

# ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2025]

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## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

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

*In attendance:* Iain McLean; Parish Council Clerk (attending remotely via Zoom);  
Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC); and 3 members of the public.

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- 1. (2025/001) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Di Smith, and the reason accepted.
- 2. (2025/002) – Declarations of interest.** There were no such declarations received.
- 3. (2025/003) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** WILD (Watchdog for Intrusive Local Development) had no particular update to report, but indicated that stage 2 of the District Plan examination is to due to re-start soon. The CPRE (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England) had sent a helpful report about a development in Chichester, which has some similarities with WILD's objections to the Sayers Common site proposal in the Plan.
- 4. (2025/004) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.
- 5. (2025/005) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ).** Cllr GZ will be sending out his next all Parishes report soon. MSDC's Business Plan and budget is in the course of being reviewed. Funding for next year is unclear as is any reform to Business rates. It was noted that the changes to the NPPF and planning policy means that MSDC's housing number under the standard method of calculation, goes up from 1,039 dwelling per annum to 1,256. Whilst the fairly advanced stage of the District Plan means that the new arrangements won't apply, the Inspector in the examination may want to get more out of

the Plan. GZ touched on the new possible devolution proposal to combine West Sussex, East Sussex, and Brighton and Hove under a new unitary authority with an elected mayor. If it progresses, the County Council elections scheduled for May will be cancelled. An issue was raised about the Christmas bin collections, where a number of residents in Parishes (including Albourne), did not receive notification of the changes. Both GZ and the Clerk will pursue this with the relevant officers at MSDC. Finally, GZ is meeting soon to take forward the concerns around planning enforcement and planning controls.

## 6. (2025/006) – Planning matters.

6.1 Two planning applications were considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It was therefore **RESOLVED to comment to Mid Sussex District Council as follows**, with Cllr JP proposing and Cllr IS seconding -

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
DM/24/3053 - Bourne House, Truslers Hill Lane	Infill ground floor extension to existing kitchen.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application.
DM/24/3105 - Truslers, Truslers Hill Lane	Proposed side and rear 2 storey extensions.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application.

6.2 On traffic and highway matters, (i) the proposal circulated by Cllr IS for distribution of the leaflets by Councillors regarding the petition to support the re-consideration of the 20 mph Traffic Regulation Order for the stretch of the B2116, was discussed. As a result, it was agreed that Cllr IS would circulate an amended proposal of streets and areas for final approval. It was agreed that knocking on doors would be discretionary, and that a tear of slip for responses would be appropriate. In addition, Cllr JD will circulate the draft of the leaflet for final approval, with a view to conducting the exercise at the end of January. It was noted that 200 copies will be needed, and that Cllr SA had agreed to carry out the printing, (ii) the other outstanding issues and the action list (see previous minutes) will be discussed at the next meeting with Adam Denby (WSCC), which is in the course of being arranged.

6.3. On planning, it was felt that with regard to the District Plan it was likely that despite all the objections, the Sayers Common site will go ahead in some form or another. The Parish Council will need to decide how best to engage with the process so as to ensure better outcomes at the various stages. It will be particularly important therefore to seek a joint approach with Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council, and also to engage with the Sayers Common Village Society. The timing of such interventions will also need to be appropriate and non-prejudicial to the Parish Councils' opening objections. In order to aid this process, it was proposed by Cllr JS and seconded by Cllr SS, and then unanimously **RESOLVED** by the Council, to accept the proposal put forward by Andrew Simpson to provide expert help and advice at a cost of £2,500.

## 7. (2025/007) – Finance report and matters.

7.1 The financial summary and the Bank reconciliation for the month, were received, noted, and approved, with Cllr SA proposing, and Cllr JP seconding.

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

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£577-45	Clerk's salary + on costs (December)	West Sussex County Council
£40-00	Data Protection fee renewal	Information Commissioner
£323-40	New battery for defibrillator machine	John Parks (reimbursement)

7.3 The proposed budget for 2025/26 was considered and discussed. It was proposed that in the main the existing budget heads were appropriate, but that five should be increased, e.g. the salary budget (employers national insurance is now payable for the first time). Overall, the budget has therefore increased slightly, but the financial situation remains stable and the budget can be absorbed. On this basis it was **RESOLVED** to agree the budget as recommended by the Clerk.

7.4 The tax base for Albourne Parish for 2025/26 was noted and considered. It has gone up again very slightly from the current year meaning a very small decrease in the council tax bills for this element of the charge. However, after discussion, and in the light of the budget, it was **RESOLVED** to keep the precept for 2025/26 at the same level as for 2024/25 (£15,022), and the Clerk was authorised to respond to MSDC accordingly (by the deadline date of 31.01.25).

**8. (2025/008) – Current issues.** Cllr JD went through the rolling list of actions, and updated the document as necessary. This will be published separately. The main points were (i) the need to improve the state of the surface of the footways on a stretch of the B2116, and B2118 has been taken up with WSCC, and will be chased up. There is an issue about responsibility as between WSCC and MSDC, which the Clerk will seek to resolve, (ii) some remedial work on flooding issues (clearance of drains) has been carried out by WSCC, but in terms of Operation Watershed Cllr SA will continue to keep this under review, (iii) Cllr JS noted the need to obtain some expertise and quotes, when the time comes in order to review the Neighbourhood Plan, once the revised District Plan has been approved and adopted, (iv) the Clerk has made some progress with Vision ICT Ltd regarding the move to a .gov.uk email domain address for Councillors, and it was **AGREED** to proceed with the Company in order to implement the project at the costs quoted, (v) other reported matters relating to the Recreation Ground such as the springs on the gates to the children's play area, and the state of the trees on the boundaries, need to be pursued with MSDC or the Parks contractor, Glendale.

**9. (2025/009) – Allotments.** (i) The vacancy for the one plot has still not been taken up, and the Clerk will re-double the efforts to fill this, (ii) the Clerk reported that he has been in contact with Adie Rowe about clearing up the accumulated rubbish from the boundary of the land, and hopes to meet with him on site, along hopefully with Cllr JP, (iii) the remaining items, and the rubbish on the Housing Association land still needs to be dealt with, along with the cutting back of the boundary hedge, and the Clerk will chase this up with Clarion Housing, (iv) Cllr SS has a contact regarding the possibility of providing a water supply, and so hopes to make further progress on this in due course.

**10. (2025/010) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters.** Cllr SS raised an issue about the state of the road near the allotments from Barleycroft. This will need to be looked into. Cllr IS asked about the latest on Councillors attendance at meetings via Zoom being properly counted. The Clerk thought that the proposal, which was well supported by the consultation, will come into force as soon as the Government's legislative timetable allows. Cllr JP raised the poor condition of the bus shelter on the B2118, and it was agreed to draw up a specification of the work that needs to be done in order to restore this, and then to seek some quotes to have the shelter improved. In that context, there was a discussion on ownership and responsibility generally, and the possible provision of a bus shelter on the other side of the road at some point in the future.

The meeting closed at 8.54 p.m.

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

***NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 4<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2025 @ 7.00 p.m.***