



MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandown Town Council held on **MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021** at 12:00 noon via ZOOM.

Town Clerk: Richard Priest

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Three written questions were received.

Mr Paul Coueslant raised a question regarding tree works at Los Altos park. This would be addressed in a statement from the ward councillor regarding the matter during the meeting.

Mr Stephen Parkes submitted a number of questions, unfortunately exceeding the word limit and missing the deadline for submitting a question. Many of the matters raised would be covered by agenda items or matters relating to the Isle of Wight Council, and Mr. Parkes would be contacted regarding any outstanding questions

Mr Colin Midmore asked a question in relation to the Honour Trail and the placement of flowers. The clerk has contacted the Isle of Wight Council regarding their policy on the matter and to draw their attention to the issue but noted that the Honour Trail was not a Sandown Town Council matter.

Present Cllrs Gary Young (Mayor), Paul Brading (Deputy Mayor), Debbie Andre, Connie Cowley, Heather Humby, Alex Lightfoot, Paddy Lightfoot, Jacquie Mereweather, Raj Patel, and Ian Ward.

43-20/21 APOLOGIES

Cllrs Chris Dupre and Ronnie Teasdale.

44-20/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

1. To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non -pecuniary interests

Cllrs Andre, Brading and Ward advised they were members of the Isle of Wight Council.

Cllr Andre also declared an interest in matters relating to Los Altos park as her property backed onto the park.

2. To receive and consider granting any written requests for dispensations.

None Received

Town Clerk: Richard Priest

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45-20/21 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2020 be approved as a true record subject to the following amendments:

- (i) 30-20/21 Cllr Andre had not attended the meeting and her apologies rather than her attendance should be recorded.
- (ii) 37-20/21(b) “grand” funding should be “grant” funding.
- (iii) 41-20/21(ii) that it be clear that users be given the option of both coin and contactless payment.

46-20/21 WAR MEMORIAL CENTENARY

Members were reminded the war memorial would be 100 years old in July 2021 and, subject to Covid-19 guidance, a programme of events would be drawn up to commemorate the milestone with involvement from the British Legion, the church and the local primary school.

47-20/21 SURVEY RESPONSES

(a) Steven Jenkins Equipment

Following the recent survey in relation to new equipment at the Steven Playground, the council would work with contractors to replace the damaged equipment and following further vandalism at the grounds take forward the CCTV project. The works would be partly funded by insurance monies.

(b) Eastern Gardens and budget proposal

A positive response had been received to the surveys. The results, such as including showers in the toilet provision, would inform work with contractors. Since the new facilities at Eastern Gardens were not located on Sandown Town Council land licenses and relevant permissions were required, therefore it was expected the project would go forward through the autumn. Monies were budgeted to keep existing facilities open in the meantime.

(c) Future Surveys

Members noted that further surveys would be undertaken in line with the councils plans to engage with residents regarding future projects.

48-20/21 DECORATIVE LIGHTING PROJECTS

Members noted that monies had been allocated in the previous year’s budget to replace decorative lighting. However, the advent of the pandemic had delayed taking the project forward. A working party would be set up to look at both seasonal and Christmas lighting to maximise investment. Residents concerns regarding the condition of the existing lighting were acknowledged.

49-20/21 QUEENS PLATUNUM JUBILEE BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND JUNE 2022

Consideration was given to creating a program of events to commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee in 2022. It was hoped the situation regarding Covid-19 would be clear but suggested the council should start working towards the event as depending on the nature of the planned celebrations road closures and other logistical matters would need arranging.

There was support for the celebrations and a church service commemorating those lost to Covid-19 and the contributions made, before moving to a weekend of celebratory events, such as a street party on the esplanade. Members requested the scope be widened to recognise the greater impact of the pandemic.

RESOLVED:

THAT a programme of events be brought forward for the Queens Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday Weekend June 2022.

50-20/21 FINANCES

- 1. To approve the receipts and payments lists as presented for December 2020 and January 2021.**

Questions were raised in relation to various payments including grass cutting at Los Altos which the clerk confirmed and payments and grant monies in relation to the volunteer expenses. There was also debate regarding the Bay Volunteer Hub and the Service Level Agreement with St. Helens Parish Council for the provision of administrative support. Clarification of funding and expenses for the hub were provided. Further information would be provided to members outside the meeting regarding the arrangement with St Helens though members did suggest there was support for the initiative.

RESOLVED

THAT the payments and receipts listed as presented for December 2020 and January 2021 be approved.

- 2. To receive and note the verified bank reconciliations for December 2020 and January 2021.**

RESOLVED

THAT the verified bank reconciliations for December 2020 and January 2021 be noted.

- 3. To receive an update on the position of the External Audit and approve the revised Risk Management Document.**

RESOLVED:

THAT the Risk Management Policy as presented be approved.

- 4. To receive and note the expenditure against budget through 31 January 2021.**

Members sought clarification regarding the inclusion of historic items on the report and were advised the budget calculations included previous year items, but these would naturally drop off. Therefore the 2019/2020 would be included as the item related to the 2018/2019 financial year.

RESOLVED:

THAT the expenditure against budget through 31 January 2021 be noted.

5. To note receipt of additional grant monies.

Members noted that grant monies had been secured for the volunteer hub, the Christmas hampers and in relation to the closure of the centre as a result of government restrictions.

6. To approve the 2021/2022 Budget

Council noted that approximately £8,500 underspend and £31,000 unbudgeted income had been carried forward into the 2021/2022 budget and that this included grant monies secured in relation to Covid-19 which could not be expected when the 2020/2021 budget was drafted. Clarification was also provided in relation to the reserves.

There was also discussion in relation to the newsletter, whereby the council would not necessarily produce its own publication, but monies were allocated for communication with residents, and the inclusion of a lifeguard service under town improvements as part of a bigger beach safety project. Further information would also be provided to councillors regarding Ferncliff gardens.

RESOLVED:

THAT the proposed budget for 2021 be approved

7. To set the 2021/2022 Precept

RESOLVED:

THAT the Band D equivalent precept of £138.85 be set for 2021/2022, resulting in a budget of £538,158.

8. To note and action the correspondence from NALC

RESOLVED:

THAT the correspondence in relation to pay grades be noted.

51-20/21 TO RECEIVE ANY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES RAISED

Councillor Andre was placed in the waiting room during the discussion relating to Los Altos Park having declared an interest in the matter which could be considered pecuniary.

Members sought clarification in relation to the tree works being undertaken by the Isle of Wight Council at Los Altos park. A statement on the matter was provided by Cllr Ian Ward (attached to and forming part of these minutes)

The ongoing issues in relation to the neglected state of the ocean hotel and site and the lack of enforcement action and progress with the sale were discussed. Members requested the clerk write to the Isle of Wight council again regarding enforcement action. Cllr Andre also provided an update regarding the Hotel Maria, which would be sold, and the Grand/Target Two derelict sites who's owner would not engage in discussions.

There was also debate in relation to the increase in dog fouling on Sandown and indeed across the Island. The Isle of Wight council had been contacted regarding the matter but did not have the capacity within its team of Environmental Officers to take further action.

52 -20/21 TO RECEIVE ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No comments were put forward in relation to applications pending decision.

53-20/21 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM

1. The Town Clerk

The town clerk provided a verbal update on a number of issues, which were noted. Key points included:

- ongoing actions in relation to the pandemic including keeping the Broadway Centre open to support groups, parking for key workers and grant funding for 500-600 vulnerable families and keeping the parks and toilets open in a Covid-secure way.
- Taking forward a project to include beach safety and working with groups in the Bay towards a programme of activity to support a blue flag application.

2. Town Councillors

Cllr Andre advised members that in response to recent flooding due to unprecedented levels of rainfall, that she had been working with partners to produce a community resilience plan, which was a living document which would set-up how to deal with a range of emergencies. It was hoped it could be brought to the council in the next few weeks.

3. To note Isle of Wight Council Ward Reports

Cllrs Andre and Ward had circulated written reports.

4. Outside Bodies

Cllr Andre had circulated the notes for the December 2020 meeting of the South Wight Parishes Health and Wellbeing Forum. Members were advised that Claire Colins, from Autism Inclusion Matters, and Mark Kelly, from Socialising Buddies had attended the most recent meeting and members could request further information if required.

54-20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be considered following central government announcements regarding Covid-19 restrictions and the 2021 Local Elections. It was hoped the next meeting could be held at the Broadway Centre.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr Stephen Parkes asked a question regarding the May 2021 elections in relation to the pandemic. He was advised to contact the Elections Manager at the Isle of Wight Council.

Mr Adrian Whittaker questioned if the town council could assist with the vegetation at the Canoe Lake. It was agreed he could liase with Cllr Andre as the Isle of Wight Council ward member.

Mrs Ceri Dent asked if the budget paper would be made public and was advised they would be published on the website.

Statement from IW Council – Los Altos Park – Tree Maintenance

As a council it is our responsibility to protect and enhance our open spaces. With this in mind, it is our goal to increase the tree cover on our land holdings by committing to planting more trees and working with a wide range of local stakeholders to secure the benefits of our natural assets for generations to come.

As a council we also have a duty of care and so we manage the risk posed by trees. All our trees are regularly assessed by competent arboriculturists, and for safety, sometimes it becomes necessary to cut back or even remove trees.

The planned Council tree works at Los Altos Park, Sandown is such a situation. The trees in question are a line of Holm Oaks along the park boundary with the Island Line Railway. The trees were once a hedge that has since grown into 20m high trees. Because of the growth habit of the Holm Oaks at this location, their closely planted proximity and their propensity to form a low arching overextended crown over the path and railway line, they pose a significant risk to the public when they fail, either onto the path in the park or the railway line. It is necessary therefore to reduce the risk with appropriate remedial works to the trees.

However, if possible, we prefer not to remove these trees entirely and with this in mind, the Holm Oaks will be maintained as pollards from now on, with an annual pruning cycle. This means the tops will be cut off but allowed to grow back until they are cut again in a few years' time, in a similar manner to plane trees on the nearby streets. These trees are a natural and cultural asset and therefore it is the intention of the council in the future to mitigate for the loss of canopy cover by planting a row of native tree species parallel to the line of Holm Oaks, but outside of the falling distance of the railway line. This will provide a greater diversity of native tree species for future generations to enjoy, whilst maintaining the safety of the public, our main priority.

14 February 2021