

## **Minutes of Sandon Parish Council Annual Assembly**

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 7.45 pm**

**Sandon Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr J de Uphaugh (Chairman), Cllr F Cannon, Cllr H Gallo, Cllr B Wordley, Cllr J Wharton.

**In attendance:** County Cllr S Jarvis, Mrs H Stubbings, Clerk, Mr M Wicksteed, Responsible Financial Officer and seven Parishioners

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

### **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr K Chamberlain, Ben Cannon, Nicola Hornblow (FOSS) Emma McGill (Headteacher), Robert Wornham.

### **Minutes of the Annual Assembly on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

The minutes of the last Parish Assembly were circulated to all present. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting, proposed by Cllr Jayne Wharton and seconded by Cllr Fiona Cannon, all agreed. The Chairman signed.

### **District report**

Cllr Steve Jarvis informed Parish on the progress of the Local Plan. The 'Examination' had taken place between November 2017 to March 2018. The Inspector has requested further information to be provided by the Council. A further six-week period of consultation will be required when this process has been finished. NHDC will then vote on the Plan.

The new waste and refuse collection contact is due to start in May. Food caddies will be delivered; a fee for the collection of the brown bin has been introduced in North Herts.

The project to provide a mini-bus to take Sandon residents to Baldock has discontinued due to no take up and therefore not sustainable.

Cllr Jarvis reminded parishioners that there were grants available for local projects.

### **County report**

Cllr Jarvis explained how some of the county budget was spent; with over four million pounds being spent on the elderly and two million pounds on the young and vulnerable adults.

This year pot holes in many roads have caused problems for the highways department. Constant reporting of them is the best way to get them repaired.

Discussions are taking place about the safety of the A505 and improvements to the junctions along with a possible seven ton weight restriction on the A507 being imposed.

### **Finance report**

Parish Accounts 2016/17

Mr Wicksteed explained that the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 had been externally audited by BDO Auditors in line with regulations and that they had been satisfactory.

Mr Wicksteed thanked Mr David Camps, our internal auditor, for his continued help in ensuring compliance.

New financial regulations have been introduced and Sandon Parish Council may be able to apply for an exemption from audit; this is dependant on income and expenditure.

Financial Report and Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018

Mr Wicksteed reported Parish Council receipts of £8,828 made up of the Precept and additional grants. Outgoings were £7,704 of which £2,100 were given in grants to the following organisations: Sandon Sports Club, Sandon PCC, Friends of Sandon School, Sandon Gardeners Club, Sandon Cygnets, Herts Air Ambulance. In addition, four new notice boards had been purchased.

The end of year finances were in a satisfactory state with a residual balance in line with the Reserves Policy. The RFO is confident that the Parish Council is compliant with PAYE and employment legislation.

Mr Wicksteed drew attention to electors' rights in accordance with the Audit Commission Act 1998 to inspect and make copies of the accounts between the 4<sup>th</sup> of June to the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2018. The accounts will also be available for viewing on the Parish website.

A budget for 2018-19 has been set at £8,200 and approved by NHDC.

### *Safety Inspections*

In addition to the annual inspection conducted by RoSPA in May, which resulted in a medium risk site, Mr Wicksteed reported that he carried out monthly Safety Inspections of Parish Council equipment on Roe Green. The soccer post require repainting, the continuing problem of litter & unauthorised driving on Roe Green was disappointing.

### **Clerk's report**

The clerk reported that the Parish Council had held 6 regular meetings in the past year, on a bi-monthly basis with an 84% attendance rate, plus two meetings to discuss planning or licensing applications. The planning application for Sandon Bury and the two licensing applications for Sandon Fields have generated a lot of extra work for all the Parish Council. The Clerk had attended a workshop at HAPTC (Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils) regarding the new data protection regulations and the impact these will have on the Parish Council; not least the cost. The RFO also attended a meeting with the new auditors PK Little John. These meetings and training events help keep the Clerk & RFO up to date with our legal obligations. New financial and transparency requirements increase the hours worked by the officers.

### **Chairman's report**

The Chairman wished to thank all those who assist in making the village the special place it is to live. Councillors have delegated areas of responsibility and this model is working well with relevant reports presented at each meeting.

The third litter pick in the Parish had been reasonably well attended with some 20 bags of litter collected.

The Chairman then thanked a few particular people; but hoping not to miss anyone out!

Helen as Clerk, Mike as RFO, safety inspector & Mr fix it! Mr Mike Ayton for winding the Church clock and raising the standards.

Chris, Simon and Tina Mace for doing an impressive job of maintaining all of Church End Green and Churchyard.

Andy & Janice Darton for their work for the Sports Club.

Robert & Christina Wornham for continuing to help in so many ways, not least VH, grass cutting, salt distribution, litter picking, Village News.

Rob & Jayne Wharton for the Pub Nights, and for the past year Jenny and Chris Mace, prior to retirement.

Cllr de Uphaugh then continued his report by mentioning the rising costs of remaining compliant with legal obligations. Working with other parish councils may be one way to share costs. The precept had been set to try to achieve a balanced position between cost, expenditure and reserves the implication is that there would be less grants to clubs available.

### **Reports from Village Organisations**

*Sandon Sports Club*; Mr Green thanked those involved with the maintenance of the cricket pitch and surrounding areas, in particular the local farmers who, roll, cut, weed and fertilise. This year the club has a full fixture list. He urged parishioners to come along and watch.

The football pitch is in serious need of drainage and the anticipated cost will be in the region of £15,000, but it is hoped that this would mean football could return to the village.

The Sports Club are planning several family friendly events over the summer months to raise funds for the projects mentioned.

*All Saints*; Mrs Wornham thanked the Parish Council for their continued grant support that went to help pay for the cutting of the grass in the churchyard; which is open to all. However, this year the grass would be cut by a contractor which will cost more than in previous years. The PCC hold two working parties each year to keep the churchyard looking neat and tidy. Cream teas in the village hall during the summer are planned as fund raising events.

*Sandon Gardeners Club*; Mrs Handley informed the meeting that the cost of speakers, some as much as £150 used up all the grant given by the Parish Council, so every penny made a difference. The other significant cost was that of engraving of cups and trophies. The club has 33 members but would love to have more, everyone is welcome. Mrs Handley thanked the Parish Council for their continuing support.

Mrs Handley also reported on the commemorative stone that is being erected in the churchyard. This will take place prior to the Remembrance Service on the 11<sup>th</sup> November and that to mark the anniversary a full review of the Sandon Soldiers Book is being undertaken.

### **Questions and comments from Parishioners**

Pot holes & Side erosion – an ongoing battle. Cllr Wharton reports these as she sees them.

### **Annual Assembly 2019 – date to be advised**

Chairman .....

Dated .....

The meeting closed at 8.55pm