021. A question was asked and responded to before it was unanimously;

Resolved

To approve creditor payments as detailed on the schedule.

5125 Code of Conduct

Members reviewed an updated version of the Local Government Association's model code of conduct. It was noted that there is currently a national petition to the Government to re-introduce a process through which a councillor may be suspended or removed from office in extreme circumstances. The Clerk was asked to forward details of the petition to members. It was unanimously;

Resolved

To adopt the new Code of Conduct as circulated.

5126 Committee Membership

The following committee vacancies were reviewed;

Finance Committee – taken by Councillor Janet Churchard.

Sports and Recreation Committee – taken by Councillor Claudio Duran.

Nomansland Management Committee – Reserve place – not filled.

Human Resources Committee – Confirmation of places and proposal to increase membership.

HR Committee membership was confirmed as;

Councillors John Hale, Claudio Duran, Jenny Roberts, Neil Harris, Jon Hegerty.

Following discussion it was unanimously,

Resolved

To increase membership of the HR Committee to five.

5127 Review of Financial Regulations

It was noted that the Financial Regulations were reviewed by the Finance Committee on 24th May and that a single amendment, increasing the amount the Clerk is able to transfer between Sandridge Parish Council accounts from £20,000 to £100,000 was agreed. It was;

Resolved

To re-adopt the Financial Regulations as amended above for the forthcoming year.

5128 2020/2021 Internal Audit Report

It was noted that the previously circulated internal audit report was reviewed by the Finance Committee on May 24th. It was acknowledged that the audit opinion is unqualified with no action points resulting. It was unanimously;

Resolved

To formally note the report and its contents.

5129 2020/21 Final Accounts, Internal Audit report and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

A set of Accounts compiled by George Street Accountants, together with a copy of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31st March 2021 were sent to Members on April 29th. The Council noted that the final Accounts for 2020/21 have been approved by the Internal Auditor who has also signed the AGAR. These were duly signed by the Chair and Clerk.

It was noted that the budgetary outturn for 2020/21 was reported to the Finance Committee meeting on 24th May 2021 and showed an overspend of £5,147. This figure includes expenditure of approximately £20,000 on items brought forward from 2019/20.

Having noted the period during which members of the public are able to raise issues of concern with the external auditor, it was unanimously;

Resolved

To formally note that the period for the Exercise of Public Rights is June 14th to July 23rd 2021. It was further;

Resolved

That Sandridge Parish Council acknowledges responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, and confirm that to the best of its knowledge and belief, with respect to the Council's Statement of Accounts for year ended 31st March 2021, the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement should be approved by the Council and that the Chair and the Parish Clerk (as RFO) should sign Section 1 of the AGAR. The statements within Section 1 were also reviewed by the Finance Committee on May 24th. It was further;

Resolved

That Sandridge Parish Council confirms that to the best of its knowledge, the 2020/21 Accounting Statements contained in the Annual Return, plus the explanation of variances made available at the meeting represent the financial position of the Council for the year ended 31st March 2021 and that the Chair and the Parish Clerk (RFO) should each sign Section 2 of the AGAR. Section 2 was also reviewed by the Finance Committee on May 24th.

5130 Traffic Calming

See item 5123.

5131 Asset Transfers/Provision of a Bike Trail

It was noted that, on May 26th, the Clerk and Councillor John Hale had a meeting with Tom Hardy, Estate Services Manager at St Albans District Council and District Councillor Anthony Rowland, Chair of the Public Realm Committee at the District Council to discuss the potential devolution of assets to the Parish Council and the proposed bike trail on Jersey Farm Open Space. The Clerk informed the meeting that he's awaiting costings on the maintenance of the Jersey Farm Open Space and the Wheat Close playground before reporting back to Ful Council with a view to recommending an application for the devolution of those assets. It was noted that the District Council has no objection in principle to the proposed alternative location of the bike trail.

5132 Matters of Note

- Repairs to vandalism of the skate ramp have been carried out following a successful claim to the Parish Council's insurers.
- Councillor James Lancaster resigned from the Parish Council on May 31st. The Parish Office has notified the District Council to begin the 14 day period during which an election may be called. If no election is called the Parish Office will move to advertise the casual vacancy for co-option. The Chair thanked James for his contribution to the Parish Council.
- On 24th May the Finance Committee released general reserves of up to £10,000 to fund artificial turf at Marshalswick Community Centre.
- Bim Afolami MP will be visiting the Parish Council's community garden on June 25th.

COUNCILLOR AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

5133 Grant Applications

- St John Fisher School

After due consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Leonard and seconded by Councillor Duran that the Council award a grant of £5,000 towards additional accommodation. It was unanimously;

Resolved

To make the award.

Payment is to be made when most of the remainder of the funding required has been secured. It was noted that the school could also seek a further grant at that time. The Clerk was authorised to make payment when these conditions were met. The award was made using the General Power of Competence.

- Sandridge 10K
It was unanimously;

Resolved

To award the sum of £500 under the General Power of Competence towards event running costs.

5134 Christmas Lights in Sandridge Village

Councillor Roberts and the Project and Amenities Officer provided a verbal update on progress in providing Christmas lights in Sandridge Village. It was noted that there have been significant obstacles to overcome in securing licenses to establish a power source at a suitable highways location but that they were confident overcoming these before Christmas.

5135 Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

Councillor John Hale provided a verbal update on the Sandridge Neighbourhood Plan Referendum result. It was noted that, following the successful referendum, the Plan was due to be approved by the District Council in July.

5136 Meetings of Committees:

There were no issues raised from the following draft committee minutes produced since the last Full Council.

- Planning Committee 13th May, 3rd June 2021
- Combined Community Centres Committee 20th May 2021
- Finance Committee 24th May 2021

5137 Planning Matters

No significant issues were raised. It was noted that the Planning Committee had objected to/commented on the following application since last Full Council.

5/2021/1185 - 17 Evans Grove, St Albans

5138 MATTERS OF NOTE ARISING SINCE THE CIRCULATION OF THE AGENDA

- It was noted that the ParkRun held on the Jersey Farm Woodland Park is due to recommence on June 26th.
- The Community Garden Open Food Garden Scheme event will take place on June 23rd at Marshalswick Community Centre between 6pm and 8pm.
- The Bolingbrook Roundabout raised bed has finally been planted. Thanks were given to Councillor Leonard and the Project and Amenities Officer for their considerable hard work.

5139 SUGGESTIONS AND/OR MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Parliamentary Boundary Review Consultation.
- To consider a Queen’s Jubilee Event next year at the Jersey Farm Woodland Park
- Co-option to the vacant Council seat

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Sandridge Parish Council will be held on Wednesday, July 14th at 7.30pm at Marshalswick Community Centre.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Chair

Date

Cllr John Hale