

# ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2025]

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## Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council (Village Hall Management Committee) - meeting as the Trustee of the Albourne Village Hall held on Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025 in Albourne Village Hall.

Present: Councillor Di Smith (Chair) (DS)  
Councillor Shane Axtell (SA)  
Councillor Suzanne Sawyer (SS) (from 7.30 p.m.)  
Christopher Davies (CD)  
Eve Gerhold/Tina Ware (EG/TW)  
Dave Robson (DR)

In attendance: Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk) (attending by Zoom), Gail Murray (Treasurer), Sandra Axtell (Bookings Secretary).

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The meeting commenced at 7.00 p.m.

1. **Chairs Welcome.** The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present. An apology for absence was received from Councillor John Spencer. Cllr SA has previously declared a minor, non-financial interest in the matters discussed at item 6, as family members used the Hall as part of a regular hiring.
2. **Approval of minutes of the previous meeting.** The minutes of the last meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were formally approved by those present, and duly signed off as a true record by DS.
3. **Matters arising.** (i) The Chair reported that the Parish Council was looking at amending the constitution of the Committee to reflect the fact that there are currently only 4 serving Councillors in the Committee (out of 5), and to increase the number of co-opted members from 3 to 4. This would greatly help with the work of the Committee. The Chair knows of someone who is interested and would be very good for the Committee. The person will be invited to the next meeting of the Committee, which will be the annual meeting, when the appointments can be made and/or confirmed. (ii) The Chair went through the various tasks allocated, or taken up, by members in terms of what had been achieved and what remains to be done.

It was noted that inevitably some members do more than others, and hopefully this can be levelled out. (iii) It was reported that the Village Hall contact telephone number needs amending on various documents, including the Parish Council website. The correct number is 07311 380157. The Clerk will correct his where necessary.

4. **Domestic issues.** (i) The Under 5s Group has requested an extension of their use of the Hall to Friday afternoons for the After School Club. However, it was noted that this is when the Hall is cleaned, and various maintenance tasks are sometimes scheduled to be done. The Chair therefore expressed reservations, and doubts as to whether the practical obstacles could be overcome. She was not therefore in favour of the proposal. However, in the light of other comments from members, it was agreed that subject to there being no clash with the issues mentioned above, there was no objection in principle to this request. It would therefore need further consideration and some careful management. (ii) It was confirmed that the fire alarm system has now been tested, and a review/update of the Fire Regulations is underway.
5. **Financial Statement and matters.** Gail Murray (Treasurer) presented her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and forms part of these minutes. The water rate amount is estimated at the moment, pending a meter reading (once the meter can be located). It was noted that the preferential agreement with EDF regarding energy usage expires in July, and the opportunity will be taken to look at other providers so as to achieve best value. The Clerk had circulated an email regarding a Village Hall Conference on 15<sup>th</sup> March, and it was agreed that it would be useful to attend this. The Treasurer will therefore book 2 places at the Conference, and it can be decided who, nearer the time, might be available to attend.
6. **Hall Hire charges.** There was a further discussion on the Hall hire charges. SA had been able to pull up the accounts filed with the Charity Commission for the last few years. These highlighted the overall expenditure and income for the Hall for those years. In the main, they showed that the Hall had been breaking even, and so no profit or loss was being made or incurred. However, it was recognised that costs are going up at a much faster rate than previously, particularly as regards energy use. It was therefore decided that the Committee will continue to review the charges, but it was agreed that the increases that came into effect in January should be left as they are for the time being.

(Note: This item was deferred by the Chair to the end of the meeting after AOB. EG/TW left the meeting at that point in view of the conflict of interest as a principal hirer of the Hall.)

7. **Pop-up-Pub.** A proposal to open up the Pop-up-Pub (Albourne Arms) to other community events in the Hall (as set out in the background paper circulated to members) was discussed. There appear to be two options. One is that hirers can use the bar (the physical structure) but providing their own refreshments, and the

other is that hirers can use the full facilities of the bar, such as the equipment and the payment machine. Both options however, give rise to some practical issues that would need to be overcome, such as the use of the glasses, licensing issues, stock taking, and the use of the sum up machine. It was also recognised that the work involved in running the pub falls almost exclusively on the Chair, and she would not therefore have the time to take on any more at the present time. She could not therefore support the second option. However, in terms of comments from other members, there was still some uncertainty as to exactly what is being proposed, and it is hoped that this could be fleshed out at future meetings. Although the Committee was in principle open to the idea, the issue would therefore be held in abeyance for the time being.

8. **Projects.** (i) **Garage.** The Clerk confirmed that the License paperwork had been completed in time with MSDC as the freeholder of the land. The garage has therefore now at last been demolished and the site cleared. (ii) **Rolling list of actions.** DS went through the three lists, which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting-

*Completed* – It was confirmed that the 4 matters had been completed, i.e. the garage (as above), the new hub for hall entry lock, vestibule photo, and the new dedicated bookings phone secured.

*To be agreed* – The main items concerned the problems with the disabled toilet floor. Quotes need to be obtained to deal with the leak problem. The heating system needs to be flushed through in order to find out what the problems are. The repair issues with the front steps will be done depending on what the specification for the work turns out to be. Some laminated notices need to be placed around the Hall to show hirers where equipment should be returned and stored. It was agreed that the Hall ladder needs to be secured to the wall, so that it cannot be used without permission. SA agreed to take this forward. The demountable marker board could be put on hooks to facilitate ease of putting up and taking down to store away.

*To be completed* – The main issues were to drop the redundant, generic Village Hall email address. Everyone needs to go on to the dedicated Village Hall email addresses. The various lighting issues in and outside the Hall are being done, but there is still some work to do. The remaining issues are ongoing.

9. **Social activities. Albourne Arms (Pop-up Pub).** There was nothing to report concerning the pub at this meeting. Plans for some social events in the Hall, including a quiz, are ongoing.

10. **Any other business.** (i) SA had mentioned the possibility of providing baby changing facilities in the Hall, which is a common feature of other village halls. This would be especially helpful if ever a formal nursery wanted to operate out of the Hall. SA agreed to source some prices/quotes for this suggestion. (ii) As noted above, it will be necessary to locate the water meter for the Hall. It is believed to be

outside in the road.

11. **Date of next meeting.** This was agreed for Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7.00 p.m.  
in the Village Hall, and DS will book the Hall.

The meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.

SIGNED as a true record.....

Chairman

DATED.....2025