



ALDWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Aldwick Parish Offices, 88 Pryors Lane, Aldwick, West Sussex. P021 4JF
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Chairman: Cllr Richard Gotheridge **Clerk:** Heather Knight

Minutes of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING (458) OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**
Held on **Tuesday 19th March 2024 at 7.15pm** in the Aldwick Parish Council Office.

Present: Cllrs Gotheridge (Chairman), Basford (from Min. 155), Bence, Buckley (from Min. 155),
Huntley, Patel, Rufey and Shepherd
In attendance: H Knight (Clerk), and 5 members of public (*part of meeting*).

The meeting opened at 7.15pm.

146. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received, and reasons approved, from Cllrs Thas (personal) and Purser (prior personal commitment).

147. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Bence declared a personal interest in any matters that may conflict with his positions as a West Sussex County Councillor and as an Arun District Councillor.

148. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Council Meeting of 23rd January 2024

It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2024 were a correct record and that the Chairman sign them. The 20th February meeting had not taken place due to being inquorate.

Clerk's Report and Actions

Min. 141.1 – Refurbishment of West Meads public toilets: Arun DC had been advised that the Parish Council would not be contributing on this occasion. Confirmation had been received that these were public facilities, and also that the refurbishment is planned to commence on 17th April and complete on 23rd July: The toilets would be out of use for the duration and pavilion users had been contacted.

Min. 147.7 – Fraud Awareness presentation: Members were reminded that the Arun West Wardens were hosting this this week, Thursday 21st March at 2pm.

Allotments: Several poorly cultivated plots had been re-let over the past few months, on the arrangement of no rent being paid until 2024 renewal due to the amount of clearing work the new tenants were taking on. This was as agreed by Council. The waiting list had therefore moved in the right direction, however, more people had asked to be on the waiting list so it had not reduced for long. Renewal letters were about to be issued, which may result in further availability of plots. One tenant had been given notice to relinquish, so there was currently one plot potentially available requiring significant clearance work. One other plot was known to be available at the end of March, in good condition.

Portrait of His Majesty King Charles III: Rather than await formal council approval in case supplies dwindled, the Clerk had taken an early opportunity to order a free, framed, official portrait of HM the King now available for town/parish councils from the Cabinet Office. This should arrive in early April. Members voiced support of the action taken.

150. Any such matters as the Chairman may wish to bring to the of the Committee for information only
None raised.

151. Adjournment for public questions

The Chairman welcomed a resident who wished to speak regarding agenda item 7, concerns regarding antisocial behaviour and damage to the Aldwick beach huts.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7.19pm

During the adjournment, the resident described spates of vandalism and attempted thefts to around 20 beach huts in January 2024. The incidents were distressing to the beach hut owners/lessees and possibly

damaging to the image of Aldwick as a pleasant and safe place to live or visit. The MP and Sussex Police Chief Constable had been involved, and reports to Sussex Police made. The speaker recognised that the Parish Council had no direct remit on the issue but asked that the Council exert any influence possible on those authorities that do have responsibility, to fully investigate the incidents and try to reduce such occurrences.

The Chairman and Members thanked the resident for their input.

The Meeting reconvened at 7.23pm

152. To receive reports from the District and County Councillors representing Aldwick

Apologies had been received from D.Cllr Needs.

D.Cllr Bence updated regarding the motorhomes parking at the seafront: There are no parking restrictions over the winter period but due to concerns regarding potential contamination of seawater, a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was being considered. This would need public support as parking restrictions could result in motorhomes parking instead in nearby residential roads such as Silverston Avenue. Aldwick is the only beach to have failed recent pollution readings, reasons include illegal hook ups from properties and contamination linking to surface water drainage. There was no news yet about new signage warning public against discharging foul water. The Government was making £100m available for areas affected by flooding. Comment was made that excessive parking in Silverston Avenue may affect Southern Water tankers accessing West Park.

C.Cllr Patel reported on various county items including: £4m new funding is set to support highways maintenance; Recycling centres move to summer opening times from 1st April; Operation Watershed, supporting communities with flood issues, will continue for a further year and any voluntary groups can apply for funding.

Query was raised around traffic issues during the previous week when various roadworks brought Bognor Regis wider area to a standstill for several hours, and why a bigger picture of such roadworks converging wasn't considered by the County Council. C.Cllr Bence advised that a key factor in this incident was that illegal temporary traffic lights had been left at Rowan Way by a utility company: WSCC had removed the lights as quickly as possible and fined the company. Comment was made about ongoing problems on Pagham Road, around the Hook Lane/Sefter Lane area, as that section being out of action would mean additional traffic in Aldwick routes.

153. Antisocial Behaviour at Aldwick Beach Huts

Members discussed the concerns reported of antisocial behaviour and damage to the Aldwick beach huts. Whilst sharing public concerns over this, it was not something the Council could directly change. It was noted that the incidents had been reported to the police and Community Wardens, and that the Clerk would be raising concerns at a forthcoming clerks' meeting with the Inspector of Neighbourhood Policing for Arun. The matter would be kept under review.

154. Co-options to Council

Details of two co-option applications had been circulated for Members' consideration. The Chairman invited each applicant to say a few words in support of their application.

Following proposal and voting, it was **RESOLVED** to co-opt Martin Buckley and Kevin Basford to the Council. Each then signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting as Councillors.

Cllrs Buckley and Basford joined the meeting.

155. Committee Vacancy

The Clerk reported that Cllr Bence had resigned from the Planning Committee, leaving one vacancy. The two new Members were invited to consider over the next few weeks whether one or other may wish to join the Committee. No appointment was made for the time being.

156. To receive Committee meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 23rd January, 6th February and 20th February 2024 were received and noted.

Cllr Patel declared an interest in this item as a member of Arun District Council Planning committee.

157. Future Staff Resourcing

The Clerk's report was noted. The Chairman explained that he had requested this item and summarised the background: In 2023 there had been a Clerk, a Deputy Clerk and a cleaner, all having retired within a fairly close period. The Council then worked with a locum clerk to maintain essential cover and to recruit the present Clerk. In the process, Members weren't sure how many hours were required for the position, so 25 hours was set with the potential to review this, including assessing whether additional staff support was needed. Now that the Clerk had had several months to settle in, the Staffing Committee would be convened as soon as practicable to discuss whether any changes needed to be made and would report back to Council.

158. Advanced Email Threat Protection

Following the Clerk enquiring into appropriate security measures, recommendations and costs had been received from the Council's IT provider. Members considered the three recommended additional items. The first, Advance Email Threat Protection (AETP), was the recommended minimum level to better screen out phishing, scam etc emails. It was **RESOLVED** to purchase the AETP security tool at the cost of £1.50 per user per month.

The other two items recommended were Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) at a one-off charge of £15 per user to activate, and Microsoft 365 Backup, recommended as Microsoft and Google do not guarantee restoring lost data, at a cost of £2.50 per user per month. The Clerk felt that more information about these two items was needed, particularly the MFA which may already be in place. It was therefore **AGREED** to defer these to a future meeting pending further details.

159. Arun DC Climate Change Workshop

The Clerk reported the District Council's invitation to clerks to a free Climate Change Workshop they are hosting, delivered by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). The workshop aim is to provide a good grounding of the context of climate change for local action and the role councils can play in tackling climate change. Members **RESOLVED** to approve that the Clerk attend the workshop, date to be finalised.

160. Councillor Training

Members had received details from the Clerk of refresher/new councillor and chairmanship training, delivered via WSALC training provider Mulberry & Co. All Members were encouraged to undertake this and asked to let the Clerk know any sessions they would like to attend. It was **RESOLVED** to approve attendance by Cllr Purser at New Councillor/Roles & Responsibilities training on 18th April and at Chairmanship training on 8th April, and attendance by Cllr Gotheridge at Chairmanship training on 8th April, each at a cost of £45 exc. VAT, totalling £135.00 + VAT. The Clerk would forward details of available training sessions to the two newly appointed Members.

161. Annual Meeting of Electors

The Clerk's report explaining the basis of the Annual Parish Electors' meeting was noted. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Parish Electors' Meeting would take place on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 6.30pm, immediately prior to the scheduled Planning Committee meeting that evening: As a result, the Planning Committee meeting start of 7.00pm may be delayed, subject to the duration of the Annual Parish Electors' Meeting. Agenda items suggested were: Council chair, committee and finance reports on outgoing year and unaudited accounts to year end; New budget and precept 2024-25; Grant Aid scheme 2024-25.

162. Arun DC Infrastructure Investment Plan

Members noted the details previously circulated by hyper-link and that the matter had been considered and referred to Council by the Planning Committee meeting (Min. 63, 05/03/24 refers). At that time a member of public had put forward a cycleway proposal for linking Pagham and South Mundham, which

would also benefit the Aldwick area. Subsequently, it had transpired that a very similar project was already on the ADC IIP longlist (ref. 61/PC), as well as a separate cycleway project linking Aldwick with Bognor Regis and Bersted (ref. 22/ADC/TI-Route 12). The Clerk had liaised with the Pagham PC Clerk and the ADC CIL Officer. ADC had advised that no specific S106 or CIL monies were set aside for either project and they would therefore remain on the 'longlist' pending any identified funding updates.

Following consideration, no new projects were proposed to be put forward and it was **AGREED** that the Council's support for both existing projects would be conveyed to ADC.

163. Insurance cover renewal

The Clerk advised that the existing long-term agreement (LTA) with the current broker/insurer would end on 31st March 2024 and the renewal quotation included an option for a further 3 year LTA. Having reviewed the insurance schedule, the Clerk was of the view that the cover offered was appropriate and the LTA beneficial, but had raised some queries with the broker to seek clarification on a) whether the Council's civic insignia was insured, b) whether cyber-attack was covered, as the policy wording seemed ambiguous and c) the reason for a schedule listing of playground equipment, as the Clerk had understood no such equipment was in council ownership or responsibility. A typographical error in previous years' building sum insured had also been identified but fortunately had not caused a difference in premiums paid. The Clerk would contact Arun DC to clarify for certain the matter of playground equipment ownership. The queried items were not likely to make a significant difference to the premium quoted and any necessary adjustments could be made mid-term. It was **RESOLVED** to approve insurance policy renewal under a Long-Term Agreement as per the quotation from Gallagher, insurance cover being provided by Hiscox, at the annual premium of £2,648.28.

164. Amenities (roads, PROW/footpaths and general maintenance of the parish).

164.1 Public Benches:

The Clerk had not yet obtained quotations for benches previously discussed. WSCC had confirmed that their Social Value Scheme had again been postponed indefinitely due to prioritisation of dealing with road issues. This item would be brought back to Council at the earliest opportunity.

164.2 Summer Play Scheme

The Chairman had asked for this to be discussed early on to allow time for consideration of options, noting some of the issues that had arisen in the previous year. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk investigate other providers and costs, including the provider previously used, so that Members could evaluate the best course of action for summer 2024, for reporting to Council as soon as practicable.

164.3 Allotments

The Clerk had provided an update under Clerk's Report, Min. 148.

164.4 D-Day 80th Commemoration

The Clerk had circulated information about the national commemoration of the D-Day 80th Anniversary on 6th June 2024, which included Beacon Lighting, Lamp Light of Peace and D-Day 80 Flag of Peace. The lamps and flags of various sizes were available to purchase from official suppliers for parishes without beacons if Members wished. The flag could also be used for Remembrance Day. Members were asked whether they wished to arrange a local event. Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** that no formal commemorative event plans would be made at present but that the Clerk should order a D-Day 80 Flag of Peace up to a total of £30.00 inc VAT & postage, maximum size 6'x4', subject to flag pole height.

165. Finance

165.1 Financial reports

Members received bank reconciliations for Cashbooks 1, 2 and 3 as at 31st January 2024. Members received an Income & Expenditure compared to budget report as at 31st January 2024. Following consideration the Chairman signed the reports. The Clerk advised that the February accounts were not yet input onto the accounts system so financial reports to the end of February would be taken to the next meeting.

165.2 Earmarked Reserves

The Clerk advised that any movement of funds into or from earmarked reserves (EMRs) should be done before year end 31st March 2024, as any unspent budget lines would return to general reserves. During budget setting decisions, the Council had previously agreed to set up an EMR for Elections & Polls, to retain the currently unused budget and build up for future election/poll costs. The Clerk recommended that Council also consider approving EMRs for Councillor Training, thereby reserving current unspent Councillor Briefing Sessions budget of £500; and for CIL Funds, to clearly identify any CIL monies received or spent (currently £583.25 received). It was **RESOLVED** to approve that these Earmarked Reserves be established, and the unspent funds moved from General Reserves accordingly for year ending 31st March 2024.

165.3 List of Payments for Authorisation: Members received and **RESOLVED** to approve the payments, as shown below, and that the payment schedule be duly signed. *[NB: The February payments schedule was combined with the March schedule, due to the February Council meeting cancellation].*

Business Stream	£24.50
Tivoli	£1,373.56
Heather Knight	£1,857.68
HMRC	£572.47
NEST	£129.08
Chichester Payroll Servicess	£15.00
Barclays Bank	£2.50
Octopus Energy	£434.05
Barclaycard Commercial	£197.27
Zen internet	£62.63
Tivoli	£1,155.00
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
Printerland.co.uk	£66.00
Christie Intruder Alarms Ltd	£342.00
Barclays Bank	£2.50
Tivoli	£686.78
Chichester Payroll Services	£15.00
Heather Knight	£1,857.68
HMRC	£572.47
Nest	£129.08
Octopus Energy	£109.03
Barclaycard Commercial	£202.28
Mulberry & Co	£162.00
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
Gallagher Insurance	£2,648.28
Zen Internet	£68.06

165.4 Zoom Audioconference Subscription

The Clerk had noted that an ongoing subscription for Zoom audioconferencing appeared to be superfluous to the Council's needs and in liaison with the Chairman had cancelled the £12.99 monthly subscription. It could be reinstated easily if Members wished, and the free 40 minute meeting platform was available if necessary. There was already a separate Teams audioconferencing subscription as part of the Microsoft package the Council had, if online meetings were needed. It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the action taken in cancelling the subscription to Zoom.

166. Representatives to External Bodies

Members noted brief reports of representation at external meetings and details of forthcoming meetings as follows:

- Cllr Rufey had attended as Vice Chairman the opening of a new Wellness Fitness Centre at West Meads.

- Cllr Rufey had read to 3 classes at Rose Green Infant School's recent Book Week, as had the Clerk, and commented on the impressive standards at the school.
- Cllr Gotheridge reported on his attendance as Chairman at the recent Chairman's Forum co-ordinated by Bersted PC.

167. Correspondence.

Details were noted, attached as Appendix 1.

168. Date and time of next Council Meeting: Tuesday 23rd April 2024 at approximately 7.15pm (preceded by short Planning Committee at 7.00pm)

The meeting closed at 9.33pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATED

CORRESPONDENCE LIST FOR COUNCIL MEETING 19.03.24**West Sussex County Council (WSCC)**

- Member Information Bulletins Issues 4, 5, 6 and 7;
- New Releases: 05/02/24 Apprenticeships funding available for West Sussex businesses; 14/02/24 West Sussex residents asked to take part in major health survey;
- 16/02/24 Budget 2024/25 special edition;
- Fostering West Sussex – Foster carers needed for local children – campaign to urgently find more foster carers across West Sussex.

Arun District Council (ADC)

Arun Business Partnership February 2024 Newsletter

Horsham District Council

Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS) Newsletter/updates for February 2024 – Project Manager/first Newsletter of 2024 about local authority led water offsetting scheme for areas affected by Natural England water neutrality position statement within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone.

NALC

CEO Bulletins 25/01/24, 08/01/24, 15/01/24 and 01/02/24.

Sussex Police

Sussex Alerts: Sussex Crime and News Alerts 13/02/24
P&CC e-newsletters 26/01/24, 02/02/24 and 09/02/24

Neighbourhood Watch

Sussex Alerts 25/01/24, 05/02/24, 13/02/24 and 14/02/24

Rampion Offshore Wind Farm Project

- NI Mail distribution notification service to Interested parties: link to letter from Examining Authority providing the examination timetable for the planning application.
- Rampion Extension Development Ltd: Project newsletter for Rampion 2 Offshore Wind Farm development.

Action in rural Sussex (AirS)

Housing Enabling Service – How can we help you? And re-launching of the Sussex Rural Affordable Housing Partnership.

Rose Green Infant School

Request for Councillors to participate in their Reading for Pleasure project week commencing 4th March
(forwarded to Cllrs)

Residents

- Correspondence from resident with WSCC following up on school crossings at Rose Green;
- Enquiry from resident about the closure of Lloyds Pharmacy at Rose Green and any replacement;
- Resident request to highlight to Council issues of vandalism and burglary at the Aldwick beach huts;
- Resident request for replacement public seat at bus stop, B2166 Aldwick Road south side approach to The Martletts roundabout.

Civic invitations

- Bognor Regis Town Council Civic Reception Wed 29/03/24;
- Bersted Parish Council Civic Reception Thurs 29/03/24.

CAGNE

Details of 10th online AGM 24/02/24 at 7pm.