

SANDFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held at Sandford Parish Hall, on Thursday 5th December 2024, at 8.00pm.

At a meeting of the Council held this day those present were :-

Chair Cllr R Ward

Parish Councillors: J Stephens, B Fyfe, R Stoye, D Crosby, S Pope, L Hooper, and P Larcombe.

MDDC Cllr M Jenkins DCC Cllr M Squires

Plus, 5 Members of the Public (part of the Meeting)

- 1) The Chair welcomed all including members of the public.
- 2) Apologies Cllrs Miles, Sandys, Hope, Crooke, and MDDC Cllr H Tufnell
- 3) Declarations of Interest - None
- 3) The MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting, held on 7th November 2024, were agreed and Signed by the Chair as a correct record.
Proposed Cllr Fyfe, 2nd Stephens, and carried
- 5) Open Forum - Items raised
 - a) The continued state of the road, and the mud on the road, out of the Village towards West Sandford was raised by a Parishioner.
He had written to SPC in the past and was annoyed that his letter had been passed on to the Munday Family.
He felt it was time for SPC to take local action with posters, blockading the road etc.
The Chair advised him that SPC were unable to take such action.
DCC Cllr M Squires advised that the much-needed improvements were on the relevant DCC List. It was hoped to carry out these works in the next financial year 2025/2026.
 - b) Charlie Werner reported that there would be Celebrations for 25th Anniversary of the Millennium Green on 21st June 2025
 - c) DCC Road Warden Scheme – Di Martin asked for more details of this Scheme and was advised that DCC provided training and tools etc

6) Matters arising

- a) Public seats – No progress.

RW

- b) Noticeboard bottom of Rose and Crown Hill - The various options were discussed. The Chair had obtained a quote from a local carpenter to replace the wooden noticeboard for £2000.
Cllr Crosby felt this was excessive. It would be adequate to replace the Noticeboard with a metal frame one similar to the one at New Buildings.
It was agreed to contact Nick Unstead to ask for his feedback on this Noticeboard. It would be necessary before making any changes to consult with Mrs Pugsley the owner of the wall.
The Clerk reminded SPC that the location was in the Sandford Conservation area
- c) Training session for “365 Office” - As this had failed to materialise it was agreed to delete this from future agendas. DC
- d) New SPC Website
Progressing and hopefully to be completed early in the New Year DC
- e) New gov.uk email addresses for Councillors
Progressing and hopefully to be completed early in the New Year DC
- f) Setting up a Sandford Speed-watch group
The Chair reported that a number of Volunteers had come forward and a meeting would be arranged in the New Year.
He felt this was also an issue for surrounding Parishes and suggested that this could be dealt with as a matter at one of the “Crediton Cluster Meetings”. RW
- g) Neighbourhood Planning – Actions from the previous meeting were noted. No further action to report at the present time. Parishioners were asking what next? RW
- h) Suggested Donation to the Millennium Green for Weeding duties
£300 was proposed by Cllr Stephens, 2nd Cllr Hooper, and carried

7) Committee feedback from Meetings including any matters to be ratified by the Parish Council: -

Review of Committees – (To include Cllr S Pope)

Play Area - Cllrs D Hope, B Fyfe, and Cllr S Pope

Finance Committee - Cllrs S Miles, D Hope, P Larcombe, and J Stephens

Planning - Cllrs S Miles, P Larcombe, B Fyfe, and J Stephens

Communication and Projects – Cllrs Hooper, D Crosby, P Sandys, J Stephens and S Pope
(Plus, Chair “Ex Officio” on all Committees)

a) Planning Committee – No Meetings had taken place. JS

b) Finance Committee * SM

The major item for discussion at the Meeting on 3rd December 2024 had been the Precept/Budget for 2025/ 2026 for recommendation for Adoption by the Parish Council later on the agenda (Item 15).

This had been made difficult as Committee Chairs had not submitted their Bids for 2025/2026.

Also, their explanations for the 2024/2025 Budget underspends and how these were to be dealt with.

Other items discussed had included: -

Lloyds Bank Account – From January 15th 2025 the Bank would start making a monthly charge of £4.25, plus cheque charges.

Alternative Banking had been researched and it had been found that other Banks already operated these charges.

It was proposed to stay with Lloyds Bank, and also close the Pavilion Account which would also attract these charges.

Proposed Cllr Miles, 2nd Cllr Stephens, and carried.

It was agreed to review this in 6 months

MDDC - Details of the breakdown of the cost of Casual Election had been received.

An invoice would follow for £5679.62.

Concern was expressed over the high cost which meant that each vote cast (254) had cost £22.71.

Although it was accepted this was the “Cost of Democracy” it was felt that the charges seemed very high in contrast to the cost of the MDDC/SPC Elections in 2023 (£1917).

It was pointed out that SPC had previously advertised Casual Vacancies and as no requests had been made for an Election had Co-opted from interested parties.

c) Communications Committee * DC

A meeting had taken place on 28th November 2024 and items discussed had included the updating of the SPC Website, new gov.uk email addresses for Parish Councillor’s, and finances.

d) Play Area Committee – Suggestions were made to identify someone to carry out the issues identified in the 2024 ROSPA Report including the gate openings etc.

Cllr Stephens agreed to contact Tom Lee for his advice.

The installation of the Basketball hoop was still awaited.

The Clerk, as Responsible Finance Officer, recorded his concerns that the cost for these works had been paid up front some time ago and the installation was still awaited.

He was assured that this was not a problem.

Cllrs Ward and Crosby were now making regular Safety Inspections DH

e) Projects Committee *

A Meeting had taken place on the 18th November 2024 when the following items had been discussed - Weavers Way / Furlongs Footpath, VE Celebration plans/ideas, Drainage Football Pitch, Shute stream jetting, Scout Hut plans to improve condition and Neighbourhood Plan update. PS

f) Staffing Committee - The Disciplinary and Grievance Policy had been discussed and was ongoing. BF

(* Minutes had been Posted on the Sandford Parish Council Website)

8) Planning

24/01687/ Land and Buildings at NGR 284069 101787 Long Barn
Erection of an agricultural livestock building Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 284030 / 101842
Cllr Stephens took this application away to study.

Grants of permission: -

24/01357/LBC Sandford Ash Copplestone – LBC for roof replacement with natural slate

24/00925/FULL Roxgates New Buildings - Erection of roof over dung midden

24/01137/HOUSE Old Frogmire Sandford – Erection of single storey extension

24/02575/LBC The Old Manse Sandford - LBC for replacement roof and installation of roof lights

24/01146/HOUSE Burrough Cleave New Buildings Sandford
Erection of a two-storey extension to side of building and single storey extension to rear to replace existing conservatory

24/01102/FULL “Crofts Estate” Sandford Change of description – Creation of 2 parking spaces

9) Items for Discussion / Proposals

- a) Review of Standing Orders - This was still proceeding. SM/PL/RW
Review of Governance Statement -No update.

- b) It was agreed to delete this item from future agendas
Review of the Sandford Emergency – No update. DD/JS
- c) “Dog Mess” problems – No update. JS

10) Council Feedback

- a. Mid Devon District Council – Plans for the two new Parking spaces at “Crofts” had been submitted (these would no longer be designated as “Disabled Spaces”).
- b. Devon County Council – Funding for Children’s services was causing concern in the both for the County Budget and Nationally.

11) Correspondence

- a) Nick Drew and Adam Voisey had both expressed an interest in the proposed Sandford Road Warden Scheme. The Chair had been in contact with them
- b) Sandford Relief in Need – John Crooke and Jill Kinch were both due for re-election as Nominees Trustees. These re appointments were both confirmed. Proposed Cllr Fyfe, 2nd Cllr Stoye, and carried.
- c) Glen Padgham had been in contact over the “Furlongs” footpath issues. The sewage problem had been resolved. Concerns over “Muddy Alley” were still a major issue for Walkers

“Weavers Way” - The legal paper work for the “Gifting of the Land” to the Parish Council was still waited.

A site Meeting was promised, to include Richard Spurway DCC, in the very near future to discuss all outstanding “Footpath Matters”.

DCC Cllr Squires reminded the Parish Council that she had promised funding towards the footpath scheme and this needed to be spent in the current year.

“Weavers Way” – Cllr Stephens reported that the Developers were still keen for an Opening Ceremony and it was felt this was best left for early in 2025

CLLR STEPHENS THEN LEFT THE MEETING

- d) DALC – Latest newsletter had been received.
It was agreed to take up the offer of “In house training session” for Councillors and the Clerk.

12) Replies – None

13) Matters reported to the Clerk / Police matters

Does Sandford still have a “Snow Warden?

It was confirmed that Phil Harvey had previously fulfilled this post and the Chair agreed to ask him whether he was happy to continue?

Cllr Hooper expressed an interest in “helping out”.

14) Receipts and Payments

Receipts

Lloyds Bank (Interest November 2024)	£36.60
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Payments

Mr. M Vallance Salary £620 (New rate) plus arrears £140.50	
Devon Transcription Services £35.00	£795.50
Sandford Millennium Green (Weeding Donation)	£300.00

Cheques signed by Cllr Stoye the only Signatory present.
The Clerk would find another Signatory to sign the two cheques.

15) Setting the Budget/Precept for 2025/2026

The Proposal from the Finance Committee was presented to the Parish Council for discussion.

As in previous years this was the starting point for SPC to discuss, line by line, the proposals under the various headings as had been discussed and recommended from the Finance Meeting.

Cllr Crosby was unhappy with the format of the Excel Spreadsheet and felt inadequate detail had been included.

The Clerk advised that this was the same Spreadsheet used by the Parish Council for the last 20 years and had always been acceptable.

The Clerk then left the Meeting.

MJV

Additional Minutes:

15. Setting the Budget/Precept for 2025/2026

- a. Cllr Ward as asked to go through the figures put forward by the Finance Committee in the Precept.
- b. Following a question about the lack of narrative provided to support the budget figures the Clerk left the meeting.
- c. It was agreed that a single item agenda meeting to discuss the precept was required to bring the 2025-6 budget to an agreed conclusion. Cllr Ward agreed to provide narrative to support the figures.
- d. Originally it had been agreed to defer the next full council meeting to 9th January, however the Clerk will be away for that meeting. We need the RFO to be present to sign off on the Precept, so an earlier meeting was suggested. It was suggested that we use 2nd January 2025 as a date for the full council with the single agenda item “To discuss and agree the budget for 2025-6”.

All present agreed. ACTION: RW

Open meeting concluded at 10pm

