



ALDWICK PARISH COUNCIL

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Chairman: Cllr Guy Purser Clerk: Heather Knight

Minutes of the MEETING (482) OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Held on **Tuesday 21st April 2026 at 7.00pm** in the Council Chamber

Present: Cllrs Purser (Chair), Bence, Buckley, Gotheridge, Huntley, Patel, Pinnelli, Rufey, Warden and West

In attendance: H Knight (Clerk)

The meeting opened at 7.00pm.

The Chairman welcomed all, and explained the fire/emergency evacuation procedure in the event of the alarm sounding.

221. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, and absence and reasons approved, from Cllr Thas (work commitment)

222. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

223 Minutes of the Council Meetings of 24th March 2026

It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the minutes of the ordinary Council Meeting held on 24th March 2026 were a correct record, and that the Chair sign them.

Clerk's Report and Actions

Min. 202, Premises and Assets - Ceiling leak - this is still under investigation, fortunately there have been no further signs of water for several weeks without rain. Cllr West has offered to take a look.

Premises and Assets - Annual PAT and Emergency Lights tests took place in March; One bulkhead emergency light failed the duration test and one LED light needed a replacement starter. The Clerk proceeded with replacement of these, under delegated authority and in liaison with the Chair, at the cost of £140.00 (no VAT). Invoices from Garry Lowen Electrical for the work/equipment were in the April Payments List for this meeting, for ratification/approval.

Min. 202, Premises and Assets - Xmas tree 2026: Ongoing research into costs of permanent recessed hooks; Costs were being sought for repair / replacement work to the supply cabinet, as the timer was not working and there had been electric supply faults in 2025.

Min. 211, Honours Board – The lettering had arrived, as agreed by Council, awaiting officer time to install. The Clerk would like to bring chair photographs up to date and would liaise with chair and past chairs regarding a sitting, plus investigate costs of photography, frames etc.

Min. 215, Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) Application, Marine Drive West and Silverston Avenue: As agreed, the application had been submitted. An officer had acknowledged this, advising that it could be considered under the Community Highways Scheme (CHS) and was being progressed for assessment, but that the Council may wish to consider applying for a Temporary TRO (TTRO) in the meantime. Cllr Rufey reported an email from the MP (who had been contacted by residents of Silverston Avenue about an illegally occupied caravan there) forwarding a letter from WSCC Highways which bore this out. The letter stated that WSCC Highways was working with Aldwick Parish Council and others regarding a CHS. The Clerk had looked at the TTRO application criteria, which appeared to be geared to developers or utilities contractors requiring road closures, and carried an application cost of between £600 and £3,000. After liaison with Cllr Bence, who had been involved with Highways senior officers about the TRO, a separate TTRO application was not thought to be necessary.

224. Any such matters as the Chairman may wish to bring to attention

None.

225. Public Session

There were no public present.

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

D.Cllr Purser briefly reported on his recent attendance at the Arun Flood Forum meeting, as well as Bathing Water Quality meetings that he and Cllr Bence attended.

D Cllr Bence reported on district matter: Due to NPPF changes being implemented, there would be reduced options for objecting to some planning applications, as referral to committee was being removed, and officer delegated authority decisions increased.

A Member asked C.Cllr Patel if there was any update available on the winter flooding issues at Lower Bognor Road; There was not, and C.Cllr Patel was asked by the Member to pursue this.

C.Cllr Bence reported that a bollard knocked down at Queens fields West sports field had presented an issue as regards unauthorised access but had been quickly replaced with the assistance of Highways senior officers.

227. Committee Meetings

The Minutes, reports and recommendations of committee meetings were received and noted, as detailed below:

227.1 Planning Committee

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 7th April 2026 were received and noted.

228. Amenities**228.1 a) Grounds Maintenance Contract 2026-27**

The Clerk reported that the new contractors, Westons, had started on 1st April visiting all parish council sites, with a second visit last week. They had undertaken weed spraying and removal, mowing, tidy up of West Meads planter and the 3 roundabouts. Visits would be fortnightly though the mowing/growing season. It was anticipated that spring planting would take place soon.

b) Outgoing grounds maintenance contract 2025-26

The Clerk reported that as agreed by Council, and in liaison with the Chair, negotiations with the outgoing contractor had resulted in a 33% reduction of both the February and March invoices, in consideration of planting and work that had not taken place before the contract ended.

228.2 Youth Activities**a) Summer Skateboard Sessions**

Members noted attendance data the Clerk had circulated from South Coast Skate Club CIC and were pleased to note that the sessions had been well received, with generally good numbers of between 20-30 attending most days. The Clerk had engaged with adults present at some sessions and received positive feedback. A very complimentary email from a parent to South Coast Skate Club was noted, which asked the council to continue providing the sessions.

The Clerk reported on funds that would be available in allocated budget and earmarked reserves, after paying for the already agreed summer sports sessions by South Coast Sports. It was possible to once again apply for 50% grant funding from the Community Safety Grant. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint South Coast Skate Club CIC to provide 12 sessions at a cost of £226 each: These would be of 2x per day on one day over six weeks of the school summer break, likely to be Fridays from 24th July-28th August inclusive. The clerk would confirm arrangements and prepare the event management plan / licence application to Arun DC. It was decided that as the council held sufficient funds, no application for grant funding would be made for these.

b) Summer Play Scheme

The Clerk had confirmed with South Coast Sports the Council's decision for the provision of summer sports sessions, subject to granting of the event licence by Arun DC. The Clerk was in the process of drawing up the event management plan for this, and was liaising with Arun DC and the South Coast Sports as to whether Queens Fields West could be a venue instead of West Park, plus Avisford Park. It was noted that Arun DC parks officer was in principle supportive of using Queens Fields West, however, avoidance of the cricket square would be essential.

Cllr Thas had asked that Council consider further whether any additional summer activities might be arranged, reviewing other possibilities she had presented at the last meeting. This excluded the talent show, which had been deferred for autumn review. Unfortunately, Cllr Thas had had to tender apologies for this evening, so was unavailable to talk to this item. Members discussed other possible provision such as children's entertainers, dance or crafting sessions and available budget after other services were deducted. On balance, it was not felt that any further activities for the summer were needed, however, Members were open minded regarding future discussion for youth activities over school half term breaks in October or spring 2027.

228.3 Allotments – Meet and greet evening

Members noted the circulated Notes of the meet and greet informal evening on 30th March 2026, attended by Cllr Huntley, the Assistant Clerk and the majority of allotment plot holders. Cllr Huntley reported on the meeting, which had been well received and appreciated by plot holders. Members reviewed the main requests and suggestions arising from the meeting, as follows:

- a) To host biannual council led meetings with Plot Holders, in spring and autumn: **RESOLVED** to approve this, with Cllr Huntley and officers to arrange, and delegated authority to spend up to £25 per meeting on refreshments;
- b) Skip provision biannually: Following considerable discussion, Members did not consider this to be necessary, preferring instead to consider options for composting;
- c) Communal composting area to be established, built by plot holders: It was **RESOLVED** to approve permission for this, to be located as proposed at the unused area beneath apple trees;
- d) Tree mulching service: It was **RESOLVED** to approve implementation of this, which held no cost for the Council, officers to liaise with Cllr Huntley to arrange;
- e) Purchase of two-way water tap for hose: **RESOLVED** to approve, with delegated authority for officers to purchase suitable equipment up to the limit of £50 (ex VAT)
- f) Painting/treating of the Council's two sheds: **RESOLVED** to approve this to protect the Council's property, with delegated authority for officers to spend up to £100 (ex VAT) on appropriate treatment and quantity, noting that plot holders had kindly volunteered to undertake the painting.

228.4 Tree Planting Scheme

Cllr Gotheridge reported on his liaison with WSCC over appropriate locations, which including expansion of previous tree planting around the West Meads area. Members noted the circulated WSCC details of tree species and locations. Noting that allocation had been made within the budget, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of the 10 trees, at the total cost of £2,570 (ex VAT), from the Open Spaces & Improvements budget code 4410. The Clerk noted that WSCC Arboricultural Officer had commented on ensuring that locations outside homes had the support of property occupiers. Cllr Gotheridge volunteered to liaise with occupants at such locations.

229. Finance:

229.1 Financial Reports, Cashbook reconciliations

Members received cashbook reconciliations for cashbooks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to month ending 31st March 2026, and confirmed that these agreed to bank statements. It was **AGREED** that two Cllrs would sign these.

229.2 Income & Expenditure report

Members received and considered the Income and Expenditure report compared to budget to month ending 31st March 2026.

229.3 Earmarked Reserves (EMRs)

Members received and noted the Earmarked Reserves report to month ending 31st March 2026. The Clerk advised that previously agreed year end transfers to earmarked reserves had not yet been implemented. This would be completed ahead of year end closedown, and members would receive an updated Earmarked Reserves report in due course.

229.4 Precept

The Clerk reported receipt of the first precept instalment of £67,674.50, which Members noted.

230. New Bus Shelters, Route 600

Members considered the invitation from the County Council to participate in a working group investigating new bus shelters along bus route 600, using the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding. It was noted that new or refurbished shelters, whilst purchased and installed by the funding, would then need to be adopted by the relevant parish/town council going forwards. The working group could also look at other issues local passengers may be experiencing. Facilitated by WSCC, the group would be independent, and a representative of Stage Coach would also participate. Aldwick had been approached to host the first meeting, if participating. It was **RESOLVED** to join the working group, with Cllrs Rufey and Warden appointed to represent the Council, with the Clerk, and that the Parish Council would host the first meeting, which was provisionally being arranged for afternoon of 13th May 2026.

A Member asked about the process for raising concerns about unofficial bus stops and was directed to contact West Sussex County Council, the county ward member or Stagecoach about this.

231. Councillor Vacancies

Members noted the formal Notice of Casual Vacancy resulting from the recent resignation of Cllr Basford. This would be advertised for the statutory period allowing residents to call a by-election. If no such call was made, the Council could co-op to fill the vacancy. There was already one existing casual vacancy available for co-option, which had remained unfilled since the 2023 elections.

Two Members present separately indicated that they would shortly be submitting their resignations due to other commitments. It was noted that a third Member appeared to have stepped back, although no written resignation had been submitted as yet, and that this would leave the council soon with 5 vacant seats. Noting that there would only be a one year term of office remaining before anticipated local elections in May 2027, Members discussed the need to fill these and ways of attracting applications to join the council, with particular emphasis on encouraging younger people to come forward. As well as the Clerk advertising in the Council's newsletter and notice boards, Members were asked by the Chair to think about people they knew who may be interested in coming forward.

232. Councillor Training

Members considered the opportunity to attend Planning / NPPF training delivered by Steve Tilbury at Sidlesham Parish Council on 25th June at 7pm. Places would cost approximately £20-25 (ex VAT) per delegate, depending on final numbers. Similar training was also available by Steve Tilbury through WSALC at a cost of £40 + VAT. It was **RESOLVED** to book places at the Sidlesham PC session for Cllrs Rufey, Warden, Huntley and Pinnelli, and for Cllr Thas should she wish to attend (Clerk to liaise), at the cost of up to £25 per person (ex VAT).

The Clerk reported that Cllr West had been booked on to new councillor training online on 20th April but unfortunately that had been cancelled by WSALC for unavoidable reasons. Cllr West confirmed that he would attend a rearranged date. Cllr Pinnelli confirmed that he could attend the new councillor training on 29th June 2026.

233. Annual Parish Assembly

Members noted the final agenda for the Annual Parish Assembly on 19th May at 6.30pm, and the Chair's Report.

234. Representatives to External Bodies

As previously referred to, Cllrs Bence and Purser had attended the Bathing Water Partnership meeting.

Cllrs Rufey and the Clerk had attended the Bognor Community Bathing Water Group stakeholder meeting on 31st March 2026 and gave a brief verbal report. Attendance had included Felpham and Pagham Parish Councils, FACT (Flood Action Community Taskforce), the Blue Tits Bathing Group and a representative of the MP's team, joining Southern Water with Aldwick PC.

235. Correspondence

The Clerk highlighted some items of note in correspondence, as follows:

WSSC

- Email 21.04.26 from Planned Carriageway & Footway Maintenance Team – notification of Footway Surface Improvement Scheme Works 20.04.26-12.06.26, various roads (*forwarded to Cllrs*)
- News release 25.03.26 – Government makes announcement on future of local government in West Sussex (*forwarded to Cllrs*)
- News release 08.04.26 – Inaugural meeting of the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority

ADC

- Email 26.03.26 from CEO – Local Government Reorganisation, Stakeholder update March 2026 (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

Bognor Bathing Water Community Group

Notes from Southern Water of meeting held Tuesday 31st March 2026 (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

236. Payments for Authorisation

Members **RESOLVED** to ratify and approve the List of Payments for Authorisation, as shown below, and that the payment schedules for March and April be duly signed by two Members:-

March payments (not taken at March Council meeting)

H Knight and A Colban	£2,904.53
HMRC	£1,155.72
NEST	£343.22
Chichester Payroll Services	£15.00
WSALC	£48.00
Securitas Technology	£342.00
Securitas Technology	£1,916.53
Barclays Bank	£8.74
Octopus Energy	£114.70
Castle Water	£8.87
Zen internet Ltd	£42.30
Monkey Nuts Cleaning	£148.80
Viking Office UK Ltd	£132.48
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
Gallagher Insurance	£494.01
Gallagher Insurance	£3,353.03
Gallagher Insurance	£369.20
Pronetic Ltd	£205.43
Barclaycard Commercial	£165.64
Perry Turner-Hogg	£611.76

April payments

H Knight and A Colban	£2,904.53
HMRC	£1,155.72
NEST	£343.22
Chichester Payroll Services	£15.00
Perry Turner-Hogg	£611.76
Arun District Council	£8,000.00
Barclays Bank	£8.50
Octopus Energy	£79.90

Copiers & Printers	£87.20
Zen Internet	£42.30
Castle Water	£8.38
Castle Water	£9.46
Zen Internet	£42.30
H V Knight	£23.25
Business Stream	£45.01
SALC	£2,683.79
Pronetic Ltd	£22.57
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
ProcessMatters2	£150.00
South Coast Skate Club CIC	£1,808.00
Lowen Electrical Services Ltd	£350.00
Lowen Electrical Services Ltd	£140.00
Monkey Nuts Cleaning	£51.60
Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	£396.00
Barclaycard	£130.52

237. Date and time of next Council Meeting

Tuesday 19th May 2026, at 7.00pm, being the Annual Council Meeting. This immediately follows the rescheduled Annual Parish Assembly (6.30pm).

The meeting closed at 8.43pm

CHAIRMAN

DATED