

# ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2026]

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

held on: Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026, at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

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

*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. (2026/020) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** An apology for absence was received from Councillor Shane Axtell, and the reason accepted.
- 2. (2026/021) – Declarations of interest.** There were none declared on this occasion.
- 3. (2026/022) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** (i) It was reported that the School have a plan to widen the road/drive from the Street down to the School to create a drop off and pick up zone. It is hoped that this may help with the ongoing parking problems. The intention is to trial this around Easter time. It was noted that the nearby lay-by is for anyone's' use, and it would not be possible to bring this into the equation. It was suggested that the School could look at an initiative called Schools Safety Engineering Assessment, which can help highlight specific risk and mitigation measures. The Parish Council would need to be involved and is happy to assist, but the School need to lead on it. It was also considered that additional signage advertising the presence of the School to vehicle drivers would help with the safety concerns. (ii) There was a discussion on the progress of the District Plan examinations. The hearings have started, and the programme is published on the MSDC website. There seems to be confidence in the new Inspector, and he is very much in charge of the room. It is likely that the housing numbers will have to go up, albeit on a likely stepped basis, to not only meet the further demands of the District, but also the unmet need of neighbouring Authorities. This will inevitably mean that MSDC will have to find more sites. The Inspector has been quite challenging about the windfall projections. He will be looking specifically at site selections at further Hearings. Cllr JS highlighted

what the Parish Council has been doing, and referred to the fact that an updated paper with supporting documents on flooding and transport concerns, has been submitted to the Inspector, The Parish Council will be represented at the Hearings when the Sayers Common Village allocated sites are discussed at the Hearing session on 17<sup>th</sup> March. Finally, it was noted that in terms of traffic flows, a number of significant developments at Sayers Common have already put increased pressure on the Hickstead junction at the A23, and with the addition of further development, this does not seem to have been properly planned for, or thought through. For example, it is unclear as to whom (if anyone) will be paying for the improved infrastructure that will be required. (ii) A resident mentioned that a traffic sign on the B2116 has been stolen and will need to be replaced. (iii) It is believed that there are plans to develop the West House Farm land (which has recently been acquired by developers) with up to 3 new dwellings, but no planning applications have yet been received for such a proposal.

**4. (2026/023) – Approval of Minutes.** It being proposed by Cllr IS and seconded by Cllr JP, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026 were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.

**5. (2026/024) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ).** Cllr GZ gave an update – (i) there has naturally been a big focus on the current District Plan examination hearings, (ii) the ongoing re-development plans for Burgess Hill have also been taking up a lot of time and attention, (iii) the proposed Local Government re-organisation continues to be a major project, and preparations for the new Authorities, whatever they turn out to be, are underway. The Government's decision on which Unitary Authorities will emerge is expected later this month (March). It is now the case that WSCC elections will be going ahead on the 7<sup>th</sup> May. The next financial year's budget has been set, but there is a deficit looming. Consultation with the villages on car parking charges is due this month (March), and WSCC will need to be engaged with the process. On a number of MSDC issues, such as the re-winding post, he understood that a reply has been given, but the Clerk will check. The standoff between MSDC and WSCC about street cleaning and gulley cleansing remains the place. The problem appears to be with the MSDC Serco contract, which seems to prevent changes being made, e.g. that roads without kerbs should still be swept. *[There was no report from WSCC, as Councillor Joy Dennis was not present.]*

**6. (2026/025) – Planning matters.**

6.1 There were no individual planning applications to consider this cycle.

6.2 On current traffic and highway matters, these will be dealt with under agenda item 8 below as appropriate.

6.3. On items (i) and (ii) regarding the progress of the District Plan and the master-planning for the Sayers Village development proposal, this has been dealt with at item 3 above. The Clerk referred to the outcome of several planning applications, and these will be published separately on the website.

**7. (2026/026) – 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 payment:-**

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£622-77	Clerk's salary + on costs (February)	West Sussex County Council

**8. (2026/027) – 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) Speed-watch is ongoing, and the last session resulted in 5 warning letters being sent out to speeding drivers. (ii) The trimming of the Linden trees in the Recreation Ground has been done. (iii) The dropped gully by the School continues to be monitored by WSCC. It was noted that Tim Boxall (WSCC) is retiring soon. (iv) The clearance of the pathway on the B2118 down to Muddleswood has been done. (v) The repair of the fingerpost at High Cross should be done soon, now that the spring is nearly here. (vi) The Clerk will take up with WSCC the possibility of installing a post at the entrance to the footpath near Yew Tree Farmhouse so as to try and prevent unauthorised vehicular access. (vii) Some of the old roadwork's signs on the Albourne Road have been removed, but the old frame is still there. The Clerk will pursue this with WSCC Highways. (viii)

**9. (2026/028) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters.** (i) There was a discussion on the request from Woodmancote Parish Council, via WSCC, to provide a bus shelter at the bus stop on the A281 on the very southern boundary of the parish. Albourne Parish Council would have to take on the maintenance costs. Although this matter will come back to the April meeting for a formal decision, the unanimous view was that this was not something that the Parish Council would want to do at this stage. (ii) Cllr SS raised a query arising out of recent pothole repairs, about the extent of the public adopted highway at Barn Close. The Clerk will check this out. (iii) Cllr IS raised an issue about the School warning signs on the B2116, and the need to add to these, and to make them more effective, e.g. by moving them closer to the School. WSCC will need to be informed, as their consent may be required. The Clerk will take this up. (iv) There was a discussion on the co-option of new members when and if current members either stand down, or are not able to stand at the next election in 2027. (v) Cllr DS mentioned the possibility of a new hiring of the Village Hall from the School. (vi) Cllr SS mentioned that although his had been taken up with MSDC Tree Officer, there is not much more that can be done about the cutting back of the Oak tree in Church Lane, because the tree is neither listed nor in a Conservation area. However, the work has at least stopped.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

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

**NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 7<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026 @ 7.00 p.m.**