

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2024]

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Wednesday, 4th December, 2024 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 Suzanne Sawyer (SS)
Cllr John Spencer (JS)
Cllr Imelda Spencer (IS)
Cllr Shane Axtell (SA)

In attendance: Iain McLean; Parish Council Clerk; Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC); and 2 members of the public.

- (2024/111) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** No apologies for absence were received. JD outlined his approach for managing the meetings in a more focused and timely way.
- (2024/112) – Declarations of interest.** There were no such declarations received.
- (2024/113) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** **(A)** WILD (Watchdog for Intrusive Local Development) updated the meeting on their work regarding the District Plan examination. It is noticeable that a number of new documents have been added to the MSDC website. There is a concern that the surface water flooding issue may not carry as much weight as hoped. Case law indicates that it is river flooding that is the main problem, and that other flooding can be mitigated or engineered out. The sustainability appraisal needs to be re-done. The housing number may have to increase. It is expected that the Inspector and MSDC will want to wrap up all the outstanding issues before Christmas, so that the examination can proceed to stage 2 in the New Year. **(B)** The possible need to evacuate the School to the Village Hall in the event of an emergency was discussed. The School will need the key code. There are some practical issues that need to be dealt with, such as the occupation of the Hall by the Under 5s Group. It was therefore agreed that Cllr DS will liaise with an appropriate representative from the School in order to resolve the issue. **(C)** The drain down Truslers Hill Lane has collapsed leading to flooding problems in nearby properties. Councillor Dennis (WSCC) needs to be involved, and the Parish Council will add it to the list of issues to be discussed with Adam Denby (WSCC) at the next regular meeting with

him. **(D)** The installation of the warning signs of the junctions ahead on the B2116 at the danger areas, are welcomed, and also the recent Traffic Regulation Order for the 40 mph speed reduction on parts of the road will help.

4. (2024/114) – Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th November 2024 were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.

5. (2024/115) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ). Cllr GZ had no particular updates to report. However, villages do need to keep abreast of what MSDC is doing on car parking charges. The question is whether there is to be any formal consultation. Communications between MSDC and Towns and Parishes is an ongoing issue. Planning enforcement officer numbers have increased, and GZ is continuing to press for better and more effective planning enforcement. The street cleaning problem on the B2116 was discussed. The problem is that if gullies are not cleared out, then after flooding, the resultant debris accumulates on the road. However, it is not always easy to determine whether it is WSCC or MSDC that is responsible.

6. (2024/116) – Planning matters.

6.1 One planning application was considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It was therefore **RESOLVED to comment to South Downs National Park Authority as follows** (with Cllr JP proposing and Cllr IS seconding) -

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
SDNP/24/04748/ADV - Wickwoods Country Club And Spa, Shaves Wood Lane	Illuminated external Wall signage – Illuminated external totems (1 no 3 post totem).	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application.

6.2 On traffic and highway matters, Cllrs JD and JP have met with Adam Denby at WSCC on 26th November. The main points were (i) the Parish Council is making progress with regard to the need to persuade WSCC to review its decision to turn down the application for the 20mph speed limit on the B2116 (see previous minutes). In order to support this, the move to organise a local petition was discussed. A flyer explaining the situation, based on Cllr JD's recent note, will be prepared for distribution. Cllr SA agreed to do the printing, and the Council will arrange a rota for Councillors to undertake the delivery. It will also be posted on Albourne Connected, and the Parish Council's website, (ii) Cllr JD and JP have also met with Chris Stark (the Highways Safety Officer) at WSCC to discuss interim measures and ideas for the B2116, such as "20 is plenty" signs, but the officer advised that such signs would not be permitted to go on highways verge land. He also agreed to liaise with Councillor Joy Dennis (WSCC) in order to seek her input. The School also need to be involved, perhaps with someone from the Hurst Education Trust, in order to try and get them onside, given the proximity of the School, and the safety of the children getting to school, (ii) the overgrown hedge on the B2116 from the traffic lights to the bridge has been done by WSCC and is much improved, but the state of the surface of the path itself, needs attention. The cutting back of the hedge/trees on the B2118 down to the Chase have not yet been done. The Clerk

will take up both matters with Adam Denby at WSCC in the first instance. The Clerk will also update Peter Holding on current progress in response to his correspondence regarding the general problem of overgrown paths and footways.

6.3. The general planning and District Plan update had been mainly discussed at item 3 above. However, Cllr JS mentioned that the meeting with the planning consultant scheduled for November had had to be postponed, but is now set for 17th December.

7. (2024/117) – 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 DS 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 (November)	West Sussex County Council

It was noted that the overall financial position remains good, and it may be possible to bring forward some of the projects in the Forward Plan. The Clerk is expecting to hear from MSDC any day now regarding the setting of the precept for the next financial year 2025/26.

8. (2024/118) - Report from Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr DS

(Chairman) gave her report. The main points were (i) the wider advertising of the Hall seeking new lettings is a work in progress, (ii) progress on the demolition of the garage is being made, and MSDC has drafted the appropriate License for Alterations under the Lease. The detailed works schedule, including the removal of the asbestos, needs to be provided and this is being worked on, (iii) the new hiring rates starting in January had been agreed (see the draft minutes recently circulated), and this prompted a discussion on the particular rates paid by the Under 5s Group. The Council encouraged the VHMC to progress the review of the Hall's expenditure, so as to gauge how this may affect the discounted rates, as soon as possible.

9. (2024/119) - Calendar of Parish Council meetings for 2025. The proposed calendar of meetings for 2025, generally maintaining the tradition of the first Tuesday in each month, was noted and approved. The dates will be posted on the website.

10. (2024/120) – 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) Speed-watch personnel now have body-cams to help with safety concerns, (ii) there is still some uncertainty as to whether the residents at Oakvale Cottages are satisfied with the work carried out by WSCC to try and alleviate the well documented flooding problems, (iii) whilst a few damaged branches have been removed, the condition of the trees at the Recreation Ground needs to be monitored, and Cllr SS agreed to check the position with MSDC, (iv) the bird boxes have been installed in the Millennium Garden, (v) Cllr SA reported that the grit bin in Barleycroft is full of water, and this needs to be investigated further.

11. (2024/121) – Allotments. (i) The vacancy for the one plot has still not been filled, despite the fact that the site looks better. However, the accumulated garden and other rubbish along the boundaries needs to be removed in order to improve the look of the site even further. It had not been possible to secure any volunteers for this, and so it was proposed by Cllr JP and seconded by Cllr DS that the Parish Council should arrange a contractor to undertake this work. It was then unanimously ***RESOLVED*** to do so, and so the Clerk will investigate getting a contractor in. Clarion Housing have confirmed that they are dealing with the vehicles on the site, and also clearing up the items of rubbish items dumped on their own land, (ii) Cllr SS agreed to contact the Water Authority to see how practical is might be to connect a water supply to the site, being one of the objectives in the Forward Plan.

12. (2024/122) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. There were no new matters raised.

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

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

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 7th JANUARY 2025 @ 7.00 p.m.