

SANDIACRE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 26 November 2024 at 7pm in the Memorial Institute, 19a Doncaster Avenue, Sandiacre, Derbyshire NG10 5FJ

PRESENT: Cllr W Major (Chairman)
Cllr S Bilbie
Cllr Mrs S Hales
Cllr T Hales
Cllr G Hickton
Cllr Mrs G Hickton
Cllr T Sanghera

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs M Bloor - Clerk to the Council

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

All members of the Committee present.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor	Declared Interest
W Major	Personal interest: Memorial Institute Trustee & Cloudside Academy Governor
S Bilbie	Personal interest: Memorial Institute Trustee
All Councillors	As residents of the parish determining the Precept – Dispensation applies

3. TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

4. VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS

There were no variations of order of business.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No items were raised.

6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 28/11/23 were noted for information purposes only, as they had been approved by full Council on 9/1/24 when the 2024/25 budget was ratified.

7. BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT

The Clerk tabled 6 pages of financial reports to assist Councillors consider the 2025/2026 budget. Each page was itemised and questions were invited.

Page 1. Overview 2024/2025	• Census 2021: Population: 9,100 / Households: 3,900 • Sandiacre is the largest of the 13 Parish Councils in Erewash with 14 Councillors • Following recovery of £24,000 withdrawn by EBC last year through the CF grant, the Band D charge was 3rd lowest at £2,169.31 • Sandiacre has the 3rd highest Precept across the parishes: £96,500 • Ockbrook & Borrowash have the highest Precept at £139,341 • Sandiacre prioritises reliable and continuing community services, such as grounds maintenance and litter picking across areas it is responsible for • Parish Precept: Band D properties: £35.74 per year / 0.69 per week • Proposed: 2025/26 = Band D properties: £37.17 per year / 0.71 per week • Proposed: 4% increase in Precept to £100,360 to recover removed CF grant and taking into account increases in service costs, inflation and higher employer NIC's. • With a sustained Precept and recovery of £2,000 removed by EBC, the proposed overall budget figure identified an actual increase of 1.85%.
Page 2. Carry forward & income	• List of carry forward figures from April 2019 to April 2024 • Carry forward April 2024 = £45,994.75, including for ring-fenced items • Polling station admin. costs ring-fenced: £2,000 p.a. set aside over 4 years • Income received from 1/4/24 to 31/10/24 = £110,848.07, including outside grant funding • Estimated income for forthcoming financial year: £214,119.05, including awaited FCC grant for perimeter footpath on Springfield Park • Predicted Cemetery income: £10,251 (reduced) • Cemetery fees noticeably reducing and by at least one third overall as people now moved to pure cremation and burial space is no longer purchased • Recommendation: Increase Cemetery fees by 4%, in line with Precept
Page 3. Budget monitoring to 31/10/24	• An itemised list of Precept expenditure to 31/10/24 was considered in detail • Energy costs were increasing year on year • Contractors would sustain increased staffing costs for employer NIC's • A complete inspection of headstone testing had been undertaken • The 4-week Summer play scheme was now fully supported by Precept • Councillors felt it important to support the scheme to benefit local families • Clerk's salary: The employer NIC's would now rise by £960 per year • The 2024 NJC pay scales had been agreed from 1/4/24. The Clerk was on the maximum of the scale and would receive an additional 0.61p per hour • The Council had adopted NJC pay and conditions and arrears had been agreed by full Council at the October meeting • The Clerk confirmed she would continue to seek outside grant funding each year to ease budget pressures • Additional tree work and reduction in vegetation had been required on parks and burial grounds to reduce vegetation encroaching onto neighbouring properties The Chairman confirmed a resident had recently requested an increase in litter picking in the village centre by the Parish Council, but it was considered this was the responsibility of EBC and the present route did not require adjustment. Councillors noted the budget position and areas which had exceeded estimated costs.

Page 4. Budget estimates 2025/26	• All expenditure now moved to Precept from 1/4/25 • Each budget heading was explained and highlighted for additional costs • Christmas lights rental agreement: Year 3/3. New agreement 2026 • Fox Landscaping under a 2-year contract. Ending April 2026 • Mr Wallace contracted for Amenity Areas in the village centre (6 months) • It was noted costs for bedding plants continued to significantly increase • Bedding areas by the canal could be narrowed to ensure a fuller display • Mr Wallace (self-employed contractor) request for an extra £1 per hour from 1/4/25 for litter picking = £13.50p.h. Litter picking covered 6 days per week / 52 weeks on 2 parks, Derby Road and Padmore Moorings • The Clerk explained Mr Wallace and Mr Spencer could be called upon to cover litter picking and/or low level work. Work was itemised each month on time sheets showing the 2 different rates • Mr Wallace had requested an hourly rate of £25 per hour for low level work, as S/E costs were increasing, which would also apply to Mr Spencer • Predicted Cemetery fees to include a 4% increase (rounded up) • It was noted the Council relied on Cemetery fees to support services and there was grave space available for approximately 25 to 30 year's Salary costs: Increase included for higher employer NIC's / Annual pay award • It was considered the village sign and 2 notice boards now required urgent replacement. The Clerk would obtain quotes.
Page 5. Cemetery fees 2025/26	• Recommendation to full Council to increase fees by 4% • To remove the line: 'Interment of Cremated Remains casket into purchased grave', as the cost for interment of a casket was already shown. • A maximum of 4 caskets could be allocated to 1 grave
Page 6. Predicted income & Priorities 2025/26	• Breakdown of predicted income including Precept, VAT refund, Cemetery fees, bank interest and potential outside grant funding: £214,119.05 • Estimated Band D charge £37.17 per annum / 0.71p per week <u>Priority areas:</u> 1. DARG: Repairs to play safety surfaces 2. Remove old Cemetery notice board and replace with metal Cemetery sign 3. Replace wooden village sign, opposite White Lion PH with metal sign 4. Replace 2 old wooden notice boards: Padmore Moorings/Austins Drive 5. Retain regular maintenance of burial grounds = Weekly/Fortnightly 6. Springfield Park: Welcome to park sign / Maintained by PC <u>Possible grant funding</u> • Public consultation through newsletter on improvement to Doncaster Avenue RG through Awards for All: New seating and litter/dog bins and park sign • Awaiting confirmation of FCC funding for perimeter footpath

a) **RESOLVED:** unanimously to receive and note the financial reports presented

b) **RESOLVED:** to review, without change, the current budget position to 31/10/24

8. CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS (CF) 2025/2026

RESOLVED: unanimously to recommend to full Council that the withdrawn £2,000 CF's grant be recovered through the Precept from 1/4/25

9. PRECEPT FOR THE PERIOD 1/4/25 TO 31/3/26

To set the level of Precept for ratification by full Council, including

- I. Parks and Open Spaces
- II. Burial grounds
- III. Clerk's salary: Increase agreed from 1/4/24 and Employer NIC's increased (Local Government Service Pay Agreement)

Following evaluation and discussion of each financial report presented it was,

RESOLVED: unanimously to recommend to full Council a Precept of £100,360

- Precept increase by 4% from 1/4/25 to safeguard all ongoing services and following withdrawal of the final CF grant of £2,000 by EBC
(Actual overall budget increase 1.85%)
- Band D charge from £35.74 to £37.17 per year / 71p per week

It was confirmed EBC would be notified of the parish Precept figure required and they would arrange for payment at the beginning of the financial year by single payment.

10. CEMETERY FEES FOR THE PERIOD: 1/4/25 TO 31/3/26

To set the level of Cemetery fees for ratification by full Council

RESOLVED: unanimously to recommend to full Council an increase in fees of 4% from 1/4/25, as shown on financial report

11. DATE FOR RATIFICATION BY FULL COUNCIL

To agree the date of ratification of the budget by full Council

Tuesday, 14 January 2025

SECOND TUESDAY IN THE MONTH

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed by the Chairman: _____ Date: _____