

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2026]

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 7th April 2026, at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr John Drew (JD) – Chairman
Cllr Joy Parks (JP) – Vice Chairman
Cllr Imelda Spencer (IS)
Cllr Suzanne Sawyer (SS)
Cllr John Spencer (JS)

In attendance: Iain McLean; Parish Council Clerk, and 4 members of the public.

- 1. (2026/029) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shane Axtell, and Councillor Di Smith, and the reasons accepted. Apologies were also received from Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC) and Councillor Joy Dennis (WSCC). Councillor Dennis has notified the Parish Council that she will be not be standing for election at the local elections on 7th May.
- 2. (2026/030) – Declarations of interest.** There were none declared on this occasion.
- 3. (2026/031) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** (i) A resident mentioned the missing highway sign on the B2116 (being a warning sign for horses) and it looks as though it might have been stolen. The pole is still there. The Clerk thought this had been reported to WSCC already, but will now do so. (ii) It was noted that work has now begin on the new/refurbished three way finger post at High Cross. (iii) The trial for the new parking arrangements at the School (drop off and pick up) will be starting on Monday (13th), and hopefully, there will be an improvement regarding the problems of congestion and inconsiderate parking.
- 4. (2026/032) – Approval of Minutes.** It being proposed by Cllr JS and seconded by Cllr IS, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd March 2026 were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.
- 5. (2026/033) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ).** *[There were no reports as neither Councillor was present.]*

6. (2026/034) – Planning matters.

6.1 One planning application was considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It being proposed by Cllr JS and seconded by Cllr SS, the Council therefore **RESOLVED to comment to MSDC as follows:-**

PROPERTY AND APP. NO.	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
Albourne C of E Primary School, The Street - DM/26/0544	Proposed classroom infill extension. This is an application to establish whether the development is lawful. This will be a legal decision where the planning merits of the proposed use cannot be taken into account.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections or comments regarding this application, and is in support of the proposal.

6.2 On current traffic and highway matters, these have been dealt with under agenda items 6.3, and 10 below as appropriate. The main focus at the moment is on ensuring that the Sayers Common housing development proposal takes on board and seeks to mitigate against the worse effects of the increase in traffic movements that the Parish Council has been waning of.

6.3. (i) Cllr JS raised the concern about the possible development of the land to the rear of the kennels on the B2118 London Road. The Parish Council has not heard of anything officially, but will keep a watch on the situation. On the District Plan, the examination hearings have now finished. The spatial strategy put forward by MSDC, and the selection of sites has found to be sound by the Planning Inspector, but he has identified the need for MSDC to find more sites, and to re-look at the ones that were rejected in the first round. He is looking for the unmet housing need of Crawley to be met by MSDC and Horsham DC. He has accepted that traffic, highways and flooding, in terms of the Sayers Common development proposals, needs much more work, and should be an integral part of the ongoing Master-planning process. The PC along with Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council, and Twineham Parish council intend to carry out some detailed research into traffic flows, and will be looking to put down some traffic loops at the appropriate road locations in order to obtain valuable data to support the case that the effects of the proposal have not been properly addressed. The Clerk at H&SC Parish Council is currently seeking quotes for the project. On that basis, it was proposed by Cllr IS and seconded by Cllr SS that, subject to the final details to be agreed by the Clerk in consultation, the Parish Council would contribute towards the cost on a proportionate basis. The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree to that approach. (ii) The issue of the extension at Old School House in Church Lane was raised, and the Clerk was asked to investigate the planning history and report back. (iii) In terms of the external planning advice being provided by Andrew Simpson, this has been an invaluable contribution to the Parish Council's work, but it was agreed that this needs to be scaled back now, at least for the time being. (iv) The felling of a tree at a property in Church Lane was discussed. It appears that despite this being in the Conservation Area, no permission was sought or given by MSDC. The Clerk was therefore asked to take the matter up with the Tree Officer at MSDC, and report back in due course.

7. (2026/035) – Finance report and matters.

7.1 The financial summary and the Bank reconciliation for the month, were received, noted, and approved.

7.2 The invoices were presented for payment, and it **was RESOLVED to agree and to make the following payments:-**

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£622-77	Clerk's salary + on costs (March)	West Sussex County Council
£129-38	Flower bulbs for planting in the Millennium Garden	Michael Nailard -reimbursement (Meadowmania)
£108-00	Repair to pole box door, Colum E, Hunters Mead	Streetlights
£40-08 *	Parish Council vinyl signs – printing *	Action Creative Group Limited *
£400-00	Donation to Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance	KSS Air Ambulance Charity
£211-21	Annual grounds maintenance, High Cross, Albourne	Mid Sussex District Council
£2,600-20	Planning advice and attendance at meetings on the District Plan and the Sayers Village development proposal	Andrew Simpson Planning Limited
£25-00	Grass cutting in the Millennium Garden (1)	Brian Truran
£86-55	New guttering and water butts for the allotment site	Peter Holding

* This payment has already been made, due to the urgency, and is included here for the record.

7.3 The outturn budget for the year end 2025/26 was received and noted. Overall, the Parish Council had spent about two thirds of its budget for that year.

7.4 It was noted that the internal audit to be carried out by Mulberry and Co. for the financial year 2025/26, will take place on 15th May 2026 (and will be carried out remotely).

7.5 It was confirmed and noted that because the expenditure for the financial year 2025/26 exceeded £25,000 (due to the in/out expenditure on the bus shelter installed on the B2118) the Parish Council cannot self certify itself as exempt from a limited assurance review this year, and so will have to submit a full set of financial papers for external audit. The cost will be circa £250.

7.6 On the recommendation of the Clerk, It was **RESOLVED** to re-engage Mulberry LAS Limited as the Parish Council's internal auditor for the next 3 years (starting 2026/7). This also secures a better rate than the 1 year deal offered.

7.7 It was **RESOLVED**, as for last year, to agree a request for a grant (of £400) to the Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Service, and the payment was authorised as above.

8. (2026/36) – Bus shelter. The discussion at the last meeting, and the decision not to agree to the provision of a bus shelter at the bus stop on the north side of the A281 (near Clappers Lane) was confirmed for the record. However, the Council has no objection if Woodmancote PC wishes to install one there, and to take on any ongoing maintenance costs.

9. (2026/37) - Annual Parish Meeting. The arrangements and agenda for the annual Parish Meeting of Electors in the Village Hall on Tuesday, 5th May 2026 at 7.30 p.m. were discussed. The proposed Agenda was then agreed, subject to a couple of minor changes, which the Clerk will make. A representative from Inspired Villages will be invited to update the Parish on the progress of the stalled Wellcroft Green retirement village development. The usual flyers advertising the meeting (250 copies) that will need to be distributed to residents, will be printed as soon as possible, and the rota for delivery of the leaflets by Councillors was also agreed. This will be done in the week commencing 27th April. The Agenda for the meeting will be published on 23rd April in accordance with the statutory requirements.

10. (2026/038) – Current issues. Cllr JD went through the rolling list of actions, and updated the document where necessary. This will be published separately. The main updates are (i) On the Operation Speedwatch programme, two further sessions have been undertaken. This had resulted in a number of warning letters being sent out to drivers. (ii) The fallen bird box in the Recreation Ground has been collected, but not yet put back. (iii) The water butts and the new guttering at the allotments has now been done. (iv) A quote from Adie Rowe regarding the clearance of the allotment rubbish and the vacant plot is awaited. (v) The impasse between MSDC and WSCC regarding road sweeping, and gully/drain clearance remains ongoing. (vi) It is believed the owner of the land at the entrance to the footpath at Church Lane regarding the possible installation of a post to try and prevent unauthorised vehicle access, has been identified, and will hopefully be contacted soon.

11. (2026/039) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. (i) Cllrs SS and IS have some issues with signing into the Vision ICT email system, and the Clerk will look into this. (ii) Cllr JP, who is stepping down from the Council in May, mentioned that she will be doing some hand over notes regarding her portfolio of Council work. (iii) Cllr SS mentioned the ongoing issue of potholes on local roads, and also the problem of the lack of road sweeping. She also mentioned her correspondence with WSCC regarding the extent of the highways adoption in Barn Close, and the fact that the response is at odds with work that has been done before in the alleged un-adopted part of the road. The issue is ongoing.

The meeting closed at 8.40 p.m.

SIGNED.....John Drew/Joy Parks
Chairman/Vice Chairman

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING (BEING THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING): TUESDAY, 5th MAY 2026 @ 6.00 p.m.