



Minutes of Sandon Annual Assembly held on Wednesday 8th May 2024 Sandon Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs John Davies, Ian Dell, James De Uphaugh, Maaïke van Wijk,

In Attendance: C Scott (Locum clerk, RFO), District Cllr S Jarvis, 7 Parishioner

1. To welcome and receive apologies for absence

Cllr N Hawxby, 3 members of the public

2. To confirm the minutes of [Sandon Parish Council's Annual Assembly on 6th April 2022](#)

Resolved, proposed Cllr J De Uphaugh, seconded Cllr M Van Wijk

3. To receive a report from District Councillor Steve Jarvis

DCllr S Jarvis reported on the drains and the recurring issues of the Gannock and Roe Green Roads. There is a big trial of recycling soft plastic (bags etc). Lynx bus is being reorganised with more vehicles and expanding the area serviced. Luton Airport is still awaiting a decision – NHDC were against the changes.

4. To receive a [report](#) from the Clerk

5. To receive a report from the Chairman

6. To receive a report from Village Organisations

[Gardening Club](#)

Curch

Village Hall

7. To receive comments and questions from Parishioners - **None**

8. To confirm the date of the next Annual Assembly – **April 9th 2025**

Sandon Gardener's Club.
Report to the Parish Council.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued financial support although it is disappointing to note that the support is less each subsequent year.

Post Covid and the increased interest in gardening' speakers are demanding substantially higher fees and travelling expenses which have to be met from our total subscriptions. While it is possible to increase the membership fees the committee feel this would be counterproductive and therefore we have tried to keep the subscriptions to an affordable level.

Although we have lost some members this year there have been new members joining us and overall membership numbers have increased.

Thanks to our programme secretary Helen Stubbings we continue to provide a monthly programme of varied and interesting speakers and garden visits.

Among the highlights since our last report are;

- a presentation by Rosemary Campbell explaining her work providing water and sanitation expertise to urban areas in Africa
- a presentation by Fiona Edmond describing how she reformed a near derelict and storm battered 20 acre garden in Essex.

In addition we have our annual show, a highlight of the Sandon cultural season.

The 2023 show was a great success with many entries and exhibitors who impressed the judges with the high standard of entries in all of the classes.

We look forward to your continued support!!.

John Handley
Chairman.

MINUTES OF THE SANDON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY 6TH APRIL 2022 AT 7.30PM

SANDON VILLAGE HALL



Present: Cllr James de Uphaugh (Chairman), Cllr Ian Dell, Cllr Janice Darton.

In attendance: County Cllr Steve Jarvis, Sarah Wylie - Clerk, Caroline Scott - Responsible Financial Officer and 1 Parishioner.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bridget Wordley, Cllr Helen Coates, Jayne Wharton.

The Chairman, Cllr de Uphaugh, welcomed everyone to Sandon's Annual Assembly and thanked Cllr Steve Jarvis for attending.

Minutes of the Annual Assembly dated 24th April 2019.

The minutes of the last Parish Annual Assembly were circulated to all present. Cllr Ian Dell raised a point of interest to be included as a point of discussion in the May meeting. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the 2019 meeting, proposed by Cllr James de Uphaugh and seconded by Ian Dell. The Chairman signed the Minutes.

Report from District Councillor Steve Jarvis.

Local plan - still nothing from the inspector last autumn - more than a year since anything has happened. Cllr Steve Jarvis quoted "No progress is not satisfactory."

Herts Lynx is proving a great success. They are to add more runs plus an electric service. Steve Jarvis to be contacted if parishioners would like a stop added.

The issue of problematic bins has been resolved.

20mph - Sandon - 300/400th on the list - is that the 20s Plenty? Look at all the speed reports for the village...Hertfordshire is lagging behind. Present speed limit is 40mph.

Increase in the number of children in care in Hertfordshire - looking at ways of dealing with this challenge.

Report from the Responsible Financial Officer, Caroline Scott.

1. Audit of 2020/21 Accounts - Application was made by the Parish Council for exemption from external audit with the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR), no queries were received from the appointed external auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP and the PC was not chosen for a 5% random sample audit.

2. Audit of 2021/22 Accounts - The RFO will be recommending to the PC that an application should again be made for exemption from external audit thereby saving £200 (min.) audit fee. The RFO is working towards preparing all year end documentation for approval by the PC at its 11th May meeting for submission of the AGAR by end May 2022. Notices of electors' rights to inspect the AGAR and related documents will be posted accordingly.

3. 2021/22 Accounts - Preliminary (unaudited) summary accounts have been prepared for the year to 31 March 2022 and a copy is shown on the reverse of this report.

4. Financial Highlights of the year ended 31 March 2022 : £

- Total receipts: (Precept + Grants + VAT refund) 8863.56
- Total payments: (including VAT) 9879.32
- Operating expenses incl. employment costs 5028.92
- Grants awarded to village clubs & organisations 1250.00
- Village Projects (village hall improvements) 345.00
- Maintenance and miscellaneous (sign post) 2680.00
- Expenses for the year exceeded receipts (due to budgeted signpost)
1015.76

5. Summary Financial Position - The Parish Council finances are deemed to be in a satisfactory state with a year-end balance of £13706.31 which is consistent with the Council's policy on operating reserves.

6. Exercise of Electors' Rights - In accordance with the Local Authority Accountability Act 2014 a notice will be displayed on the PC website: <http://sandonherts.co.uk> and village notice boards advising those interested that by appointment with the RFO (tel. 07542758948) or the Clerk, they may inspect and make copies of the (AGAR) and supporting documents between the dates that will be shown on the notices to be posted.

7. Internal Audit - During April 2021 an internal audit of the Parish Council's financial and administrative procedures was conducted by the Council's Internal Auditor, no significant financial or procedural errors were found, and compliance with the Transparency regulations, Real time PAYE reporting and Pension auto enrolment regulations were demonstrated.

8. Governance - During the year the Council reviewed, its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations; Insurance cover, Bank mandate, and its Business and financial and made a few minor to changes to strengthen its safeguards.

9. Budget for 2022 / 23 - The Parish Council has set a budget for the current year that is a 2% decrease over 2021 / 22. This decrease was due to the payment for the village sign which was completed in 2021/22, a precept of £8,750 has been agreed by NHDC. This will leave the PC financially constrained to meet its commitments and to support village clubs and organisations and will necessitate the use of Parish Council's reserves.

10. Safety Inspections - An independent annual RoSPA safety inspection of the Roe Green play area was conducted on 8 June 2021, and no defects were found and no recommendations for improvement made. Monthly internal inspections were conducted throughout the year by the Parish Council's Safety Officer.

Report from the Clerk, Helen Stubbings (outgoing).

Since the last annual village meeting the Parish Council have continued to meet for regular PC meetings and addition to discuss planning applications.

In the first year of the pandemic the PC met via zoom with the link accessible to parishioners. Each councillor in their neighbour set up a Whatsapp group to maintain links with villagers and in particular those who might have been

vulnerable and in need of help with shipping or medical supplies, or just a friendly chat.

For the past year the PC have met following current covid guidelines. Item to note include the refurbishment of the finger post sign in the middle of the village - this was partially funded by a grant from Cllr Jarvis' locality budget. The village hall committee have also sought governments grants and have been successful. Village organisations have been given grants from the PC.

Three councillors have resigned over this period, with two being replaced via the election process and one by co-option. The new councillors are Ian Dell, Janice Darton and Helen Coates. A new RFO was appointed in 2020, after seven years in the post, the Clerk has stepped down.

Report from the Chair, James de Uphaugh.

A big thankyou to Helen for all her services.

Thanks to David Locke (mowing), with the mower that Mike bought.

Thanks to Mike Ayton who looks after the Church clock.

Thanks to Steve Jarvis for attending the meetings and all your efforts.

Thanks to Robert Wornham for all that he does for the Village both seen and unseen.

Comments and questions from Parishioners.

Mike Wickstead endorsed the councillors and their jobs.

Nice to receive a drop in Council tax on the part on the Parish Council.

The date of the next Annual Assembly is to be discussed at the May meeting.

Point from Mike - Village Hall committee - organising for the Jubilee... letter of insurance for the PC is valid but not necessarily for the Village Hall committee.

Delegate responsibility to the Village Hall Committee...to be included in the May minutes.

Sandon Parish Council

Financial Report for the year ended 31 March 2024

Prepared for the Annual Village Assembly 13th May 2024

1. Audit of 2022/23 Accounts –Application was made by the Parish Council for exemption from external audit with the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR), no queries were received from the appointed external auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP and the PC was not chosen for a 5% random sample audit.
2. 2023/24 Accounts – Preliminary (unaudited) summary accounts have been prepared for the year to 31 March 2024 and a copy is shown on the reverse of this report.
3. Financial Highlights of the year ended 31 March 2024: £

<u>Total receipts: (Precept + Grants + VAT refund + credit note)</u>	<u>10768.68</u>
<u>Total payments: (including VAT)</u>	<u>9148.49</u>
➤ Operating expenses incl. employment costs	6301.93
➤ Grants awarded to village clubs & organisations	1660.00
➤ Village Projects (Coronation)	1186.56
➤ Maintenance and miscellaneous (grass cutting)	0.00
<u>Receipts for the year exceeded expenses:</u>	<u>1620.19</u>
4. Summary Financial Position – The Parish Council finances are deemed to be in a satisfactory state with a year-end balance of £17,683.16 which is consistent with the Council's policy on operating reserves.
5. Governance – During the year the Council reviewed, its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations; Insurance cover, Bank mandate, and its Business and financial risk assessment, Privacy & cookie Policy, Publication Scheme and Code of Conduct.
6. Budget for 2024/25 – The Parish Council has set a budget with a precept of £9000 being agreed by NHDC with an added CTRS of £321.94 making the total budget £9,321.94. This will leave the PC financially constrained to meet its commitments and to support village clubs and organisations and will necessitate the use of Parish Council's reserves.
7. Safety Inspections - An independent annual RoSPA safety inspection of the Roe Green play area was conducted in May 2023, and no defects were found and no recommendations for improvement made. Monthly internal inspections were conducted throughout the year by the Parish Council's Safety Officer, Ian Dell.