



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 **ORDINARY MEETING (461) OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**
Held on **Tuesday 18th June 2024 at 7.15pm** in the Aldwick Parish Council Office.

Present: Cllrs Purser (Chairman), Bence, Buckley, 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.

30. Apologies for absence

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

31. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations made.

32. Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of 21st May 2024

It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 21st May 2024 were a correct record and that the Chairman sign them.

Clerk's Report and Actions

The Clerk reported on a recent WSCC online meeting launching a new Parish/Town Communications pilot with a group of councils including Aldwick. The aim is improved working between councils and the County Council. The pilot includes a dedicated 'Your Voice' webpage as a forum to provide feedback to WSCC and to share useful information; A dedicated parish/town email to be able to escalate more complex enquiries to WSCC; A virtual drop-in session with WSCC officers to provide councils with information on services run by WSCC Highways, key themes to be agreed. The pilot will run for three months initially, then be evaluated for wider roll out. Members asked whether cllrs could participate directly: The Clerk understood it was for Clerks as the council representative at this stage but would check.

Min. 4.2 – Register of Interests: Those Members who had not yet done so were reminded to complete and return forms as a matter of urgency.

Min. 22 – Proposal for pedestrian crossing, Rose Green: The formal letter of support had been sent on 22nd May to accompany the CHS application by Cllr Thas.

Min. 182.1, 23.04.24 – WSCC Donate a Tree Scheme: As agreed, Cllr Gotheridge had identified potentially suitable sites and was liaising with WSCC to establish locations and species. Further information to be reported back when available.

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

None raised.

34. Adjournment for public questions

There were no public questions.

35. Reports from the District and County Councillors representing Aldwick

D.Cllr Bence reported on overgrown verges and trees in the Aldwick beachfront and West Park area and issues with some members of the public using them in place of toilets. There were ongoing issues with motorhomes parking overnight in that area. Arun DC Community Safety team are involved and an Environmental Officer had visited the area that day.

36. Committee Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 4th June 2024 were received and noted. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Committee Terms of Reference without amendment, as recommended.

37. Internal Audit

Members received and reviewed the Internal Audit Report dated 11th June 2024, noting the Internal Auditor's comments and that no matter had given cause for concern that regulatory requirements had not been complied with. It was noted that the previous year's Notice of the Exercise of Public Rights had been published on the Council's notice boards but unfortunately omitted from the Council's website, which has had to be declared to the External Auditor. Members also reviewed and accepted the Internal Auditor AGAR report page 3.

38. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023-24

The Clerk had circulated background and supporting papers relating to the AGAR for year ending 31st March 2024 for Members' information. These included, in addition to the AGAR Section 1 and Section 2, the Income & Expenditure report, Trial Balance, Nominal Ledger, Bank Reconciliation, Reserves Breakdown, Explanation of Significant Variances report, Internal Audit AGAR report, Clerk and Internal Auditor statements regarding publication of the 2022-23 Notice of the Exercise of Public Rights, and the Notice of Exercise of Public Rights 2023-24. The Clerk reported that the Notice of Exercise of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return/Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2024 would be posted on the Council's website for the period 24th June-2nd August 2024. The Notice explains public rights to inspect or question the accounting records.

38.1 Section 1 – AGAR Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

Having regard to the Internal Audit reports, Members reviewed and responded to each of the 9 statements of Section 1 and approved that the Chairman and Clerk duly sign the form – **RESOLVED**.

38.2 Section 2 – AGAR Accounting Statements 2023/24

Having regard to the supporting papers reviewed, and noting that the RFO had as required prepared and certified the accounts beforehand, Members reviewed these and approved that the Chair duly sign the form – **RESOLVED**.

39. Review / Adoption of Policies

The Clerk had circulated NALC Legal Topic Note (LTN) 22 Disciplinary and Grievance Arrangements in Local Councils for information, together with drafts of the NALC model Disciplinary Policy and model Grievance Policy for consideration. It was noted that the Clerk is in the process of drawing up other necessary policies, such as Health & Safety, which would be brought to Council as soon as possible.

39.1 Disciplinary Policy

Members reviewed the draft Disciplinary Policy and **RESOLVED** to adopt this without amendment.

39.2 Grievance Policy

Members reviewed the draft Grievance Policy and **RESOLVED** to adopt this without amendment.

40. Assets of Community Value

Members considered the formal notification from Arun DC that the five year listing for ACV 89 'My Local' Convenience Store, Aldwick Street expires on 22nd August 2024. Cllrs Gotheridge and Bence and the Clerk gave some contextual background to the item: The building had previously been listed by a 'Friends of' volunteer group when as The Ship public house it was closed and for sale, with the aim of it becoming a community led pub. The project didn't materialise unfortunately as the Covid 19 pandemic arrived. The Clerk reported that the pub sign was in the Council's care. There was some support for the Council submitting an ACV renewal application, noting that listing triggers a moratorium should the asset be put up for sale in future. It was felt that further information and discussion were needed and **RESOLVED** to add to the July agenda for further consideration.

41. Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) - Sewage spill survey request

Members considered a request to parish councils from the CPRE to complete their survey on experiences of sewage spills and development pressures. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would submit the survey responses agreed by Members.

42. Parliamentary Bill on Safety of Lithium-ion Batteries – Campaign support request

Members considered the request and information from a researcher for Lord Foster, who with the Electrical Safety First charity is campaigning for legislation to ensure greater safety in the use and disposal of lithium batteries to reduce fires. Members did not consider that it is in the Council's remit to support parliamentary campaigns and decided against taking action.

43. Surrey & Sussex Police Cyber Protect Officer - Online Safety Presentation request

The Clerk reported on a request to host a free public presentation in September or October aimed at making communities cyber resilient and reducing online fraud / cyber crime. It was noted that the Arun DC Community Wardens had provided a similar event several months ago. It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the Council Chamber could be used without charge and that the Clerk liaise with the presenter to arrange this.

44. Finance

44.1 The financial monthly reports for April were not yet available, due to the additional time involved in finalising the year end accounts on the new Rialtas system and resolving VAT reporting issues. Bank reconciliations for April and May would be deferred to the July meeting.

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

Zen Internet Limited	£58.84
H Knight	£1,881.81
J Rufey	£331.50
A Patel	£265.30
R Gotheridge	£265.30
G Purser	£300.00
HMRC	£680.74
NEST Pension	£129.08
Chichester Payroll Services	£30.00
Barclays Bank	£2.50
Octopus Energy	£48.33
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
Smithe & Co Limited	£480.00
Barclaycard Commercial	£155.35

44.3 The Clerk sought Members' approval to commence the annual Grant Aid scheme in July, as budgeted for – **RESOLVED**.

45. Amenities**45.1 Annual Play Scheme**

The Clerk's report on investigations of potential providers and costs was noted. Freedom Leisure were fully booked but would contact the Council when looking at 2025 bookings. Enquiries had been made with the Family Support Workers (FSW) but unfortunately no further information was available currently. The previous provider, Meynell Games, had confirmed availability for 10 days as per previous arrangements, however the previous issue regarding Arun DC sign off for using the inflatable had not been resolved so that item would likely have to be omitted.

Members discussed the merits of the play scheme and types of provision against risks involved. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to proceed with appointing Meynell Games to provide the summer play scheme for 10 days at a cost of £9,850 (no VAT). The Clerk would start an urgent application to commence the scheme from Tuesday 30th July if possible and obtain appropriate public liability insurance and other due diligence checks from Meynell Games. Members requested that the provider be asked to provide records of any accidents or insurance claims for the past three years. It was **AGREED** that to support the Clerk in monitoring the play scheme for safety and overall evaluation, Members would form a rota to regularly visit the play scheme in operation at West Park and Avisford Park.

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

Gardening/Grounds Maintenance

The Clerk’s confidential report was noted. Tivoli had confirmed that the plants were the final summer planting. Members discussed concerns around the summer planting scheme provision and options for watering. The recent continued hot, dry, windy weather was impacting the survival of the plants. The Clerk had been able to water the Millennium Garden bedding several times and Cllrs Basford and Buckley had watered the planters but without a regular regime it was likely plants would fail. In an effort to save the Council’s asset and spending on the scheme, and in liaison with the Chair and Cllr Basford, the Clerk had obtained an estimate for a regular watering service by Town Force (Bognor Regis Town Council) for Members’ consideration. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the appointment of Town Force on the estimated basis of a maximum of 10 weeks/3 waterings weekly @ £93.00 per visit (ex VAT) to a total cost of £2,790.00 (ex VAT), noting that this would take the cost centre budget overdrawn. The Clerk was asked to query the time estimated for the watering visits and see if that can be reduced.

46. Representatives to External Bodies

Cllr Purser had been unable to attend a recent Bathing Water Quality group meeting and the minutes were not yet available, so would report to a future meeting.

Cllr Bence had attended various meetings with Southern Water and the Environment Agency. The bathing water signage is in place. There are a number of collapsed drains in the area needing urgent attention, some of which are not owned by the authorities. Despite appearances and rumours to the contrary, the relevant authorities have been working tirelessly to resolve issues.

47. Correspondence.

Details were noted, attached as Appendix 1.

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

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATED

APPENDIX 1**CORRESPONDENCE LIST FOR COUNCIL MEETING 18.06.24****WSSC**

- Member Bulletins dated 22.05.24, 20.05.24, 05.06.24, and 12.06.24.
- Highways, Transport and Planning – News and Updates 28.05.24
- News release 30.05.24 – Join a webinar to find out how to help nature across Sussex: Details of online Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) taking place – West Sussex event 11th June – details posted on APC website.
- Email 13.06.24 from Waste Prevention Team: Details of recycling knowledge survey, posted on APC website and at link: <https://yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/recycling-survey>

ADC

- Arun Business Partnership June newsletter.
- Email 12.06.24 Notice of Withdrawal (Reg.27) of the Arun District Council Gypsy & Traveller Development Plan Document.

Horsham DC

Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS) Newsletter - June 2024

NALC

Chief Executive's Bulletins: 23.05.24, 30.05.24, 06.06.24 and 13.06.24.

Neighbourhood Watch

- Sussex Alerts, 03.06.24 – June 2024 edition of Our News.
- Sussex Alerts, 13.06.24 – Nominations now open for Volunteer Recognition Awards 2024.
- Sussex Alerts, 13.06.24 - Prime Minister Rishi Sunak visits Neighbourhood Watch in Horsham.

Sussex Police

- Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner: Various regular updates/e-newsletters (published on APC website)
- Sussex Alerts: Sussex Police bulletin 10.06.24, Arun District with latest Sussex Police appeals, news and burglary & vehicle crime details.
- Sussex Alerts: Sussex Police 29.05.24, Secure your home and protect your property advice. Further advice on all aspects of home security can be found on their website at <https://www.sussex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/> (-> s-url.co) and more about property marking here <https://www.immobilise.com/> (-> s-url.co)

Rural Services Network

Bulletins/e-newsletters 04.06.24 and 11.06.24

Residents**Organisations/community groups**

- Voluntary Action Arun & Chichester (VAAC) funding focus May 2024.
- Voluntary Action Arun & Chichester (VAAC) E-bulletin 12.06.24.
- CAGNE June 2024 Bulletin
- Fair Play for Children – Manifesto for Children's Play/General Election 2024.