



ALDWICK PARISH COUNCIL

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Chairman: Cllr Guy Purser Clerk: Heather Knight

Minutes of the MEETING (485) OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

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

Present: Cllrs: Purser (Chair), Bence, Huntley, Maxwell, Patel, Smith and Thas

In attendance: H Knight (Clerk/RFO)

The meeting opened at 7.00pm.

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

55. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, and reason approved, from Cllr Rufey (personal commitment), Cllr Warden (personal reason) and Cllr West (personal commitment).

56. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made on items on the agenda.

57. Minutes of the Council Meeting of 23rd June 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 23rd June 2026 were a correct record and that the Chairman sign them.

Clerk's Report and Actions

Premises and Assets: The external fire exit was again sometimes not latching shut after being opened (opening the door was not an issue). This had arisen last year and some adjustments to existing door furniture and mechanisms had been made, which were successful for a time. It now seemed likely that a new bar mechanism would be required, and the Clerk would arrange a contractor appraisal and quote, authorise the required work under delegated authority, and report back.

Bognor & Aldwick Bathing Water Community Group: The second stakeholder/community meeting was being planned by Southern Water, at Aldwick PC premises, for late July, as previously reported. Cllrs Purser and Rufey were the representatives to this group but all councillors could attend. The MP had recently held a meeting here with Southern Water and local residents associations to discuss flooding issues. Cllrs Purser, Huntley, Pinnelli and the Clerk had joined a recent tour of Lidsey Water Treatment Works which proved interesting.

Min. 41, Social Media/Facebook page: It was planned to have this set up during the next week.

Min. 46, Nat West Bank Account: The letter to the bank was with the master Minutes of June meeting as Appendix A, for signing by the 3 required signatories. It had not been included in the public version due to containing personal data, but a copy would be shown on screen for Members' information.

Min. 49.2, Allotments / Water butts: This had not yet been ordered as a slightly different style was needed with a top entry downpipe, the Assistant Clerk was researching suppliers and an order would be placed as soon as possible.

Flooding at Lower Bognor Road: The recurrent issues there had proved problematic to resolve but C.Cllr Bence had advised the Clerk that significant progress had been made recently in investigating and attempting to resolve the issue, which he would report under agenda item 6.

Councillor Training: Cllr Pinnelli had not yet been able to undertake this so future dates were being checked, and Cllr Maxwell would also be registered. In person training availability was being researched, as Cllr Maxwell's preference, but these were less available since the rise and convenience of online training.

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

The Chairman was looking into support for the Armed Forces Covenant Pledge, which the Council may wish to consider signing up to as part of supporting that section of the community. He asked that members pass on their views to him as part of information gathering.

59. Public Questions on agenda items

There were no public present.

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

D.Cllr Purser reported that the Arun Bathing Water Partnership meeting was taking place the following day, so unfortunately could not report updates as yet.

C.Cllr Bence reported several matters: B2166 Lower Bognor Road flooding issues - Following WSCC investigation with riparian landowners, which had been thought as a potential cause, these ditches were not linked with the gullies. It had been established that a natural land dip that had always existed, was causing overwhelming of the nearest gully. A dedicated officer had been appointed to monitor the situation, and work on possible resolution; Recycled water proposals – Southern Water is proposing to adopt a model used in other countries of recycling foul water, purified, into reservoirs and drinking water. This would also mean that rivers and streams would receive highly purified and de-mineralised water, which had implications for the biodiversity of these. A planning application had been made direct to the government for approval to proceed.

61. Committee Meetings

61.1 The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 7th July 2026 were received and noted.

62. Committee Appointments

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the appointment of Cllr Patel to the Planning Committee.

63. Casual Vacancy

The Clerk reported that following non-attendance for six months, without Council approval or apologies, Cllr Sapsed was now automatically disqualified from office. This resulted in a casual vacancy, which was now being advertised for the opportunity of a by-election being called by residents. If none were called within the specified period, the vacancy would be available for co-option by the Council.

64. Working Group Reports

64.1 Business Plan WG: Cllr Thas gave a verbal update from the recent WG meeting. Cllr Purser had produced an online questionnaire using MSForms, which enabled easily collated responses and data collection. The survey was for local residents and businesses to feed into plans for the new Business Plan 2026-2031. The WG was keen to launch the survey as soon as possible if Council approved, with a closing date of 1st October. It was planned to publicise this on the Council's notice boards and September newsletter, with a QR code, as well as in the Sussex Views magazine, the Willowhale Library and on the Council's website. Approaches could also be made to local businesses, churches, mother and toddler groups and veteran services groups. There would be an option for those wishing to complete a printed copy, so no community sections were excluded. There were no significant costs involved, apart from a small amount of in house printing of a few posters and hard copies. Members had been asked to review the questionnaire ahead of the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Working Group recommendation and proceed with launching the questionnaire, results to be reviewed and reported to a future Council meeting.

65. Amenities

- 65.1** Grounds Maintenance: The Clerk updated members on the contracted maintenance. The contractor had replaced the initial planting with new and confirmed that regular watering was being done several times weekly. Bark chippings had been added to planters to help retain moisture.

66. Finance**66.1 Cashbook Reconciliations and Income & Expenditure Reports**

Members received the bank reconciliation for cashbooks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to 30th June 2026, These were approved for signature by two Members.

66.2 Income & Expenditure Reports

Members considered the Income & Expenditure report to 30th June 2026. The Clerk reported some items of note. Due to additional and replacement equipment this year, it was possible that the Premises Expenses budget code 4210 may not prove sufficient. Budgeting for 2027-28 may need increasing accordingly for the following year if this year proved under budgeted.

66.3 Earmarked Reserves

Members noted the Earmarked Reserves report to 30th June 2026.

67. Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

Since the agenda being issued, the Government had announced a further delay on its decision for West Sussex until October. It was noted that Arun DC CEO would be writing to the Government to express dismay at the delay and press the points regarding demographic deficit issues. Press releases and statements from the County and District Councils were forwarded to Members.

68. Local Cycling and Walking infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Phase 2

Following consideration of responding to this consultation, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk, would meet with Cllrs Purser and Bence, to produce and submit a response for the Council – meeting to collate response to be arranged.

Cllr Bence declared an interest in this item due to his role with West Sussex County Council planning matters.

69. R C Sherriff Blue Plaque

Members noted and considered the correspondence between the Clerk and the RC Sherriff Trust regarding custodianship of the blue plaque removed from the now demolished 'Sandmartins' property. The matter had been ongoing for a year now and the Clerk sought Members' wishes as to any further action. Noting the offer of the Trust director to meet for a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would accept and a meeting would be arranged with the R C Sherriff Trust Director to include the Chair of Council and Bognor Regis Museum/Local History Society.

70. Community Emergency Hubs

Members discussed the West Sussex County Council invitation for the Council premises to be included as a Community Hub, for the community to come together in times of crisis and coordinate local help. Details had been circulated to Members, and the Resilience & Emergencies Team Adviser had asked for an opportunity to discuss things in more detail. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council supported participating and that the Clerk would arrange to discuss further details with the WSCC Adviser on progressing this.

71. Representatives to External Bodies

There were no reports made. It was noted that Cllr Rufey had attended the recent online WSALC Chairs' Forum.

72. Payments for authorisation

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

Chichester Payroll Services	£15.00
H Knight / A Colban	£2,904.33
HMRC	£1,155.92
Nest Pension	£343.22
Barclays Bank	£9.34
Octopus Energy	£29.36
Copiers & Printers	£94.58
Zen Internet	£42.30
Castle Water	£52.69
Castle Water	£8.28
Monkey Nuts Cleaning Ltd	£154.80
Pronetic Ltd	£205.43
ProcessMatters2	£150.00
Sidlesham Parish Council	£100.00
Westons Group Ltd	£652.00
Chicheser Payroll Services	£15.00
H Knight / A Colban	£2,862.49
HMRC	£1,001.07
Nest Pension	£539.91
Barclaycard	£460.75
Zen Internet	£42.30

73. Correspondence

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

- Arun DC public consultation on PSPO for dogs, running to 29th July 2026 – this item was received too late to be an agenda item – *to be forwarded to Cllrs*
- WSALC – notification of autumn programme of parish and district focus groups meeting with Sussex PCC and Sussex Police – dates and venues to be notified in August.
- Armed Forces Week / Introducing Squaddie Box and the Squaddie Box Pod initiative – Details of a newly launched scheme, a veteran led organisation dedicated to supporting homeless and vulnerable veterans through practical, compassionate and sustainable solutions. Each pod can provide practical support for up to four homeless veterans by providing a secure postal address, which then opens up access to healthcare, benefits, banking, employment etc.
Following earlier mention of supporting the Armed Forces Covenant and its aims, members were very interested in this scheme. The Clerk would forward information to Members, let the organisation know about the Council's grant aid scheme, and publicise the initiative in the next available Newsletter.
- Clerk & Councils Direct, July issue 166.

74. Date and time of next Council Meeting

Tuesday 22nd September 2026 at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.12pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATED