ALDWICK PARISH COUNCIL

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

Minutes of the **MEETING (486) OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**
Held on **Tuesday 22nd September 2026 at 7.00pm** in the Council Chamber

Present: Cllrs: Purser (Chair), Bence (to Min. 82), Goodall (from Min. 82), Huntley, Maxwell, Patel, Rufey, Smith and Warden.

In attendance: H Knight (Clerk/RFO)
2 members of the public (part of meeting)

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.

75. Apologies for absence
Apologies were received, and reasons approved, from Cllr West (personal commitment), Cllr Pinnelli (personal commitment) and Cllr Thas (personal commitment).
Cllr Bence had given advance apologies that he needed to leave the meeting early due to a county council commitment.

76. Declarations of Interest
There were no declarations of interest made.

77. Minutes of the Council Meeting of 21st July 2026.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21st July 2026 were a correct record and that the Chairman sign them.

78. Any such matters as the Chairman may wish to bring to attention
The Chairman reported briefly on his recent attendance at the Aldwick Preservation Society /Duck Pond coffee morning, hearing about the work the volunteers do looking after that area of land.

79. Public Questions on agenda items
At the Chairman's discretion, a member of the public was permitted to speak on a matter that was not on the agenda.

The resident introduced himself as an owner of a beach hut at Marine Drive West, Aldwick, and spoke about vandalism over the past weekend, involving graffiti that included swastikas, marking several of the beach huts, and broken locks. A local business was also believed to have been a victim of the graffiti. There were possibly other related incidents in the general Bognor Regis area over the weekend. The matter had been reported to police, who were treating it as hate crime and were investigating. The resident was already in contact with Insp. Wickens, Sussex Police Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT). The resident reminded Council that the beach huts had suffered attempted burglary and damage on a previous occasion and noted that the vicinity is a target for such incidents, owing to limited street lighting, easy concealment and no CCTV. Acknowledging that the council couldn't debate the matter tonight, the resident asked that the council publicly condemn such vandalism and put pressure on police to apply more resources and increased patrolling in that area, particularly at night. The resident was also seeking that the relevant authorities consider installing CCTV cameras in that area.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted both the area PCSO and Arun DC Community Safety Manager about the incidents. Assurance had been received that the police were investigating, Arun DC was in close liaison with them, and that PCSO and Community Protection Officer patrols would increase to focus on the area. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting to the police. The matter would be raised at the forthcoming Arun all parishes / NPT meeting.

The Chair agreed to the matter being an item for discussion at the next full Council meeting and thanked the resident for bringing this to attention. The resident thanked the Council and left the meeting

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

C.Cllr Bence reported several matters in brief: He was pressing for action to resolve the poor state of roads such as Hewarts Lane and Grosvenor Gardens; Having met with the relevant Highways Officer, he was appraised of the latest situation regarding the Silverston Avenue/Marine Drive West TRO application, which would now need to follow a Community Highways Scheme process.

D.Cllr Purser reported that a resident in contact with him regarding the poor condition and safety concern of a footway section in Barrack Lane had been referred to C.Cllr Pinnelli.

81. Co-option

Members had received an application for co-option for consideration. The applicant was in attendance and, following invitation from the Chairman, gave a short address about their background and reasons for applying.

Following proposal and seconding, it was **RESOLVED** to co-opt Mark Goodall to the Council. Having duly signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Cllr Goodall joined the meeting.

82. Committee Meetings

82.1 The Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 4th August and 1st September 2026 were received and noted.

82.2 The Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 15th September 2026 were received, with recommendations considered as follows:

82.2i) The recommended draft Sickness Absence Policy had been circulated. The Clerk advised that an additional amendment was made subsequent to the Staffing Committee consideration. This had been to establish clarity between policy content for employees, and guidance notes for employer, but did not materially alter the policy.
It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the amended Sickness Absence Policy.

82.2ii) The completion of the staff annual appraisal process was noted.

82.2iii) The employers/unions nationally agreed pay scale uplifts to Spinal Column Points (SCPs), effective from 1st April 2026, was noted.

82.2iv) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommended move of the Clerk's salary by 1xSCP to SCP 34 and the Assistant Clerk's salary by 1xSCP to SCP 18, both backdated to 1st April 2026.

82.v) It was noted and agreed that forthcoming budget discussions include consideration of potential movement by 3 or 4x SCPs to the Clerk's pays cale on attainment of CiLCA qualification.

Cllr Bence gave his apologies and left the meeting.

83. Working Group Reports

83.1 Bus Shelter WG: A meeting took place between the various parish/town councils and WSCC Highways officers, together with a Stagecoach bus service representative. The spreadsheet of parish/town council comments was thoroughly discussed. A further APC Working Group meeting would be held shortly to consider the updated WSCC spreadsheet and make recommendations to full Council. WSCC hoped to have all responses and parish/town decisions by late October if possible.

83.2 Business Plan WG: The Business Plan 2026-2030 Survey went live earlier in the month and responses were arriving. These would be evaluated by the Working Group after the 1st October deadline and further report made to full Council.

84. Amenities

84.1 Allotments: The Clerk and Cllr Huntley reported on the poor condition of the Council's larger shed roof, for which roofing felt and battens were rotten and needed replacing. A competent allotment tenant had offered to carry out the repairs if the Council obtained the necessary materials, and had advised on and costed appropriate materials, with options for a 15year or 5year felt warranty. The Clerk advised that volunteers and councillors are adequately covered by the Council's Employer and public liability insurance. Following some discussion around various other solutions and longevity, it was **RESOLVED** to approve that the materials be purchased up to a value of £500.00 (ex VAT) for the 15year felt warranty, funded from the Allotments Maintenance budget code 4480, and to approve that the volunteer undertake the work for the Council, with thanks. An appropriate risk assessment was to be carried out.

84.2 Railing troughs: The Clerk reported that bolts on two of the railing troughs had rusted through, causing repeated sideways slippage recently, posing some risk which needed resolving. The Clerk met Bognor Regis Town Force on site to review the issue. Town Force had tightened the bolts as best they could without causing further breakage, which was temporarily holding fast. Options and costs for remedial work were being followed up and not yet available. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk proceed with remedial works under delegated authority for urgent business / safety concerns basis, for ratification at a future meeting.

84.3 Remembrance Day 11th November 2026: Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk proceed with arrangements for the annual Remembrance Day service, and the purchase of wreath/s and light refreshments from the budgeted fund. Two Members kindly volunteered to provide home-made cake.

84.4 Christmas Tree 2026 Project:

84.4i) The Clerk reported that it continued to be difficult sourcing appropriately competent contractors willing and able to undertake the necessary survey work for permanent recessed hook fixings for the Christmas tree. It was therefore not going to be possible to implement this for 2026, and the achievable solution was to ensure the tree pit depth could be fully utilised for tree stability. This had over several years accumulated debris and residual swollen tree trunk, limiting any new tree depth and reducing stability. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the cost of removing tree stump detritus from the tree pit, work to be undertaken by Allbright Ltd at an estimated cost of £367.50 + VAT.

84.4ii) Discussion took place regarding proposals to stage a small tree lighting Christmas event, with potentially a formal switch-on. A local trader had confirmed interest in assisting with plans for this and had offered to meet Members to discuss further. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint a Christmas Event Working Party, membership being Cllrs Rufey, Smith and Warden, which would meet urgently to formulate and progress plans, reporting back to full Council.

84.5 Summer Youth Activities: Members discussed the reports received from South Coast Sports Coastal CIC and from South Coast Skate Club. Both free activities sessions had been well received. Attendance had been lower than anticipated, but this was thought to be largely due to the excessively hot weather for most of the school break period. Some very positive feedback had been received from families /young people attending, with no poor comments or suggestions for change. The move to use West Meads park appeared to have been popular. Both activity providers were keen to return for October half term, with South Coast Sports offering several options. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve that the Clerk arrange for October half term activities of 2x sports sessions by South Coast Sports Coastal CIC (over one day) at a cost of £580.00 (ex VAT) and 2x sessions by South Coast Skate Club (over two mornings) at a cost of £542.00 (ex VAT), funded from the unspent Youth Activities budget code 4415.

85. Finance

85.1 Precept: Members noted receipt of the 2nd precept instalment of £67,674.50.

85.2 Cashbook Reconciliations

Members received the bank reconciliation for cashbooks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to 31st July and to 31st August 2026, and agreed reconciliation with bank statements. These were approved for signature by two Members.

85.3 Income & Expenditure Reports

Members considered the Income & Expenditure reports to 31st July and to 31st August 2026. The Clerk reported some items of note and answered Members' questions.

85.4 Earmarked Reserves

Members noted the Earmarked Reserves reports as at 31st July and 31st August 2026.

86. External Audit Completion

Members received the signed External Audit Report and Certificate for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2026, and were pleased to note that all was in order with no issues raised.

The Report and Certificate confirmed that following review of Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR the information provided by the Council was in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The Clerk advised that the Notice of Conclusion of External Audit had been published as required.

87. Premises – Ceiling Leak

Members considered the report circulated, following the contractor internal roof space investigation previously agreed. The report identified several areas of concern and potential causes of water ingress, principally relating to aged and shrinking bituminous underfelt compromising the roof weatherproofing. Other possible causes were a historical water tank leak, damaged external bird/vermin protection and potentially roof disturbance from the solar panel installation. The main loft space was in generally satisfactory visible condition, the roof structure appearing sound. The eaves roof space, however, showed more significant evidence of water ingress, including wet insulation. The report recommended replacement of the entire roof, rather than a patchwork approach, due to the condition of the bituminous roofing felt. The Clerk had sought the contractor's estimated costs for this as an indicator, broken down into the various aspects of the work and a confidential paper had been circulated to Members. Members discussed the report content and likely cost indicated, for which there was insufficient budget. It was **AGREED** to include appropriate fund planning with forthcoming budget setting, and **RESOLVED** that the Clerk meantime seek quotations from other contractors for cost comparison of the work and methodology.

88. Silverston Avenue/Marine Drive West TRO Application

Cllr Rufey reported on having recently followed up progress and status of the TRO application on behalf of residents. Communications with the Area Highways Manager and Assistant Area Highways Manager subsequently stated that the TRO application had failed and that a Community Highways Scheme application was awaited from the Council or residents, so nothing had been progressed unfortunately. The annual deadline had passed, so any forthcoming application would not be considered now until July 2027. There appeared to have been misunderstandings previously and Cllr Rufey and the Clerk were meeting with the Arun Assistant Area Highways Manager on 25th September to clarify matters. It was thought that a single CHS or TRO application solely for Silverston Avenue may be a more sensible approach and Cllr Rufey sought Council's support. It was **RESOLVED** that Council supports this, pending outcome of the meeting with the Assistant Area Highways Manager, which would be brought too the next available meeting.

89. Community Emergency Hubs

Members considered the Clerk's report (tabled) summarising the meeting she had had with the WSCC Resilience & Emergencies Team Adviser about the scheme. A free training sessions would be provided by the WSCC officers, on either a weekday or a Saturday. Council had discretion to decide whether this is just for Members, or whether to invite public volunteers and other stakeholders. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact WSCC to and obtain viable dates and arrange a training delivery session for the Council.

90. Policies for Review /Adoption

Members reviewed policies and **RESOLVED** their adoption as follows:

90.1 Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy
90.2 Recording of Meetings Policy

91. Devolution and Local Government Review (LGR)

Following the Government's recent pause on its LGR programme, as per details circulated to Members, there were no further updates available currently. It was noted that the Government was still proceeding with Devolution and mayoral strategic authorities, with mayoral elections scheduled for 2028.

92. Sussex PCC Autumn Engagement Meeting

Details of the invitation for councils and clerks to participate in the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner's office online meeting on 7th October were noted. The Clerk intended to join and asked for names of any Members wishing to participate. Cllrs Smith, Huntley and Patel asked to be registered.

93. Arun DC Community Governance Review Programme

Following conclusion of the first stage consultation and recommendations, further consultation was now live on those. It was noted that the Parish Council had previously supported the proposed amendment of the Aldwick and Pagham boundaries to accommodate 9 houses within a large development into Pagham. Members considered that no further representation on this or any of the other draft recommendations proposed was necessary.

94. Representatives to External Bodies

- Cllr Rufey reported on her recent visit and tour of the Bognor Foodbank, which was very interesting.
- Cllr Purser reported on attendance at the recent Bathing Water Quality meeting, held at principal authority level with the Environment Agency, County and District Councils and Southern Water.

95. 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 two Members:-

Business Stream	£46.77
South Coast Skate Club	£2,712.00
Barclays Bank	£8.50
Octopus Energy	£29.48
Castle Water	£81.06
Castle Water	£8.52
Barclaycard (August statement, zero balance)	£0
Monkey Nuts Ltd	£51.60
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
Pronetic Ltd	£205.43
Westons Group Ltd	£652.00
Moore	£504.00
Chichester Payroll Services	£15.00
H Knight / A Colban	£2,862.09
HMRC	£1,001.47
Nest Pension	£539.91
Barclays Bank	£8.98
Octopus Energy	£30.14
Zen Internet Ltd	£42.30
Method Construction Services Ltd	£408.00
Cloudy IT	£78.00

Arkview Ltd	£984.00
South Coast Sports Coastal CIC	£2,320.00
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
Monkey Nuts Ltd	£51.60
Westons Group Ltd	£652.00
Pronetic Ltd	£205.43
Lowen Electrical Services Ltd	£370.00
Barclaycard (Sept statement)	£23.65

96. Correspondence

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

WSCC

- News release: A fresh look for West Sussex streets as the Highway Ranger pilot launches. Launched 3rd August, starting in Worthing before moving around the county until March 2027, the Highway Rangers will focus on the smaller maintenance jobs that can have a big impact on how an area looks and feels, including: cleaning road and traffic signs, clearing debris from drains and other drainage features, cutting back overhanging vegetation, minor street furniture repairs, removing weed and clearing pavement edges, removing unauthorised signs and advertisements ,minor hedge trimming an decluttering works.
- Operation Watershed is open for applications 2026/27 – Is your community affected by surface water or groundwater flooding?
- Greenprint project update and final report *(forwarded to Cllrs)*

ADC

- Correspondence between Cllrs Purser, Pagham PC and ADC officers regarding Pagham Advisory Group Meetings and meeting cancellation.

Southern Water

- Copy of letter to Barrack Lane residents and stakeholders regarding meeting with residents 8th September to discuss overflow relief pipe at Barrack Lane; Copy of letter to residents and stakeholders confirming permission to proceed with replacement overflow relief pipe and anticipated timeline. *(forwarded to Cllrs)*
- Stakeholder team update on work to protect bating waters in West Sussex. *(forwarded to Cllrs)*

Residents/Public

- Copy correspondence to ADC Economic Development Projects officer from resident regarding resident's objection to Proposed Route of Pagham to Bersted Trailway behind Pinehurst Park; Copy of officer's response.

Publications

- Clerks & Councils Direct, September 2026, issue 167.

97. Date and time of next Council Meeting

Tuesday 20th October 2026 at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.52pm.

CHAIRMAN …….

DATED ……