



SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

THRIVING COMMUNITIES WORKING PARTY MEETING 5 MAY 2026 (9:30 AM)

1.1. Present: Cllrs Joan Solomon (Chair), Leon Girling and Paddy Lightfoot.

Also in attendance: Jennifer Armstrong (Clerk/RFO), Raine Elliss (Deputy Clerk)

Community Safety

JAG Update

- 1.2. Members noted with disappointment that the initiative to increase of Community Safety Officer could not be taken forward due to lack of buy-in from other areas. However, there was potentially some positive news with possible funding from the Social Network Group's Thriving Communities Fund (up to £8,000). A contact (Toby) was identified, and Cllr Solomon agreed to pass on the details to officers to enable further enquiries.
- 1.3. Cllr Solomon had attended a Home Share webinar, highlighting a scheme where younger individuals live affordably with elderly homeowners in exchange for assistance with household tasks.
- 1.4. This service was being commissioned by the Isle of Wight Council and local councils were being asked to support the initiative. Members agreed that unless Council objected, information regarding the scheme would be added to the Local Information section of the Council's website and promoted where possible.

Police

- 1.5. Issues affecting the town were discussed with members noting officers recent, positive discussions regarding reporting antisocial behaviour and non-urgent crimes.
- 1.6. Concerns remained in relation to anecdotal evidence regarding the handling of 101 calls, including concerns about a lack of follow-up. Noting that the "Let's Talk" system was intended for residents to report anti-social behaviour and minor local issues, the Working Party expressed concern that 101 calls are not being prioritised for residents.
- 1.7. The Working Party agreed that officers should write to their contact to seek clarification of the process. Subject to this, it was further agreed to write to the local MP and the Police and Crime Commissioner, to raise concerns that calls may be being prematurely closed and to request support. A public meeting with the MP and the Police and Crime Commissioner would also be proposed
- 1.8. The local neighbourhood police officer would also invited to attend a future Thriving Towns Working Party to introduce himself and build relationships with members and the community.

- 1.9. The Clerk advised costs for speed cameras had been explored as previously raised as a potential solution. However, initial research had costed this in the region of £90,000.
- 1.10. Different approaches to interrupting vehicle-related anti-social behaviour, including cars undertaking “donuts.” were discussed. Interrupting the flow of the overflow carpark was proposed. Officers would speak to the IWC regarding fencing on the grass area.”

Issues affecting Sandown

- 1.11. Public perception and communications were discussed, including the potential referral of a volunteer to assist with website updates and improving engagement with residents on Council matters. The Clerk advised this was a positive idea and was supportive in principle; however, implementation would require time to establish appropriate arrangements, including a volunteer policy. The Council agreed to bring forward a proposal for consideration, with a view to implementation in late summer.
- 1.12. Progress on the Ocean Hotel site was discussed with draft designs for the communication boards at the Ocean being presented and well received. Members followed up on when the Ocean Hotel survey would be published now the pre-election period had ended.
- 1.13. Sandown in Bloom was noted as going ahead. It was agreed that officers would contact the main organiser to help with promotion and advertising, and to ascertain whether any further support is required Subject to further discussion, Council could seek to adopt the initiative in the future.
- 1.14. Members discussed correspondence received from Royal Mail to MP Joe Robertson outlining the reasons why Sandown is not currently eligible for a small alternative rural postal service and confirming that opportunities are being advertised for a full Post Office service in the town.
- 1.15. The MP has requested the letter be shared with the public to provide clarity and understanding. The Council agreed that the correspondence should be published alongside its “Working to Make Sandown Better” communications to help inform residents and gather public views.

School Crossing Patrol

- 1.16. The budget had included monies to support The Bay Primary School in providing a safer zebra crossing through part-funding of a School Crossing Patrol. The budget had been set expecting the PTA or similar group to match fund. However, the school did not have a PTA.
- 1.17. A proposal was made to increase support initially but decrease year in year to allow the school to establish its own monies for the provision via crowdfunding and school-led fundraising.
- 1.18. It was agreed a proposal be presented to Full Council by the Working Party on 18 May for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT, using funds from the Community Safety budget line, funding be increased to fund 100% in year 1n 50% in year 2 and 25% on year 3.

New Mural Project

- 1.19. Members noted that the Eastern Gardens Viewing platform mural was expected to be in place by the Summer.
- 1.20. Locations for further murals were discussed with including a mural beneath the Iron Bridge was discussed. Officers would investigate potential funding opportunities, determine whether planning permission is required and seek permission from the Railway

Phone Box Library

- 1.21. The Phone Box had been installed at the Broadway Centre. Work had begun on refurbishing the project.

Beat Surgery

- 1.22. Police Beat Surgeries were now scheduled on a regular basis at the Broadway Centre. However, May's session had been cancelled.

Butt Bin

- 1.23. This project would be taken forward when officer's had capacity.

Community Vegetable Planters and Broadway

- 1.24. Planters had not been installed. Christchurch Warm Spaces and Aspire Café among other local groups would be taking ownership. Sandown Town Council had supported the project by providing the land and undertaking tree works to ensure the site was suitable.

National Reading Project 2026

- 1.25. The Deputy Clerk provided an update on the *National Reading Project 2026*, reporting that they are working in partnership with Jean Jones, winner of the National Reading Volunteer Award. The project highlights the importance of early reading and demonstrates how town and parish councils can contribute meaningfully to this national focus through the funding and provision of book bags for local primary schools.
- 1.26. All artwork had been sent to the printers, and draft materials were currently being checked by the schools and the Deputy Clerk. Members would be kept updated on the project's progress.