



ALDWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Aldwick Parish Offices, 88 Pryors Lane, Aldwick, West Sussex. PO21 4JF
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Chairman: Cllr Guy Purser Clerk: Heather Knight

Minutes of the **ANNUAL MEETING (460) OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**
Held on **Tuesday 21st May 2024 at 7.15pm** in the Aldwick Parish Council Office.

Present: Cllrs Purser (Chairman), Basford, Bence, Gotheridge, Huntley, Rufey and Thas.

In attendance: H Knight (Clerk), and 1 member of the public (part of meeting)

The meeting opened at 7.15pm.

1. Appointment of Chairman

The outgoing Chairman, Cllr Gotheridge, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. One nomination for Chairman was proposed and seconded, and following voting it was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Guy Purser as Chairman of the Council for the civic year 2024-2025. Cllr Purser duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and presided thereafter. Thanks were given to Cllr Gotheridge for his work and leadership over the past year during a transitional and challenging period for the council.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

One nomination was received, proposed and seconded. Following voting, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Jan Rufey as Vice Chairman of the Council.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, and reasons approved, from Cllr Patel (personal commitment), Cllr Buckley (personal commitment) and Cllr Shepherd (work commitment).

4. Declarations of Interest

4.1 Cllr Bence declared an interest in any agenda matters that may relate to his positions as a County and a District Councillor.

Cllr Gotheridge declared an interest in agenda item 19, Councillor Allowances.

Cllr Purser declared an interest in any agenda matters that may relate to his position as a District Councillor.

4.2 A new Register of Interests form had been circulated to Members, with the same content but in the format used by Arun DC to simplify the administrative process. Members were asked to complete and return these to the Clerk as soon as possible and within 28 days if there were any changes to existing information registered.

5. Approval as a correct record the minutes of the Council Meeting of 23rd April 2024

It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd April 2024 were a correct record and that the Chairman sign them.

Clerk's Report and Actions

Min. 148, 19.03.23 - Portrait of His Majesty King Charles III: Members had been asked to think about where to display this and a suggestion of the premises lobby area put forward. This area though was subject to strong sunlight, which may damage the portrait, the Clerk therefore suggested that a council chamber wall would be more suitable, especially being an external solid wall, to which Members agreed.

Min. 164.4 – D-Day 80: The flag with Certificate had been received, the final size and cost of the flag being 3x2ft @ £22.80 including delivery and VAT (£19.00 ex VAT).

6. Any such matters as the Chairman may wish to bring to the attention of the Committee for information only

None raised.

7. Adjournment for public questions

The meeting was adjourned at 7.24pm for a member of the public to speak.

The member of public queried whether a member had to be an elected councillor (as opposed to co-opted) in order to be appointed as chair of the council (Agenda item 19 refers). The Chair advised that this was not a requirement, referring to the Representation of the People Act 1983, s39. The Clerk further clarified that co-opted councillors have the same responsibilities and rights as elected members, with the only exception being that they are not entitled to receive the basic parish allowance.

The meeting was reconvened at 7.29pm.

8. Reports from the District and County Councillors representing Aldwick

C.Cllr Bence updated members on the ongoing issues to resolve flooding in various parishes across West Sussex and meetings held with Southern Water/WSCC. Fish Lane had been affected by Portsmouth Water supply issues during the recent incident.

Cllr. Bence urged councillors to use the One.Network website tool to find out details of future works in our location. In response to a member's query about how road surfacing works were scheduled and prioritised, he advised that he would liaise with Cabinet Member Cllr Joy Dennis and follow up with the APC member. Unfortunately staff resourcing issues were impacting the scheduled works causing some, eg Hawthorn Road, Bognor Regis, to be considerably delayed.

D.Cllr Purser reported on chair and leader etc changes from the Arun DC Annual Council meeting, with Cllr Dr Walsh now Chair, Cllr Tandy Vice Chair and Cllr Lury Leader.

9. Committee and Working/Steering Group Appointments

9.1 It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the Planning Committee membership as: Cllrs Shepherd, Rufey, Thas, Huntley and Buckley.

9.2 It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the Staffing Committee membership as: Cllrs Gotheridge, purser, Rufey and Shepherd (with Chair and Vice Chair of Council having ex-officio membership).

9.3 No other standing committees were appointed, which would be kept under review as the council evolves and potentially grows membership/staffing levels.

9.4 It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the Business Plan Steering Group membership as: Cllrs Gotheridge, Purser, Buckley and Basford.

9.5 It was **RESOLVED** that each committee and steering group should appoint its own chair and vice chair and make recommendations to council regarding Terms of Reference for approval.

10. Review of Standing Orders, Delegated Authority and Financial Regulations for the 2024-25 civic year

Members noted the draft papers circulated and the Clerk's recommendations in comparing the recently updated NALC model Standing Orders (SOs) and Financial Regulations (FRs).

10.1 Standing Orders: Members reviewed in detail the draft SOs, which required specific decision in some areas of optional content, and the Clerk would draw up the final document in line with decisions made – **RESOLVED** therefore to adopt as amended.

10.2 Financial Regulations: The FRs also required very detailed consideration where optional content or financial parameters are required. It was **RESOLVED** that this item would be deferred and that the Chair and Clerk would undertake an initial review with recommendations for consideration at the July meeting.

11. Bank signatories

It was **RESOLVED** that the current signatories of Cllrs Gotheridge, Rufey and the Clerk would be retained, with the addition of the Chair, Cllr Purser, for authorisation of the Council's bank accounts, cheque signing and online banking.

12. Appointments

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) Smythe & Co. be appointed as the Internal Auditor for 2024/2025.

- b) Noted that Moore is the external auditor for 2023/2024 as assigned by the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments body.
- c) Irwin Mitchell be appointed as Solicitors for 2023/2024.

13. Deeds & Trust Instruments held in the Custody of the appointed solicitors.

It was **RESOLVED** that the relevant documents be held by the appointed solicitors.

14. Calendar of Meetings

Members noted the draft suggestions from the Clerk for the remaining six months July-December, using the same scheduling pattern as the previous six month period. It was **RESOLVED** to approve those meeting dates, and the Clerk would produce the final version for publication and issue to Members. Meetings would continue to be held on specific Tuesday evenings at 7pm (Planning) and 7.15pm (Council).

15. Representatives to outside bodies

Following discussion, the following was **RESOLVED**:

- To remove Emergency Planning (Arun Link) from APC list;
- That the Chair and Vice Chair be the primary and reserve representatives respectively for: Youth Activities, Aldwick & Pagham Advisory Committee, West Bersted Advisory Committee, West Sussex Association of Local Councils, Arun District Association of Local Councils.

Cllr Bence offered to also be a representative/liaison if needed for the West Bersted Advisory Committee, on which he sits already as a District Councillor.

16. Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) annual subscription

It was **RESOLVED** to continue to pay the cost for the Clerk's 2024/2025 membership.

17. Parish Online annual subscription

It was **RESOLVED** to renew the Parish Online annual subscription at the subsidised cost of £25.00 + VAT.

18. To receive Committee meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 23rd April and 7th May 2024 were received and noted.

19. Members' Allowance

Arun DC had advised the recommendation of the Remuneration Panel that parish/town councillors continue to be allowed up to 10% of the District Basic Allowance, giving a Basic Parish Allowance of £663 pa for the three eligible Aldwick PC members. The Clerk advised that if approved this would result an overspend of £78 on the budgeted Councillor Allowance cost centre (4070). Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve payment of the 2024-25 Councillor Allowance of £663 per annum for the three councillors entitled to receive this, payable in two instalments in May and November, with a resulting overspend of £78 to that cost centre.

20. Chair's Allowance

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Chair's Allowance for 2024-25 of £600 as budgeted, with £300 to be paid to the Chair in May and £300 held until November, with the option to consider utilising the funds if considered necessary on appropriate items where the Council had no power to spend.

21. Financial Reports

Members received and approved signature of bank reconciliations for Cashbooks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to 31st March 2024, and signed by two authorised signatories. Members received an Income & Expenditure compared to budget report to 31st March 2024. Cost centres showing overspends were discussed. 4130 Telephone & Internet overspend of £128 indicated an insufficient budget provision. 4085 Professional Development overspend of £150 was due to allocating an additional unbudgeted cost of accounting software training. The insurance cost centre 4110 overspend was due to the new premium being entered on the accounting software, as due before 1st April, but relating to the current financial year: This would be adjusted as a prepayment and allocated to the correct year when the Clerk finalised the year end accounts, which was in hand.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the List of Payments for Authorisation, as shown below, and that the payment schedule be duly signed:-

Mrs H Knight/ HMRC / NEST Pensions	£2,559.23
Business Stream	£20.16
Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd	£54.00
Chichester Payroll Services	£15.00
Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	£321.00
Printerland.co.uk	£266.16
ProcessMatters2	£120.00
C&M Fire Alarms Ltd	£168.00
Castle Water	£39.98
Barclays Bank	£2.50
Octopus Energy	£63.21
Zen Internet Ltd	£56.82
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
Geosphere Ltd	£30.00
Barclaycard Commercial	£152.28

22. Proposal for Pedestrian Crossing at Rose Green

Cllr Thas reported on the survey she had undertaken in 2023 regarding views on the safety of pedestrians and school children at the Carlton Avenue / Rose Green Road junction. The questionnaire had been completed by parents and local schools as stakeholders and results analysed in her report, which Members had received. Cllr Thas sought the Council's support to submit a Community Highways Scheme application for a pedestrian crossing at the junction. It was noted that ward county councillor support would be required and Cllr Thas would be approaching Cllr Patel in this regard. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council supports the application and would provide an appropriate letter. If possible a joint application would be submitted, the Clerk to work in liaison with Cllr Thas regarding this.

- 23.** It was **RESOLVED** to change the order of business by moving agenda item 23 Gardening Maintenance Agreement to the end of the meeting, as it may contain sensitive information and therefore require exclusion of press and public.

24. Youth Services - Summer Play Scheme

The Clerk updated that she had contacted Freedom Leisure to obtain alternative costs and options but had been redirected to a different staff member and as yet had had no clear response. The Clerk would continue to pursue this item urgently.

25. Representatives to External Bodies

There were no reports made.

26. Correspondence.

Details were noted, attached as Appendix 1. It was noted that the Chair would be attending Bognor Regis Armed Forces Day, accompanied by the Vice Chair, on 22nd June 2024. The Chair was not available for the Arun Community Transport AGM and the Vice Chair would check availability and attend if possible.

- 27. Date and time of next Council Meeting:** Annual Council Meeting, Tuesday 18th June 2024 at approximately 7.15pm (preceded by short Planning Committee at 7.00pm).

- 28.** Owing to the contractually sensitive and confidential nature of the next item, it was **RESOLVED** to exclude members of the public and press for the following item.

29. Gardening/Grounds Maintenance

Cllr Basford and the Clerk reported on their recent site meeting with Tivoli local Operations Manager to discuss the planting schedule and service arrangements. This had been followed up with a letter setting

out the Council’s views and basis of an interim monthly arrangement pending final negotiation of terms and conditions before accepting the new quotation, with a deadline for completion of 30th June 20224. The information provided by Tivoli for the scheduled dates and work within the agreement had required further clarification. Members noted a lack of regular watering of the seasonal bedding and risk of plants failing was a concern, as Tivoli do not provide this. On balance it was felt that this was a relatively low risk that would have to be endured for the current year, subject to being able to organise a separate watering regime through the spring/summer. The possibility of asking local businesses to assist in watering planters near to their premises was mentioned. Concern was also noted over considerable delay in arrival of summer plants, with no date yet provided. Following considerable discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the action taken by the Clerk, in liaison with the Chair and Cllr Basford, and **APPROVE** their continued negotiation of the interim arrangements together with finalising mutually acceptable terms and conditions for acceptance of the quotation.

The meeting closed at 9.32pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATED

CORRESPONDENCE LIST FOR COUNCIL MEETING 21.05.24

WSCC

- Various dates Member Bulletins and press releases (forwarded to Cllrs where relevant)
- Email 15.05.24 from Parish & Community Engagement Officer – thanks to councils for registering interest in participating in a pilot trialling some new ways of working with parish/town councils and outlining next steps.

ADC

- Email 22.04.24 from Community Safety Officer: Details of public survey on Understanding Drug use and Harm, in partnership with WSCC (published on parish website and notice boards)
- Email 25.04.24 from Landscapes Officer (Projects): Details of public survey about Queens Field play area improvements (published on parish website and notice boards) deadline 5pm 24th May
<https://forms.office.com/e/YrgtHwUDuS>
- Email 01.05.24 from Project Support Officer, Climate Change: Spaces still available for their Climate Change Workshop on 6th June – up to 2 representatives per parish can attend (Clerk is registered to attend) plus follow up day 10th July.
- Email 10.05.24 – Announcement of Dawn Hudd's appointment as new Chief Executive.

NALC

- Various Chief Executive Bulletins/e-newsletters
- Announcement of publication of new updated edition of The Good Councillor's Guide

Sussex Alerts

- Neighbourhood Watch April and May editions of 'Our News'
- Action Fraud – WhatsApp group chats targeted by fraudsters
- Sussex Police – Arun District news and incidents 12/04-26/04/2024.

Sussex Police

Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner: Various regular updates comms (published on APC website)

Residents

Email notifying reporting parking issues at Rose Green Road/Osborne Way – reported by resident to WSCC and District/County ward members.

Organisations/community groups

- Bognor Regis Armed Forces Day – Thank you card for Council's support and funding for the 2024 event
- Bognor Regis Armed Forces Day - Invitation to APC Chairman (or VC) and guest to the 22nd June 2024 event, Celebration of the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings, 10am-6pm at the Promenade, in front of the pier and in Waterloo Gardens. **Check new Chair availability.**
- Arun Community Transport – invitation to APC Chairman (or VC) to AGM on 19th June, 1.30pm at Dove Lodge, Littlehampton **Check new Chair availability.**

Transport for the South East

Your Voices Survey now live! Transport Strategy Your Voices Press Release (published on council website/social media)
<https://tfse.engage-360.co.uk/>

The Planning Inspectorate

Rampion Extension Development Limited Offshore Wind Farm Project: Notification of Hearings and Notification of Accompanied Site Inspection

Publications

Clerks & Councils Direct, May 2024, issue 153