



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 10 September 2024

In Attendance:

Cllr Mark Griggs (Chairman) MG	Ms Caroline Wood (CW)
Cllr David Rogers (DR)	Julie Horan (Clerk) (JH)
Cllr Katherine O'Neil (KO)	Borough Cllr Ellen Neville (EN)
Cllr Julie Griggs (JG)	Borough Cllr Tom Dawlings (TD)
Cllr Denis O'Neil (DO)	County Cllr Sean Holden
Cllr Adam Kerry (AK)	Members of Public - 4

Item:	
1.	Apologies for Absence
	Cllr Christopher Robinson (Vice-Chairman) (CR), Borough Cllr Beverley Palmer (BP)
2.	Declarations of Interest
	Councillors were reminded that they must inform the Monitoring Officer of any changes to their Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR Allotments • AK Planning – Applicant is a friend
3.	Approval of Minutes
	To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11 June 2024 are a true record of the meeting. Members were reminded the only issue relating to the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR proposed; CW seconded and it was agreed by those present that the minutes were a true record of the meeting. To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 09 July 2024 are a true record of the meeting. Members were reminded the only issue relating to the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR proposed; CW seconded and it was agreed by those present that the minutes were a true record of the meeting.
4.	Councillor Intervention
	Cllr Sean Holden: The county council is assessing the situation as far as the new government is concerned, one of the most notable things is the proposal to increase

the housing allocation by 58% in the Tunbridge Wells Borough, which has implications for infrastructure. There has been a lot of talk about support for buses but no evidence of any money. We are also looking at the meaning of the VAT imposed on private schools. Kent has 95 independent schools with 19,000 pupils, and it is estimated that those schools with fewer than 200 pupils will be vulnerable to closing, 2/3 of the prep schools in Kent have fewer than 200 pupils which will have a knock-on effect on state schools.

Cllr Ellen Neville: The telephone box book exchange has had a spruce up, we would like to purchase some adhesive signage, which the council was happy with. The Sandhurst Climate Action Group, we have had two meetings so far and that has enabled us to access some time from the sustainability person at the borough council who has given us lots of information on what parish councils can do in terms of leading by example, how to manage open spaces and church yards and also have some influence on public transport.

Cllr Tom Dawlins: Just wanted to pick up on HIPS, at the annual Benenden Parish meeting the councillor responsible for HIPS, said they can give you exactly the same report as last year as we have still heard nothing back from KCC. I have to say I am increasingly sceptical about Highway Improvement Plans. The issue I have been pursuing through August with the Head of Planning was the changes in the planning numbers for Tunbridge Wells which are about to go up from 650 dwellings per year to over a 1000 dwellings per year. I take a lot of comfort from the protections of the AONB, the borough council has plans for the garden village in Tudeley for 2,500 houses, which I am sure will be dusted off again. My hope is we can protect our part of the borough.

5. Finance and accounts

Accounts
 To approve accounts retrospectively for payment from 01 July 2024 to 31 July 2024 & 01 August 2024 to 31 August 2024
 To receive details of receipts from 01 July 2024 to 31 July 2024 & 01 August 2024 to 31 August 2024

- DR proposed to agree payments and receipts for July & August; KO seconded - all present agreed.

To note the bank reconciliation at 31 July 2024 & 31 August 2024

- CR confirmed before the meeting that the reconciliations had been checked and signed.

To review forecast:
 The forecast dated 08-Sep-2024 shows a projected year-end deficit of £5,017.07 against the target of £23,608.75. However, this includes allowances for expenditures that might not be required, or that might be less than forecast, as follows:
 6135 Unauthorised Encampments £1,100
 6075 Professional Advice – Legal £1,000
 5003 Infrastructure Improvements (speed signs) £9,000
 5025 Defibrillators maintenance (solar panels) £500
 3005 Rubbish Collection £6,850
 6005 Audit and Accountancy £1,006 (Mazars invoice likely to be c. £600)
 This totals an overestimate of up to £18,000, so I believe the forecast is robust.
 Also please note that there is an allowance of £14,770 for adult exercise equipment which represents a maximum spend. I have no information about possible grant support for this project.

	<p>The West Kent Rural Grant of £14,750 applied for to support the car park resurfacing will come before the Grant Panel on 17th September and we should be informed of the decision within three weeks.</p> <p>Financial Regulations: There are new model Financial Regulations, JH to review and circulate before the next meeting.</p> <p>Allotment Rent Charges for 2024/25 This was discussed at length.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AK proposed to raise the allotment rent to 00.33p per m2 from 29th September 2025; JG Seconded of those present 4 agreed, KO & DO objected and DR abstained. <p>Review the External Annual Audit Report from Mazars: The external auditor's report and cover letter were circulated before the meeting. The following points were made:</p> <p>The Council were unable to provide meeting minutes which evidenced the Council's decision to reappoint the internal auditor for 2023/24.</p> <p>In future, the Council should ensure that decisions regarding the appointment or reappointment of the internal auditor are appropriately minuted.</p> <p>JH will ensure the appointment of the Internal Auditor is brought before the council in January/February each year.</p> <p>Email management: The Practitioner's Guide (March 2024), points 5.210 and 5.211 respectively state that: All Parish, Town and Community Councils are eligible to use, and are advised to use, a .gov.uk domain for their websites and email communications. Your community, suppliers and partners will now reasonably expect a local council to have a .gov.uk domain name.</p> <p>To assist with compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), it is advised that clerks provide official .gov.uk email accounts to their councillors, which must only be used for official council business.</p> <p>Accessibility regulations We are aware that the Accounts and Audit Regulations requirement for a physical 'wet ink' signature on the original AGAR, does not allow parish councils to fully comply with the Accessibility Regulations. The National Audit Office are aware that the two pieces of legislation are not compatible, therefore smaller authorities are advised to make it clear on their website that the document is a scan and will not be fully compliant with the Accessibility Regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KO proposed to accept the findings of the External Auditor's report; DO seconded – all present agreed
6.	<p>OSH/Playing Field Car Park/Pavilion</p> <p>Painting OSH: Work has started and is continuing. A scaffold is required for the side elevation of the OSH, DR has said he would expect it to cost around £500 / £600</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DR proposed to spend a maximum of £800 on scaffold; AK seconded – all present agreed <p>Dean has provided a quote of £675 to paint the railings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DR proposed to accept the price of £675; AK seconded - all present agreed <p>A quote for £750 was received for the rebuilding of the front pier at the OSH</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DR proposed to accept the price of £750; AK seconded – all present agreed Academy Flooring OSH were the winning bid for the renovation of the OSH floor, the price of Oak has increased since the quote was made the original quote has gone up by £1189 MG proposed to accept the increase; DR seconded – all present agreed The SPF Community Grant application has been successful, this is to replace the water heater in the kitchen and for replacing the lights in the hall with LED and the addition of spotlights. <p>The pavilion loft hatch lock, a new padlock has been purchased by DR costing £8.99</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AK proposed to reimburse DR £8.99; MG seconded – all present agreed <p>Carpark at playing fields – carried forward to next meeting Car Park Barrier – Allocation of keys; AK, Football Club, Cricket Club, CR</p>
7.	Old Orchard Play Area/Adult Gym Equipment
	<p>Old Orchard Play Area – all looking good, new turf has been laid where required. Playdale have said there was more earth/rubbish to take away from the area than originally planned and an extra skip was required at a cost of £550.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MG proposed to accept this extra cost; DR seconded – 6 agreed, CW abstained <p>Bow top fencing at Old Orchard Play Area – quotes circulated via email</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JG proposed to retrospectively accept quote C £5180; DR seconded – all present agreed <p>Adult Gym Equipment: Quotes were circulated although the quotes were not on the same basis. CW, MG, JG, CR & KO met with three companies, The Outdoor Gym Company (the Rolls Royce of outdoor equipment, made in the UK), The Sunshine Gym & Sovereign. CW & JG to look at grant funding to boost the amount available to spend on the equipment.</p> <p>Rospa Play Area Report: The Tanyard report was disregarded as Playground has been refurbished since the inspection was undertaken.</p> <p>The Marsh Quarter Lane report: JH to forward the report to a play area suppliers to obtain costs for the remedy of items flagged in the report.</p> <p>Playing Field Gate: Bolt missing, AK to investigate</p> <p>To review quote received from George Harding for the erection of various signs and replace small part of car park fence at Playing Fields. To replace two posts and 1 Chestnut rail £260; To install Signage on metal posts (3) £330</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DR proposed to accept the quote of £590; MG seconded – all present agreed
8.	Speed Watch
	<p>During July and August, we did seven sessions, recording 155 offenders out of 1,757 vehicles passing.</p> <p>This is 8.8% but includes a session at Bodiam Road where no offenders were recorded out of 67 passing vehicles.</p>
9.	Neighbourhood Plan
	<p>We have had responses to the draft plan from Sandhurst residents that the PC is already dealing with, and very detailed ones from TWBC & KCC on several issues. There were around 14 emailed responses from the agencies contacted and 12 via Survey Monkey.</p> <p>Both the above councils offered advice about supporting terminology, as well as drawing attention to council policy for inclusion or reference.</p> <p>TWBC had most issues with the Design Code Document. Alison Eardley will take this up with Ben Castell from AECOM in preparation for a Teams meeting with herself,</p>

	<p>some of the steering group and the TW representative who is overall responsible for Np's. This meeting is scheduled for this Thursday.</p> <p>The correspondence regarding the proposed green space classification alongside Millers Meadow from the Clarendon Homes contact was described by Alison Eardley as the most unpleasant she had encountered when dealing with Neighbourhood Plans.</p>
10.	Parish Council Insurance
	<p>The Parish Council insurance is due for renewal at the end of September. Three companies have been contacted for quotes, but so far only our current insurer has supplied a quote. The quote supplied is on the same basis we have been insured over the last four years. One year premium is £2,297 or an LTA (3 years) is £2,115.39 (providing nothing changes the premium should be similar for each of the three years).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR proposed to accept the 3 year quote on the basis that none of the other quotes requested (when they arrive) are significantly lower; MG seconded – all present agreed
11.	Defibrillators
	<p>Four of the Parish defibrillators require new primary batteries around November time at a cost of £264.65 each and new electrodes in February costing £150 each set. These four defibrillators are due to be replaced during the latter part of 2025. JG will look at the possibility of grants available.</p>
12.	HIP (Highway Improvement Plan)
	<p>The HIP was mentioned by Cllr Tom Dawlings earlier in the meeting. CR is drafting a response to the KCC Road Safety and Active Travel Newsletter (April – June) which does not reflect our council's experience at all. This will be sent as a complaint to KCC to which will be added a detailed account of our treatment by the County Council.</p>
13.	Planning
	<p>Application: 24/01897/FULL Proposal: Conversion of barn to dwelling with associated access, amenity, and landscaping. and part demolition of the adjacent barn. Address: Boxhurst Farm, Boxhurst, Sandhurst, Cranbrook, Kent, TN18 5PE Comments due: 4 September 2024 – Extension until 12th September 2024 This application was discussed and there were no comments made.</p>
14.	Noticeboard – Sandhurst Cross
	<p>The noticeboard has been repaired using recycled materials, thank you to Cllr and Mr Wood for doing the repairs.</p>
15.	John Fowle Trust
	<p>DO gave a brief background on the charity. The PC wanted to confirm the appointment of Denis O'Neil as the representative of the Parish Council and Mrs Maureen Relf to be recognised as the second representative on the John Fowle Trust Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MG proposed that Denis O'Neil and Maureen Relf be nominated as representatives; JG seconded – all present agreed
16.	Correspondence to the clerk

Email: 7th September 2024 - This morning, as I write this, the kitchen extractor fan at the OSH is in operation and producing strong cooking smells, venting onto our patio which technically it shouldn't as it is contrary to building regulations and constitutes a trespass.

Previously it has not been in use, so we have not had cause to complain, but obviously, if it is to be in use from time to time, then it will need to be suitably vented so that it is not over our property and not producing strong cooking smells.

Although rarely used, DR will investigate having the vent relocated.

Email Katherine O'Neil – 4th September 2024

I have had a request from an allotment holder along the following lines they were wondering if there would be any possibility the PC would allow them to let our neighbour cultivate one of the beds on our plot.

The lady is as passionate about flowers and veg as us but really doesn't get much free time with young children and working part-time and certainly no time to take on a small plot currently. It would be lovely to let her just potter on one small section to start with, so she is under no pressure whilst we carry on maintaining everything else.

The Parish Council does not object to the plot holder allowing their neighbour to tend part of their plot, providing they comply with their tenancy agreement and the person they are allowing to work on their plot is also aware of the Tenancy Agreement and agrees to comply with the conditions of that agreement. There should be NO secondary tenancy agreement put in place. If any extra keys are required, it will be up to the plot holder to provide them.

Email: Newenden PC – 2nd September 2024

I'm writing to let you know that we have had a request from a Newenden resident to look into the overgrown pathway that enables walkers/runners to get to Sandhurst.

The area of concern is just after the sign that sits as you exit Newenden and enter Sandhurst. I have suggested that this resident contact you directly to see if you can help in any way and offer them advice as to where they go to get this matter addressed. I have walked this route and at this section, you do have to leave the path as it is blocked with brambles/nettles/overgrown hedging and walk into the main road, which is dangerous. I have attached a couple of photographs for your reference.

This item has been reported to KCC and a link sent to the sender of this email to enable them to report it.

Email: Sandhurst Resident – 31 Aug 24

As discussed, I am pleased to report that the fence to the rear of my property that backs onto the allotments has now been mended. Apologies this has taken longer than the allotment holders had hoped.

I am keen to get a view from the parish council regarding another part of my fence, this is the section that divides our property from the playground. These fence panels are frequently subject to vandalism and in a poor state of repair as children climb over the fence to retrieve footballs etc. I understand that the playground has been allocated funds for a refit and I wonder whether my fence panels could be considered as part of this work.

Thank you to the resident for carrying out the repairs. The other part of the fence mentioned is the responsibility of the landowner and no funds are available from the PC for repairs/replacement. If there is vandalism, then it should be reported to the police.

	<p>Email: Wednesday 28th August 2024 Does the parish have any first aid training or able to organise some for residents? <i>The PC did ask people to contact the clerk if they wanted defibrillator training (a minimum of 15 names were required), so far only one request received.</i></p> <p>Email: 26 August 2024 Hello, I wonder if you know the actual closure dates of the Newenden/Northiam Bridge which I believe is now next year for 3 months? Do you know if they will be providing a crossing for pedestrians and cyclists/ motorcyclists? Have any attempts been made to get the bridge done in one month by using more engineers and working 24/7? <i>Sandhurst PC have not received any notifications regarding the bridge, Newenden PC or KCC will have more information.</i></p> <p>Email: 9th August 2024 Can u build a pump track for bikes and scooters a skateboards somewhere in Sandhurst for all of the kids. <i>Unfortunately, there is no budget available for this at present.</i></p>
	Public intervention
	<p>Member of the public said that the footpath maps had run out and the footpaths were overgrown. <i>PC Response: Members of the public are encouraged to report any overgrown footpaths to Kent County Council Public Rights of Way (PROW). The Infrastructure Committee walked all the footpaths in the parish and have raised repair requests. The PROW officer did come down and we were told only three officers were covering Kent and there is a huge backlog of cases.</i> <i>Footpath Maps: Due to copyright issues, we are unable to provide the footpath maps.</i></p>
22.	Date of Next Meeting
	<p>08 October 2024 12 November 2024 03 December 2024 – Precept meeting 10 December 2024</p>

Mark Griggs
Chair, Sandhurst Parish Council

CC: For Information
County Cllr Seán Holden
Borough Cllr Ellen Neville
Borough Cllr Beverley Palmer
Borough Cllr Tom Dawlings