

SANDFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held at Sandford Parish Hall, 8.15pm, on Thursday 6th March 2025.

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

Chair – Cllr R Ward

Parish Councillors – J Stephens , P Larcombe, J Crooke, P Sandys, D Crosby and S Pope.

MDDC Cllr M Jenkins and Cllr H Tufnell Parish Clerk Mr M Vallance

Five Members of the Public (Part Meeting)

1)Chair’s opening remarks - Cllr Ward welcomed members of the Public and invited them to raise any issues in the Open Forum.

2) Apologies DCC Cllr M Squires Cllrs S Miles, R Stoye, B Fyfe, and L Hooper

3) Declarations of Interest – None

4) MINUTES of the Parish Council meetings held on 6th February 2025.

The Minutes, which had been circulated prior to the Meeting, were confirmed and Signed by the Chair as a correct record

Proposed Cllr Larcombe, 2nd Cllr Stephens, and carried

5) Open Forum – No matters raised.

6) Matters Arising

- a) Public seats – The Chair had agreed to meet with the Parishioner offering to provide finance to replace the seat outside St Swithun’s. RW
- b) Noticeboard bottom of Rose and Crown Hill – In hand. DC
- c) Annual Parish Meeting – Set for 20th March 2025, 8.15pm, at the Parish Hall. The Presentation of the Sandford Recognition Awards would take place and Nominations had been requested
It was also agreed to place on the Agenda the DDAY80 Commemorations. RW
- d) New SPC Website – Still awaited. DC
- e) New gov.uk email addresses for Councillors - It was reported that Councillors were having problems with installing this.
Cllr Crosby asked anyone having problems to contact him for assistance. DC
- f) Setting up a Sandford Speed-watch group Awaiting attention. RW
- g) Neighbourhood Planning – Awaiting attention. RW

- h) Damage to Sandford Sports Pavilion/Insurance claim – Zurich insurance had finally made contact with the Clerk and a claim, plus quotes to repair the damage, had been submitted. MJV
- i) “Keep the Lamb” Meeting 22 February 2025 - The Meeting had gone off well and had been attended by 190 members of the Public. RW
- j) DALC Training Event - A date for availability of the Hall/ Extension was awaited MJV
- k) Outstanding payment for damage to “Creedy View” play area pillar
The Chair had this in hand RW
- l) The Closure of Back Lane (24th March 2025) for 4 weeks to re thatch “Sadlers” was clearly going to have a huge impact for Village life, and for local business’s
Cllr Stephens felt the home owner needed to engage a “Thatcher” who could carry out the work without a need to close “Back Lane”.
It was also pointed out that Scaffolding had recently been erected at the “Manse” on Church which suggested roof works were due to take place there in the very near future.

The Long Diversion had been noted but it was felt there was a need to come up with a Village Diversion to the deal with this.

The Clerk was asked to contact DCC Highways to discuss the matter,
Cllrs Ward and Stephens agreed to contact the home owner to discuss these issues.

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

- a) Planning Committee – No Meeting JS
- b) Finance Committee – Meeting to be convened SM
- c) Communications Committee No Meeting DC
- d) Play Area Committee - The basketball hoop area would shortly to be open for use.
Following recent damage to the Pavilion a suggestion had been made to install Posts at the front of the building.
- e) Projects Committee - Plans for VE Day 8th May 2025

Cllr Sandys told the Parish Council that he did not feel this was something for the Projects Committee to organise.

(The Precept for 2025/2026 included a sum of £3000 for “Projects”, and there would be unused “Project” funding in the current year (2024/2025 Precept), for this Event).

“Furlongs Footpath” – Thanks to a change in the weather the Contractor has finally been able to get on site to carry out the Footpath improvements Also to install a new Disabled access gate at the “Furlongs” end.

A suggestion was made to engrave some wording on the granite post at the end of the Path.

The Parish Council and the Footpath Walkers all agreed that the long wait had paid off and an excellent job had been carried out by the Contractor.

Michael Lee seat and tree – Now that the Footpath works had been carried out it and the time had come to discuss the location of the seat, and tree, along the footpath.

The Clerk had spoken to the Lee family, who were happy to provide the seat, and a meeting was suggested to agree on the location.

(Coincidentally the Millennium Green was Celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2025. 25 years ago, on the day of the Opening the “Mary Lee Seat” had been installed and commissioned by Angela Browing MP),

- f) Staffing Committee – No applicants had been received for the Parish Clerk Vacancy. The Chair and Clerk had met to discuss arrangements for the changeover.

8) Planning

25/00188/CAT “Tree Tops” Back Lane Sandford – Intention to remove 1 Eucalyptus, 1 Cypress, and 2 sapling trees in the Conservation Area

NO OBJECTION

25/00298/FULL & 25/00299/FULL Erection of roof to provide covered manure store “Long Barn” Crediton

NO OBJECTION

Grant of permission 25/00028/CAT St Swithuns graveyard – Demolition of one oak tree in the Conservation area

9) Items for Discussion / Proposals No matters raised.

10) Council Feedback

- a. Mid Devon District Council –
The opening of the Zedpods had now been set for May 2025.
The Local Government Plan Changes for Devon were being discussed and it was anticipated these would be in place by 2030.
- b. Devon County Council - DCC Cllr M Squires was not present and had told the Clerk that she would not be standing for the DCC Elections in May 2025

Highway matters – It was noted that both the previously reported damage to the Railings in the Square and the Lynch were still awaiting repair.

Also, the “Shute Stream” was still awaiting “Jetting” and it was suggested that maybe this was an issue for the Environment Agency

11)Correspondence

- a) David Hope had tendered his Resignation from Sandford Parish Council. The Vacancy had been Published following which MDDC had informed the Clerk that sufficient Parishioners had written to request an Election to fill the vacant seat.
If sufficient candidates came forward there would be an Election in May 2025 on the day of the DCC Elections.
If not the Parish Council would have the opportunity to Co-opt someone to fill the vacant seat,
- b) Rachel Vowles (Parish Hall Bookings Secretary had written to Complain over SPC use of the Parish Hall for their meeting on 6th February 2025. Access had been attempted before the previous users ended their session at 8.00pm.
The Chair had duly apologised to the “previous user” and it had been agreed for future meetings of SPC to take place at 8.15pm although not everyone was happy with this late start.
Discussion once again turned to use of the Hall for SPC Meetings. Although the “previous users” ended their sessions at 8.15pm they apparently no longer used the Annexe for “Changing”.
A suggestion was made for SPC to have use of the Annexe from 7.30pm using the Annexe access ?
- c) Mid Devon Mobility/ CAB/ CHAT/Sandford AFC had all sent a letter of thanks for their donations.
- d) DALC – Various Newsletters had been received and forwarded on to Councillors.
- e) MDDC had once again made a request to identify “small and medium sized sites for potential development” in the Parish.
- f) Ministry of Play had submitted a quotation to “install a new Mill Lane gate, and a self-closing gate, to the play area”.
Cllr Sandys stated that the Parish Council would need to get three Quotes

12) Replies

- a) Lloyds Bank had sent confirmation of the £20K short term 161 days Deposit.
- b) DCC Locality planning confirmed that an award of £2000 had been agreed towards the “Furlongs Footpath” works.

c) KGF – Parking on the Sandford King George’s Field

Following the February 2025 meeting the Clerk had been in touch with Fields in Trust, who acted for KGF, over the matter of how parking on the field was covered in the KGF covenant ?

The following response had been received :-

“Any car park on protected land should only be for the green space users.

If the car park is to be turned into parking spaces for the wider community, or if a new car park is added, then Fields in Trust consent is required”.

This clearly meant that the field was not available for “Commercial Use” which had been causing concern by users including Sandford AFC.

Cllr Sandys proposed that this matter be added to the April Agenda for a formal decision to be taken.

The Sandford Playing Field would remain a KGF until 2036

13)Matters referred to the Clerk / Police matters

It was reported that a serious road accident has occurred recently, adjacent to the railings at the bottom of Rose and Crown Hill, and the pedestrian involved was in hospital recovering from his injuries.

Whilst this was not the reason for the accident it was pointed out that the continual failure of repairs to these railings, and those in the Square, were clearly in need of being attended to as a matter of urgency to avoid any further accidents.

13) Receipts and Payments

Receipts

Lloyds Bank Interest (February 2025)	£51.63
Lloyds Bank short term Interest (£10K)	£40.79
DCC Locality Budget (Furlong’s footpath)	£2000.00

Payments

Cheques drawn mid-month 13 th February 2025	
Angus and Davey Locksmith (Pavilion)	£110.37
Dave Totterdel Electric (Pavilion)	£274.42
(Signed by M Vallance and R Stoyale)	
Mr M J Vallance (Salary)	£659.90
Mid Devon District Council (Casual vacancy Election costs)	£5679.62
Sandford Parish Hall (Hall hire)	£25.00

Devon Communities (Annual subscription)	£50.00
CPRE Devon (Annual subscription)	£60.00

Cheques signed by Cllrs Ward and Stephens.

15) 2025 Grass Cutting Quotes

Two quotations had been received :-

- a) Steve Mc Culloch (Garden and Countryside Services)
- b) Halcyon Landscapes

After discussion it was agreed to accept the quotation from Steve Mc Culloch (Garden and Countryside Services)

Proposed Cllr Sandys, 2nd Cllr Pope, and carried

16) Councillors Forum - No new matters raised

Members of the Public then left the Meeting.

The Parish Council then went into a private session to discuss the forthcoming stepping down of the Parish Clerk (Malcolm Vallance) on the 26th March 2025.

As stated in the Minutes the Chair and Clerk had met to discuss the changeover and the handing over of documents, files, records etc

The Clerk was in the process of sorting these and once done the Chair would call to collect them.

Some of the old SPC Minutes were already in the process of being sent off to the Devon Archives.

The Chair felt this was the opportune time to purchase a Laptop and Laiser Printer, in place of the current outdated kit, as discussed when setting the 2025/2026 Precept.

Discussions had already commenced with The Technology Shop in Crediton who had assisted the Clerk over Parish Council computer issues in the past.

This would also include the transfer of Data from the present SPC Computer to the new Laptop. The purchase of an external “hard drive” was also suggested.

It was agreed that Cllr Ward would liaise with The Technology Shop in Crediton to arrange for these actions to take place.

Proposed Cllr Stephens, 2nd Cllr Larcombe, and carried

The Chair closed the Meeting at 9.40pm.

Next Meeting 3rd April 2025 8.15pm at Sandford Parish Hall

