

SANDFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held at Sandford Parish Hall, 8.00pm, on Thursday 7th September 2023.

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

Chair – Cllr R Ward

Parish Councillors - P Larcombe, S Miles, J Crooke. M Snow, D Crosby, D Hope, B Fyfe, and J Stephens

DCC Cllr M Squires (Arrived during the Meeting)

MDDC Cllrs M Jenkins and H Tuffin

Parish Clerk Mr M Vallance

Three Parishioners (One arrived during the Meeting)

1) In his opening remarks the Chair encouraged the Parish Council to embrace New Challenges, to take up Training opportunities that arose, and to find a “middle way” for the encounters that lay ahead.

2) APOLOGIES – Cllrs L Hooper, P Sandys, R Stoye. And D Martin (Parishioner)

3) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

4) The MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th July 2023, which had been circulated to Councillors in advance, were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

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

5) OPEN FORUM

a) Nick Silk suggested that the Parish Council send a letter of thanks to Rachel Luxton, who had left her job at Sandford Stores, and had helped the Parish function during COVID.

(This action was supported and Cllr Ward agreed to write a letter of thanks).

b) Nick Silk considered that there was still a need for a Diary of Parish Events to avoid a clash of dates.

(The Clerk agreed to speak to Sandford Stores).

c) Lizzie Dalton questioned the decision made in July to purchase Microsoft Teams. The cost, whether it should be paid for from the precept, if it included training and why other options such as Drop Box were not considered.

Cllr Ward advised that Microsoft Teams would provide a much-needed repository for storage, and circulation of Parish Council business.

He was hopeful that funding could be sourced to cover the cost.

6) To report on MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Not on the Agenda)

a) Sandford Congregational Church – The sale had now gone through to a private buyer who was hoping to return the Hall, in due course, for Parish use

b) Shute Stream – Cllr Stephens confirmed that he had this matter in hand.

JS

c) Microsoft Teams – Cllr Ward confirmed that this matter was now on hold until the necessary funding was in place.

RW

(DCC Cllr M Squires, and D Squires, arrived at this point in the Meeting)

7) WORKING GROUPS / COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND FEEDBACK

(Copies of Committee Meeting Minutes are on view on the Sandford Parish Council Website)

a) Planning Committee – Meeting 17th July 2023

It was agreed to postpone the Election of the Chair and the Adoption of the Terms of Reference to a subsequent Planning Committee Meeting.

Current planning applications were discussed and Grants of permission noted.

Discussions had taken place over questions to be submitted to MDDC, and Belfield, in respect of outstanding matters on the Weavers Ways development. See Minute 9 (g)

b) Finance Committee – Meeting 30th August 2023.

The Asset Register had been reviewed and was in the process of being updated. MJV

Financial Regulations were being discussed. RW

Reserves to 31st March had been discussed, the current S106 balance had been requested from MDDC, and the Clerk confirmed that the Accounts for the year ended 31st March had been Signed off

c) Communications Committee – A meeting had taken place on 21st August 2023.

Items discussed had included SPC Website, Internal Communications, and the forthcoming “Meet the Parish Council” event being planned by Cllr Hooper.

d) Play Area Committee – See Minute 9 (b)

e) Planning Committee - Weavers Way – Site Meeting 8th July 2023 (See Minute 9 g).

f) Staffing matters Committee – This meeting had been postponed and would be rescheduled for later in September.

8) PLANNING

23/01027/FULL Land and buildings Sandford NGR 282353 103682 (Road from Signpost Lane to Stoneshill Cross) - Change of use of redundant light industrial building and conversion to a dwelling.

(Site Meeting - See comments submitted to MDDC Planning Appendix 1)

23/01075/HOUSE & 23/01076/LBC Kerswell Cottage Sandford
Conversion and extension to existing annex

(Site Meeting - See comments submitted to MDDC Planning Appendix 2)

23/01092/FULL Erection of agricultural building
Appledown Crediton

Whilst the Parish Council did not object it was felt that the proposed building needed to be classified as a storage building as there would currently appear no agricultural need.
It was also felt that screening in the form of hedging and tree planting would be needed.

23/01310/LBC Gaters Cottage Sandford

LBC for minor amendments approved under 21/02107/LBC to include change of floor, internal walls and internal roof materials and alterations to internal steps
NO OBJECTION

21/01311/HOUSE & 23/01312/LBC Gaters Cottage Sandford

LBC for replacement of external render, timber windows and doors to main cottage, installation of flue and erection of porch
NO OBJECTION

Grants of Planning permission to note :-

23/00226/LBC Preston Barn Cottage East Village
LBC for the installation of 9 replacement windows

22/00667/HOUSE Mortimores New Buildings
Erection of shed following demolition of existing sheds.

23/00955/FULL Woodparks Barn Copplestone
Change of use of office building into dwelling with associated access parking and landscaping

23/01230/NMA Non material Amendment for 22/01970/FULL to allow semi-circular curved roof
“Summerhayes” Sandford

9) Items for Discussion / Proposals:

a) Proposal: To create a Sandford Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Ward advised that the window for submitting bids for Neighbourhood Plan funding was now open.

A proposal was made that Sandford Parish Council express an interest in formulating a Neighbourhood Plan.

Proposed Cllr Fyfe, 2nd Cllr Larcombe, and carried.

RW

Concern was expressed over the costs involved and, although it was noted that a Grant of £10K would hopefully be forthcoming, the balance it appeared would need to come from the Parish Precept ?

Cllr Ward stressed the need to keep an eye on expenditure given that Planning Consultant fees were charged at an average of £500 per day.

b) Playing Field – The Play Area Committee had met with Sandford AFC earlier in the evening to discuss the following :-

Sandford AFC had raised safety issues over the car park drain cover problems.

Continued use of vehicles, including farm machinery, had it was felt caused this damage.

Cones had been placed around the two drain covers to warn of this “Safety Hazard”.

It had been agreed to obtain two heavy duty drain covers to replace the existing
Going forward it was suggested that users of heavy farm machinery should be advised to keep away from the drain covers.

Also, maybe to erect some kind of warning near the drain covers ?

It had been agreed that the cost for the new drains covers could be taken from the Pavilion Maintenance fund and quotes obtained.
Play Area Committee

c) Proposal: Weeds in the Village – It was generally felt that the “hand weeding” this year had not been as effective as in 2022 partly due to the weather.

Cllr Ward reported that he was in discussion with Steve Mc Culloch over a possible alternative to deal with the Weed problem in 2024 ?

Following discussion this action was accepted as the way forward.

Proposed Cllr Snow, 2nd Cllr Hope, and carried.

RW

d) Proposal for a Parish Councillor to attend meetings of the Raddon Hill Group.

Newton St Cyres was no longer willing to Host or Clerk these Meetings.

Cllr Stephens had previously represented Sandford and it was felt that, since COVID, the Meetings were not serving the same purpose and the Clerk was asked to respond along these lines.

MJV

e) Proposal: Business Rates “Creedy View car park”.

Following the receipt of a backdated demand for £5089.91 in respect of Business Rates the Clerk had completed and submitted a Small Business Rate Relief Application form to MDDC.

This had been successful and the demand for £5089.91 had been withdrawn.

f) Village Square pedestrian safety. See Minute 10 (c)

g) Update on questions submitted regarding outstanding matters on the Weavers Way Development.

(DCC Cllr Squires Declared an Interest and left the meeting whilst the item was discussed)

The Clerk had written to both Adrian Devereaux (MDDC Planning), and Justin Denno (Belfield Development) on 3rd August 2023, with a list of questions arising from the Site Meeting in July 2023.

Adrian Devereaux had responded on the 7th September 2023.

Justin Denno had replied to say he had not received this communication.

It was agreed to re send the correspondence to him requesting a written response within “two weeks” to enable SPC to discuss the matter.

10) Council Feedback

a) MDDC - Cllr Jenkins and Cllr Tuffin reported that they were following up the concerns of Sandford Parish Council over Weavers Way.

It was noted that some of the properties were to be occupied in October 2023.

Cllr Jenkins was actively following up S106 agreements for Weavers Way.

Cllr Jenkins could not make the proposed meeting date with MDDC concerning the Zed Pods at Crofts. The meeting has been postponed until Council Officers had returned from leave.

It was agreed to request that a representative from SPC attend the re-arranged meeting.

A question was raised by Cllr Stephens about the impact of the "Three Rivers" development appeal going against the District Council.

MDDC Cllr Jenkins reported that he felt it would have serious impact on MDDC Finances going forward.

b) Devon County Council - Cllr Squires advised that due to the summer recess the County Council had not been meeting.

c) Meeting with Steve Tucker DCC Highways (24th July 2023)

(A copy of the notes of the Meeting are on view on the Sandford Parish Council Website)

Items discussed included :-

- Potholes, and Rumble Strips which had been recently been “patched up” and would be removed in due course subject to funding, probably in 2025.
- Flooding Coppice Lane, and water across road at Creedy Manor - (Cllrs Stephens and Crooke agreed to visit these locations and speak to the residents. JS / JC
- Pavements and cobbles in the Square
Steve Tucker advised that the Highway rules stated that NO clutter/obstruction should block the footpath meaning that as a general rule a footpath must have a minimum width of 1.5m. He was aware that there were at least 4 properties in the Square which did not fulfil these rules. This meant there were safety issues to pedestrians and users of wheel chairs, and prams.
He had been asked who would be liable if the clutter was left on the pavement and a similar incident occurred, as that on 8th July 2023, when a Parishioner had tripped off the high pavement and fell into the road ?
Steve Tucker advised that in those circumstances the person causing the obstruction would then have to take responsibility for any incident occurring.
He felt that the properties concerned needed this to be drawn to their attention.
- Flood Risk to the Parish – It was suggested that the first step was to appoint a Parish Road Warden. The Warden would have access to the necessary tools and above all extra sand bags. MJV

11) Correspondence

Received:

a) Sandford AFC – Future maintenance including re-painting and storage issues. See Minute 11 (c) The training Goal Posts were being stored inside the Pavilion due to lack of storage facilities. The Parish Council had been asked to assist with the issue of storage. It was felt that Sandford AFC should return to the previous practice when these were stored in the changing rooms.

b) Raddon Hill Group (See Minute 9 (d).

c) Valuation Agency – Details of the Creedy View car park had been requested and it was assumed this was the reason that MDDC non domestic Rate Demand had been received.

- d) DCC Highways
- i) Road closure 11-15 September Tail Corner to New Buildings Cross. (Supply new water Course)
- ii) Road closure 2-6 October Church Cross to Lamb Inn (Sewer connection).
- iii) Road closure 15-17 November from Cross Hill to Cheriton Cross (Overhead cabling/tree cutting).
- e) Stu Howell – Suggestion for a Sandford Neighbourhood Plan – See Minute 9 (a).
- f) Parishioners (4) – Weeds in the Village - Benches in the Square - Safety issues Sandford Square - request for railings – Matters to be discussed at the next meeting.
- g) Chris O'Connor – Request for disabled access to the Playing Field off Meadowside.

(To be discussed at the next meeting)

He also commented on the benches in the Square outside the Lamb Inn.

(To be discussed at the next meeting)

h) Street work – Advance notice of footpath Closure at “Weavers Way” Oct/Nov 2023.

i) Lizzie Dalton – Considered that the Parish Council Website needed a “ Website Security Certificate” Certificate”. Noted,

Matters reported to the Clerk

Weeds in the Village / Benches in the Square / Cluttered footpath in the Square

Replies:

a) Community Insurance had responded to the question of cover for the Benches outside the Lamb Inn and confirmed that they were covered under the current SPC policy.

It would be necessary for the Benches to be inspected for safety reasons, and a Risk Assessment carried out, before accepting their ownership.

It would also be necessary for a regular Safety Inspection to be carried out.

b) DALC had responded to a question regarding Valuations over items on the SPC List of Fixed Assets. Further information had been requested and Clerk was in the process of supplying these details. MJV

12) Police Matters – No new matters raised.

13) RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

Receipts

Lloyds Bank (July Interest)	£24.11
Lloyds Bank (August Interest)	£29.06
HMRC (VAT repayment)	£4054.81
Unit Lodge Benevolent Fund £300 / Private donation £20 (Basketball Project)	£320.00

Payments

Mr M Vallance (Salary) £557.00	Gardens prize money £22.00	£574.00
DALC – Training courses x 5 attendees		£396.00*
Devon Communities (Annual membership)		£50.00
Pamela Phipps (Travelling expenses for training course 23 May 2023)		£7.20
Mr P Sandys (4 x 20 Speed signs)		£132.00
SLCC – Renewal of Membership		£177.00
Nick Unstead (Posts for speed signs)		£14.37
Mr S McCulloch – Grass cutting		£61.50
Mr P Sandys (Adjustment to cheque 001896)		£22.00
Information Commissioner – Renewal of data protection license		£40.00
*Signed 17 July 2023 by Cllrs Miles and Stephens		

Cheques signed by Cllrs Snow and Stephens.

14) Any other business

a) Memorial for Michael Lee – The Clerk reported that several Parishioners had suggested a permanent memorial for the late Michael Lee. Suggestions included a seat and tree, to be sited along the Millennium Green Path, near the Mary Lee seat.

It was agreed to discuss this matter at the next Meeting.

The Clerk had been in contact with Roger Lee who confirmed that the family would support any suggestions or proposals.

15) Date of next Meeting – 3rd October 2023, 8.00, Sandford Parish Hall

There being no other business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.40pm.

Appendix 1

Comments submitted to MDDC Planning Office

23/01027/FULL Land and buildings Sandford NGR 282353 103682 (Road from Signpost Lane to Stoneshill Cross) - Change of use of redundant light industrial building and conversion to a dwelling

This application was discussed at a recent Sandford Parish Council planning meeting attended by three Objectors who spoke on the application.

Whilst the Parish Council do not have any objection in principle, we do have concerns over certain parts of the application which include:-

- A lack of detail on the height etc of the proposed building does not permit objective discussion and what impact the extra height will have on the neighbouring properties.
- Supply water stated as connected but is this correct and have Southwest Water been consulted?
- We recommend a site visit by the MDDC Planning Officer / Committee.

Appendix 2

23/01075/HOUSE & 23/01076/LBC Kerswell Cottage Sandford
Conversion and extension to existing annex.

This application was discussed recently following a site Meeting.

Sandford Parish Council recommend approval of this application which will enhance the current appearance of the cottage and surroundings and provide much needed additional accommodation.