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 (487) OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**
Held on **Tuesday 20th October 2026 at 7.00pm** in the Council Chamber

Present: Cllrs: Rufey (Vice Chair/Chairing), Bence, Goodall, Huntley, Maxwell, Patel, Pinnelli, Smith and Thas.

In attendance: H Knight (Clerk/RFO)
1 member of the public

The meeting opened at 7.00pm.
In the absence of the Chair of the Council, the Vice Chair took the meeting. Cllr Rufey welcomed all to the meeting and drew attention to the fire/emergency evacuation procedure in the event of the alarm sounding.

98. Apologies for absence
Apologies were received, and reasons approved, from Cllr Purser (personal commitment), Cllr West (personal commitment) and Cllr Warden (personal reason).

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

100. Minutes of the Council Meeting of 22nd September 2026.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22nd September 2026 were a correct record and that the Chairman sign them.

Clerk's Report and Actions. The Clerk's Report was noted:-

Min. 46, 23.06.26 Nat West Bank Account: Unfortunately, the bank had written stating that the existing signatory signature forwarded did not match their records. The Clerk was working on resolving the matter.

Min. 63, 21.07.26 Casual Vacancy: Arun District Council had confirmed that no by-election had been called following the casual vacancy caused by a Member's non-attendance, therefore this was available for co-option. Subsequent co-option to a different casual vacancy meant that there were now only two vacancies remaining on the council.

Min. 68, 21.07.26 Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan: The agreed meeting with Cllrs Bence and Purser to formulate a response to the consultation did not take place due to unforeseen circumstances, and could not be rescheduled, therefore no formal response was sent.

Min. 84.2, 22.09.26 Railing Troughs: As previously reported, temporary bolt tightening had taken place, the cost of £111.60 being in this meeting's Payment Schedule. This would be formally ratified at the next meeting together with the anticipated quotation for permanent solution, which was still awaited.

Min. 84.3, 22.09.26 Remembrance Day: Plans were underway for the short service on 11th November, with posters published and local veterans groups and the school invited. The Clerk had arranged for a clean and re-lettering of the memorial monument to be carried out. Owing to the shortage of time before the November commemoration, this had already been undertaken. Several quotes had been sought from competent contractors. The selected contractor cost of £540.00 would be ratified at the next meeting.

Min. 84.5, 22.09.26 Youth Activities: Provisional plans were made as soon as possible to host the half term free sports and skate coaching sessions agreed but had been dependent on consents from Arun District Council. This had now been received and the activities were being actively promoted.

New Cllr Training: Cllrs Maxwell and Goodall had both attended the online WSALC training session on 24th September 2026.

Premises checks: The annual security alarm service visit had taken place on 8th October 2026, and the six monthly fire alarm service visit had taken place on 13th October 2026.

Councillor Surgery: The next drop in surgery had been advertised for Friday 30th October 2026, which Cllr Pinnelli had volunteered to cover.

101. Any such matters as the Chairman may wish to bring to attention
None were raised.

102. Public Questions on agenda items
None were raised.

103. To receive reports from the District Councillors and County Councillors representing Aldwick
D.Cllr Bence reported that there were no figures yet available for the bathing water quality from this year but he remained optimistic of improved results from prior reporting periods.

Responding to a query raised, C.Cllr Pinnelli reported that he and Cllr Smith had been researching a resident's concerns about an overgrown area of land and in particular trees, bordering West Meads park. The trees were impeding adjacent properties and footpath. Cllr Bence had also spent time looking into this previously. It appeared that the land is not owned and both district and county councils were unwilling to accept responsibility for maintaining the land / trees. Some background of prior ownership was discussed, having at one time belonged to a housing association and then thought to be in private ownership. However, at present it appeared to be unregistered to anyone. It was **AGREED** to add an item to the November agenda for further consideration, Cllr Smith to provide the Clerk with the detailed item and proposal.

104. Antisocial Behaviour and property damage, Aldwick Beach Huts
It had been agreed at the last meeting for an item to consider this, following a resident's address and request for Council support under Public Questions/Session. It was noted that, whilst the particular incident was being treated as a hate crime by police and was under investigation, general antisocial behaviour and crime was an issue elsewhere in the parish. This was especially apparent with increased organised shoplifting incidents at Aldwick retail areas. Members commented on firsthand experience of incidents. The Clerk mentioned sporadic reports received from residents of incidents affecting them. Following some discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk write to Arun DC Community Safety Manager, Housing, Wellbeing and Communities, expressing the Council's concerns and seeking assurances on what is being done to actively address the issues.

105. Committee Meetings
105.1 The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 6th October 2026 were received and noted.

106. Working Group Reports
106.1 Route 600 Bus Shelter WG: The Working Group Notes from its previous meeting had been circulated, with recommendations for some shelters to be adopted. Others were to be considered subsequent to outstanding queries and information being established. Cllrs Smith, Rufey and the Clerk reported verbally from the Working Group advising that a further WG meeting would be held soon, that some costs were yet to be established and that further discussion with WSCC officers/engineers were needed on some items. It was **AGREED** to defer this item to the next meeting, subject to outstanding investigation on several items, so that all could be considered together once all information is available from the Working Group.

106.2 Business Plan WG: Cllr Thas reported from the Working Group's last meeting and collation of the online survey results. Responses had been low overall, though acknowledged that this is not unusual. The Business Plan 2026-31 survey results had been circulated to Members, with a request that Members read the data and bring their own suggestions for consideration for inclusion in the Council's Business Plan objectives. The results indicated, amongst several main points, that the Council needs to explain to residents what it does more clearly. Another question highlighted a wish for social activities to be hosted, such as coffee mornings. Comments were made regarding the lack of awareness of the many activities that are already available. Cllr Huntley was compiling a list of these to better inform this aspect. As no other suggestions from those present was forthcoming, it was **RESOLVED** to defer this item to the November meeting, with the Clerk to email Members seeking input ahead of the agenda issue.

106.3 Grant Aid WG: Cllrs Rufey, Thas and Huntley reported from the Working Group's meeting reviewing applications. The recommendations by the Working Group had been circulated to Members and were now considered, noting that there were several conditional recommendations. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to award the following grants, including conditions where stated:

St Wilfrid's Hospice	:	£500.00
Sage House	:	£200.00
Bognor Regis Town Youth FC	:	£500.00
Bognor Regis Foodbank	:	£1,000.00
Rose Green Infant School	:	£500.00
Aldwick PCC (St Richard's)	:	£482.40 - *Conditional, 2x information boards*
Grove House Surgery PPG	:	£200.00
Air Ambulance KSS	:	£500.00
Arun Counselling Centre	:	£200.00
4Sight Vision Support	:	£880.00
RAFA Branch 381 BR	:	£1,500.00
Willowhale Community Asscn	:	£250.00
RSPCA Sussex West Branch	:	£100.00
Girl Guiding Bognor Regis	:	£200.00 - *Conditional, evidence of 2025 grant spend as per application, and evidence of 2026 grant spend, by 30.09.27*
Regis Gymnastics CIC	:	£500.00
Bognor Regis Seafront Lights	:	£250.00
Bognor Regis Croquet Club	:	*Deferred - extension granted, pending further financial information requested*
Bognor Regis Armed Forces Committee	:	*Late request for application received, deferred – extension granted, and any grant made conditional on spend being for event support, not hospitality*

The two deferred items would be considered by the Council at the November meeting, if received, for potential funding from remaining unspent budget balance after the above awards were made.

106.4 Budget WG: Cllr Patel, the Clerk and Cllrs Thas and Rufey reported. The Notes from the Working Group meeting of 13th October 2026 had been circulated, together with the current 2026-27 budget and the Clerk's report to the WG. The notes referred to some specific budgetary considerations such as increased insurance premium and staff salaries. Other items were being viewed as a likely inflationary increase, unless a known figure. Members noted that work was still at an early stage, with further Working Group meetings to refine and consider any additional information available. It was anticipated that a first draft budget would be put to the November Council meeting

106.5 Christmas Event WG: Cllr Smith gave a verbal update with input from the Clerk, on the WG meeting of 19th October. The owner of the Apple Tree Lounge had attended the WG meeting and was liaising with other retailers and assisting with delivering a community event. The tree would be installed, and lighting checked, on 19th November. The official switch-on date/event had been set as Friday 4th December, likely around 6 or 6.15pm. Anticipated activities included school, church and community choirs, subject

to availability and any costs), children's activity at the art and crafts centre, and a walking Christmas trail through the shopping areas. The Co-op at Nyetimber Lane were supportive of closing off their car park temporarily; Arrangements were in hand for 2x food wagons to park outside the cafe and the butcher shop (possibly butcher's own BBQ), all areas of land involved being business owned. Late opening of public toilets and involvement of police were being investigated; The Clerk would provide a poster for physical and social media publicity. Some costs were as yet unconfirmed but anticipated, such as purchasing additional hi-viz vests for stewards, some potential professional choir fees. The WG would meet again very soon to progress arrangements urgently as time was short. It was **RESOLVED** to give the Clerk delegated authority, in liaison with the Working Group, for expenditure on necessary or urgent costs within unspent budget code 4500 Christmas Project.

107. Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) application for Silverston Avenue and Marine Drive West

Members discussed the news that there had evidently been misunderstandings around the council's March 2026 application, in that it was believed this was being assessed for a Community Highways Scheme (CHS). It had transpired, however, that WSCC was awaiting a new submission for that to be considered. Correspondence had been circulated to Members for information. Cllr Rufey and the Clerk reported on their recent site meeting with the Assistant Area Highway Manager to review the situation. As a result, the Council was now asked to consider whether to submit a new combined CHS application for both roads, or to submit a new TRO for Silverston Avenue alone. The WSCC officer had advised that it was not appropriate to submit one now and another for the other road later on. Members commented on similar motorhome, campervan and caravan parking/habitation issues at High Trees, noting that problems affected other areas across the county, not just Aldwick. Therefore, a more strategic look at a growing issue might be needed. Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** that a new TRO application would be submitted for Silverston Avenue only, for prohibition of parking motorhomes, caravans and campervans overnight from 9pm-9am on the Western side of Silverston Avenue. C.Cllr Pinnelli had indicated his support as the county ward member.

108. Amenities

108.1 Youth Activities - Half Term Activities

The Clerk confirmed that the required Arun DC event licences had been applied for and consent received. Unfortunately, time had been very tight and Arun DC staff had kindly dealt with this within a very short period. The timing had, though, left little time for promotion but posters were placed on the Council's noticeboards, website, Facebook page and shared to various social media groups.

109. Finance

109.1 Cashbook Reconciliations

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

109.2 Income & Expenditure Reports

Members considered the Income & Expenditure reports to 30th September 2026.

109.3 Earmarked Reserves

Members noted the Earmarked Reserves reports as at 30th September 2026.

110. Rialtas accounting software, costs to move to cloud based service

Members considered the request by the Clerk, quotations and supporting information from Rialtas to move the accounting software from single desktop to cloud based. This would enable remote working on the accounts via the laptop or desktop. There were options for 1x user or 2x users, and Members were also asked to decide, if in agreement, whether to implement this immediately on a pro-rata basis, or in the new financial year. It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the accounts be migrated to cloud based, for a single user, effective pro-rata for the remainder of the current financial year at the additional cost of circa £109.00 + VAT, and then from the new financial year at the annual additional cost of £212.00 + VAT.

111. Community Emergency Hubs (CHubs)

The Clerk confirmed, as circulated to members following consultation, that the previously agreed Community Emergency Hubs (Chubs) training session would be delivered on Tuesday 10th November at 11am.

112. WSALC AGM and Conference

Members noted the circulated details of the joint East and West Sussex ALC AGM and conference on 4th November 2026. The Clerk advised that Cllr Purser and the Clerk would be attending. Cllr Rufey was unable to attend and Members were asked whether the Council wished to send a proxy voting representative in her place. Members did not wish to do so.

113. Support for Dependants' Carers' Allowance proposal

Members considered the proposal by NALC and Weymouth Town Council asking the Government to amend current Dependants' Carers' Allowance to include parish and town council members. Currently the allowance was only available to principal authorities, excluding parish/town level. This was felt likely to discourage people from all walks to apply to become Councillors and represent their community. It was **RESOLVED** to support the proposal by writing to the MP, as recommended, using the template provided.

114. Arun District Council Community Safety Project Showcase Event

Details of the Community Safety Project Showcase event on Wednesday 18th November were noted. Members and officers were invited to join event. Whilst it was a drop-in occasion, Arun DC had asked that names of attendees be forwarded to assist with planning. The Clerk advised that she had submitted photos and a report of how its successful Community Safety grant fund had helped in providing skateboard sessions in Aldwick. Members were asked to let the Clerk know if they would be attending.

115. Arun Flood Forum

Details of the next Arun Flood Forum meeting on 5th November were noted. The Clerk asked if a Member wished to attend in an observing capacity, as invited. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Huntley would do so. No questions were raised to put to the forum.

116. West Sussex County Council Consultation 'Help Shape the Future for Young People in West Sussex'

Members noted details of the WSCC consultation, which would inform its new Young People's Strategy. Members did not wish to submit a formal response to the consultation.

117. Representatives to External Bodies

Cllr Rufey reported that she had joined the recent WSALC Chairmen's Forum.

118. 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:-

Castle Water	£8.52
Castle Water	£55.63
Chichester Payroll Services	£15.00
H Knight / A Colban	£3,423.85
Downsview Monumental Co	£540.00
Business Stream	£40.09
Process Matters	£150.00
Lowen Electrical Services	£175.00
Westons	£652.00
Sussex Views Magazine	£120.00
Octopus Energy	£32.12
Pronetic Ltd	£205.43
Bognor Regis Town Council	£111.60
Copiers & Printers	£95.20
Monkey Nuts Cleaners	£103.20

Barclays Bank	£8.98
Barclaycard	£567.00

119. Correspondence

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

ADC

- News release 28th September: Planning for the future – consultation launches on Off-Street Parking Strategy (deadline had passed before Parish Council could consider)

WSALC

- Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA) delivery team update /presentation *(forwarded to Cllrs)*

Residents/Public

- FOI request from a member of the public, received 8th September 2026, and responded to by Clerk, requesting information on total costs of devolution & LGR in Sussex relating to Aldwick Parish Council;
- Copy of email from resident to Arun DC formally requesting restriction of using herbicide spraying of vegetation on Arun DC grounds.

120. Date and time of next Council Meeting

The Chairman thanked the various working groups for their efforts and reports.
The next Council meeting would take place on Tuesday 17th November 2026 at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.53pm.

CHAIRMAN …….

DATED ……