



## SANDOWN TOWN COUNCIL – MEETING MINUTES 26 JANUARY 2026

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandown Town Council held on **MONDAY, 26 JANUARY 2026** at 7:00 pm at The Broadway Centre, 1 Broadway, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 9GG.

**Present:** Cllrs Alex Lightfoot (Mayor), Lee Ambler, Debbie Andre, Frank Baldry, Ian Boyd, Liam Cregg, Paddy Lightfoot, Tracy Mikich, Joan Soloman and Gary Young.

**Also Present:** Jennifer Armstrong (Clerk/RFO). Lorraine Elliss (Deputy Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

### **PUBLIC QUESTIONS:**

Ms Stephanie Jefferies (Sandown Xmas Funday) raised concerns about conflicting information from councillors regarding the proposed Summer Events programme. The Mayor clarified that the programme had not yet been scoped, would not include the Regatta or Carnival, and that all proposed draft budgets included funding for the Funday.

Ms Jefferies argued that her requests for increased funding had been ignored, stating the current £2,000 grant was insufficient given the scale and cost of the event. The Mayor replied that the only proposed grant increase was for the Carnival Association, whose funding had previously been reduced and who had faced unexpected exceptional financial pressures this year.

He added that the Council had engaged a Community Development Officer/Bid Writer to help local groups secure additional funding and offered to pass on her details (with consent). He also noted that neither he nor the office had received any formal request from her for increased funding.

### **92-2025/26 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Leon Girling and Ian Ward.

### **93-2025/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

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

Cllr Andre declared an interest in matters pertaining to the Isle of Wight Council as ward member and a pecuniary interest in the Carnival Association. It was also noted her property backed onto Los Altos Park and was used as an Air BnB.

#### **To receive and consider granting any written requests for dispensations.**

None Received.

## **94-2025/26 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 24 November 2025, was moved and duly seconded. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements; the results of which were as follows and it was unanimously agreed:

### RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November be approved as a true record.

## **95-2025/26 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### a) Risk Register

Members considered the updated Risk Register noting that a number of areas for reflection had been put forward by councillors and would be incorporated into the review process in the Autumn.

A motion to approve and adopt the Risk Register and duly seconded. Councillors' votes, were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements; the results of which were as follows and it was unanimously:

### RESOLVED:

THAT the updated Risk Register be approved and adopted.

### b) Delegated Authority for Grants under £2,000

Council considered the request from the Finance Committee requesting Council delegate authority for grant awards up to £2,000 to the Finance Community, noting that the majority of grants were for smaller amounts of money and funded from existing budget lines such as the place plan.

Members also noted that the agenda would provide prior notification of any grants being considered, that the meetings were held in public and were open to all councillors should a member wish to comment on an application.

A motion was moved and duly seconded, that the Committee request delegated authority to approve grants of up to £2,000. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements, and it was unanimously:

### RESOLVED:

THAT the Finance Committee be delegated authority to approve grants of up to £2,000

### c) Recommendations from meeting held on Monday, 19 January 2025.

No recommendations were put forward at the meeting.

## **96-2025/26 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE**

No recommendations were put forward by the Planning Committee

## **97-2025/26 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE**

Council ratified the remote decision to appoint Cllr Joan Solomon as the council's representative on the Joint Actions Group sub-group tasked with reviewing the key

recommendations from the Crime Prevention Team's report which needed to be made at short notice over the festive period. Members noted that the Isle of Wight Council Ward Members were also part of the group.

A motion was moved and duly seconded accordingly, and councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements, and it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the remote decision to appoint Cllr Joan Solomon as the council's representative on the Joint Actions Group sub-group tasked with reviewing the key recommendations from the Crime Prevention Team be ratified.

**98-2025/26      2026-2027 BUDGET**

Council considered three budget proposals.

- The Council's Draft Budget (an increase of £60.16 per year or 25.0%).
- An alternative Budget proposed by Cllr Joan Solomon (an increase of £33.59 per year or 14.0%)
- An alternative Budget proposed by the Together for Sandown Group (an increase of £23.50 per year or 9.7%).

Clarification was provided that the Council's budget was not an officer recommended budget but prepared on the basis of the items proposed at the November 2025 meeting.

Cllr Solomon proposed her budget focused on funding for a second day of funding for an additional Community Protection Officer (CPO) for the island. The alternative budget included one days funding (with an additional two days being sponsored by Ryde and Newport) and one day was set aside for administration, this left one working day unfunded.

Cllr Solomon argued that since Sandown represented two of the main four "hotspots" on the island, those being the Esplanade and the High Street, it would be an advantage to Sandown if a second day could be funded to give greater foot fall and a more visible presence in our community.

She then outlined the savings proposed to reduce help fund this additional cost. The proposed alternative budget was not seconded.

Cllr Alex Lightfoot proposed a budget drafted by Together for Sandown, noting the figures had changed by 25p due to an increase in the tax bases since it was drafted. Overall, the proposed budget was very similar to that of Councillor Solomon. The key difference was the resurfacing of the carpark.

Members also noted it had been indicated there was some appetite from the PCC to fund the additional day.

The need to increase the budget to maintain the quality of existing services while also delivering new projects that meet community needs was highlighted.

A motion proposing the amendment was moved. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements; the results of which were as follows and it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the alternative budget of £861,438 presented as Appendix C (attached to and forming part of these minutes) be approved and adopted.

A motion regarding setting the precept in line with this budget was then moved and duly seconded. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements; the results of which were as follows and it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Council approves a precept of £685,816 or Band D equivalent of £263.72 for the financial year 2026/2027.

**99-2025/26      UK TOWN OF CULTURE**

Members considered a motion proposing the Council support an Expression of Interest for the governments UK Town of Culture competition and act as the responsible body for the application but not to prepare the submission themselves and support an community based "bid partnership" group to do so. The key points highlighted were

- The initiative was not for established cultural centres, but where change could be most affected.
- Sandown would fall within the Small-Town category and would not be in competition with Ryde and Newport though would be in the same category as Ventnor.

A motion proposing the first three recommendation in the accompanying report was moved and duly seconded. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements; the results of which were as follows and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED**

- (i) THAT Council formally approve the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) for the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition before the March 31st deadline.
- (ii) THAT Council act as the "Accountable Body" for the bid, providing the necessary local authority partnership required by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).
- (iii) THAT Council endorse the formation of a dedicated bid partnership comprising local cultural, scientific, and community leaders to lead on the vision and content of the EOI.

A second motion regarding the appointment of councillor representatives to the steering group preparing the expression moved and duly seconded. Councillors' votes were confirmed verbally to meet accessibility requirements; the results of which were as follows and it was unanimously

- (iv) THAT Council nominate two Council representatives, Cllrs Mikich and Solomon, to sit on the steering group to ensure alignment with the Council's existing regeneration and dereliction surveys.

**100-2025/26      WORKING PARTIES**

The report from the working parties was noted.

### **101-2025/26 TOWN CLERK REPORT**

Members received and noted the report from the Town Clerk updating them on recent activities including a visitor fall at the centre and resolution of the lighting and access issues at the PlayZone with the proposed opening to the public in February. Posters would be displayed accordingly.

### **102-2025/26 TO RECEIVE ANY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES RAISED**

None Received.

### **103-2025/26 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS AND OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Lee Ambler reported on issues previously raised about threatening behaviour from street drinkers and advised police had been seen to be actively dispersing individuals in the areas protected by Public Space Protection Orders and no further complaints had been made.

Cllr Andre updated members on various matters:

- Discussions were ongoing between planning enforcement and the owners of the Cygnet Hotel site. A report from building control was pending but it was likely the building would be demolished.
- There were new owners at the Parkbury who had begun works to fully refurbish the building.
- External works to the Esplanade Hotel were nearly complete.

She also encouraged the reporting of potholes as there had been significant deterioration to the Islands Roads and advised work was underway to reduce the impact of the Isle of Wight Takeover on residents and highways.

Cllr Ian Boyd highlighted the focus of the recent NALC National Assembly meeting on devolution and the impact on local councils noting they would need to work in clusters and with local organisations. How this was happening locally was discussed.

Cllr Paddy Lightfoot noted the budget set provided funding for the Bay Regeneration Officer post which was no longer funded by national government or the Isle of Wight Council, noting that the Bay Councils had specified the funding was for the incumbent officer only and there would be an SLA clearly stating that the officer work only on Bay projects.

Cllr Lightfoot also commented on the Southern Water planning process noting that there had been a significant number of objections from the Environment Agency down and that the public consultation date may be extended as a result. The Town Council, at a recent meeting with the Isle of Wight Council Administration had made its objections clear. Cllr Andre informed members she would not attend the planning meeting considering the item as a committee member but as ward member so she could put forward residents' objections.

Cllr Alex Lightfoot updated members on a recent "Sandown Summit" attended by the MP and PCC; while there had been no clear outcomes there as an agreement to work more collaboratively across the Bay and meetings would be held quarterly.

Cllr Lightfoot also congratulated everyone involved in the LINK project opening at the newly refurbished Town Hall. It was highlighted that funding for the project was from the Youth Investment Fund for the delivery of youth services.

The Skate Park refurbishment project will now be taken forward with consultation planned from Easter and the Young Futures working party taking forward the next steps.

Finally, Cllr Lightfoot informed members that the Town Council the Isle of Wight Council were considering the disposal Street toilets site at the February meeting of the relevant committee.

**104-2025/26      NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on 9 February 2025

None Received.

Meeting Closed 7:50