

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2024]

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 8th October, 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 Shane Axtell (SA)

In attendance: Councillors John Spencer and Imelda Spencer (attending via Zoom), Iain McLean; Council Clerk; Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC); and 4 members of the public.

-
- (2024/090) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** No apologies for absence were received on this occasion.
 - (2024/091) – Declarations of interest.** There were no such declarations received.
 - (2024/092) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public. (A)** A local resident raised the ongoing issue of the speed of traffic along Shaves Wood Lane and Truslers Hill Lane. A petition has been presented. The next stage is to seek a Traffic Regulation Order from WSCC, and the Parish Council supports the application and stands ready to help. It will also be important to secure the support of both Albourne’s MSDC and WSCC Councillors. It was suggested that it may also be helpful to get the Wickwoods business on side. Cllr IS mentioned the importance of good data collection, and it may be that the Parish Council could help with e.g. putting down speed loops on the road. WSCC will need to be involved. **(B)** Tim Higginson updated the meeting on the work of WILD regarding the District Plan, and there had been had been a good public meeting recently. Their examination hearing statement is now on the website, along with many other papers recently added by MSDC, such as the Sayers Common Village Matsterplan. Cllr JS noted that the developers that had given presentations at recent liaison meetings no longer appeared to feature. He also referred to a recent meeting with Andrew Simpson, who is giving the Parish Council some help and advice regard its approach to the District Plan. It is intended to ask him for a firm proposal, but it will be important not to duplicate work. The lack of consultation is a particular point that the Parish Council will want to focus on. The Parish Council has also made a written submission, and has registered to speak at the examination hearings. **(C)**

A local resident noted that the road markings on the B2116, whilst some of the work had been done, had not been completed. **(D) Cllr IS** had received an update on the Inspired Village development from Phil Docherty, as follows – “*Last Friday (20th September) we received tenders back from contractors to undertake the 'enabling works'. This is essentially the 'below ground' works. We have been clarifying a few points with individual contractors to try and identify a preferred contractor. Once complete I will make a recommendation to our internal (Inspired Villages) board first and then, with their support, our funder's board (Legal & General and NatWest Group Pension Fund) of how best to proceed. My aim is to begin the enabling works before Christmas but this is to be subject to two separate board approvals.*” **(E)** There was a discussion on the general problem of hedge trimming and the overgrown state of some of the roads and footpaths. There is a need to identify land owners, so that they can be reminded of their legal obligations. **Cllr JS** mentioned that he has the ability to check land registries, and it was agreed that a plan of the Parish could help identify and highlight the problem areas. Peter Holding said that he would be able to provide this.

4. (2024/093) – Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd September 2024 were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.

5. (2024/094) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ). **Cllr GZ** referred to his latest written report that had been sent to Councillors, and is available as part of these minutes. In terms of the District Plan he is continuing to press the issue of the proper enforcement of planning conditions, and to ensure that there are consequences from the failure by developers to meet those conditions. The gap in the hedge at Hunters Mead was raised again, and the fact that the re-wilding area leading up to the gap is being trampled down. The Parish Council would like MSDC to review its decision not to fence off or block the gap, and the Clerk will write to the relevant MSDC officer with a copy to GZ. There was a discussion on the meaning of fly-tipping in the context of the ongoing issue on the Street opposite the Village Hall, and GZ will take this back to the officers for some clear guidance. The question is when purported temporary storage of items on the pavement awaiting collection is, or if it isn't, becomes fly-tipping.

6. (2024/095) – Planning matters.

6.1 There were no individual planning applications to discuss on this occasion.

6.2 An update on outstanding traffic and highway issues is given in item 8 below.

6.3. The general planning and District Plan update had been given at item 3 above.

7. (2024/096) – 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
£577-45	Clerk's salary + on costs (September)	West Sussex County Council
£25-00	Grass cutting in the Millennium Garden	Brian Truran
£395-95	New airman silhouette silent soldier for remembrance	Bespoke Laser Art (reimbursement for Imelda Spencer)
£217-33	Street lighting maintenance contract payment 2 of 2 (2024/5)	Streetlights

7.3 The half yearly budget monitoring report for the period 01.04.24 to 30.09.24 was noted and approved. The Council has only spent about a third of its budget so far, and is unlikely to overspend for the year. It was noted however, that many of the budget heads are contingent on events, and so may not need to be used. The Clerk confirmed that it was perfectly possible to vire (transfer) money over from unspent budgets to others, should the need arise.

8. (2024/097) – 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 new silent soldier (Airman) has been delivered, and arrangements for installing it are now in hand, (ii) on the speeding, highway and traffic issues, a meeting with Adam Denby is now in the course of being arranged. It was noted that it might be possible to put in some temporary “nudge” signs on the B2116 in consultation with Sussex police in order to help try and slow down traffic, (iii) the recent monitoring of speeds on the B2118 led to nine warning letters being sent to drivers. Body cams for the operatives need to be sourced given at least one instance of intimidating driving, (iii) Cllr SA reported that some remedial flooding work has been done by WSCC, mainly at Oakvale Cottages. Feedback from the residents may help confirm this, (iv) it was **AGREED** to purchase some wildflower seeds to plant in the re-wilding area to make it look nicer, (v) the maintenance work to the footpaths in the Millennium Garden has been done, and the invoice is awaited, (vi) it was noted that the Medieval Pound will be cleared as previously agreed, (vii) on the nest boxes for the Millennium Garden it was proposed, after discussion, by Cllr JP, and seconded by Cllr SS to purchase four boxes at £24-95 each, to include installation and maintenance. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to do so, and Cllr JP will take this forward. It was also noted that the nature of the boxes in the Recreation Ground need to be checked with MSDC, to make sure they are not suitable for Tawny Owls, as they can be quite aggressive at breeding season, and are quite close to the children’s playground, (viii) it was noted that the nets for the basketball hoops at the Recreation Ground have been improved, (vix) the broken springs on the gates to the Play area in the Recreation Ground have been reported and action is awaited, (x) the broken finger post has been repaired, (xi) the issue of the overgrown hedge at the Street/Barleycroft remains outstanding and Clarion need to be chased up. The Clerk will pursue this further, (xi) the agreed action to padlock the gate, and to give a key to the School, from the Millennium Garden to the School, will be done as soon as possible, and Cllr SS will be dealing with this, (xii) the Clerk has made some progress with regard to securing separate uk.gov email addresses for Councillors, and will be taking this up with NALC (National Association of Local Councils) who can provide some assistance and financing.

9. (2024/098) - Report from Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr DS

(Chairman) gave her report. The main points were (i) the fridge has been replaced, (ii) there is to be a renewed focus on advertising the venue for hire, given how good it now looks, (iii) there are already some new bookings, (iv) most of the renewal work to the Hall has now been done, and although there has been a lot of expenditure, the finances are stable, but hopefully the drive to advertise the hall for hire as mentioned above, will result in more income, (iv) the Friday pub attendance and income is quite variable at present.

10. (2024/099) – Allotments.

(i) The vacancy for the one plot has still not been filled, (ii) Regarding the overgrown state of some of the allotments, the Clerk has now written to allotment plot holders in order to remind them of their responsibilities to properly cultivate their plots, and some action has been taken. It is hoped therefore that the situation will improve. (iii) There has been a kind offer from Peter Holding to deal with the issue of the repairs/improvements to the gate and the fence. They may be able to provide the labour, and the Parish Council would supply the materials. Cllr JD will look into this further.

11. (2024/100) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. Cllr DS

referred to the fly-tipping in the Street, and the fact that a number of wasp nests have been found in a hedge by a resident. This needs to be reported to MSDC, although it may be that nature will take its course. Cllr SA mentioned the issue of some rubbish that had been cordoned off at 13, Barleycroft in an apparent attempt to sidestep the issue. This has been reported to Clarion Housing as it is believed to be their responsibility.

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

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

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 12th NOVEMBER 2024 @ 7.00 p.m.