

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2025]

Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council (Village Hall Management Committee) - meeting as the Trustee of the Albourne Village Hall held on Tuesday, 27th May 2025 in Albourne Village Hall.

Present: Councillor Di Smith (Chair - elect) (DS)
Councillor Suzi Sawyer (Vice Chair - elect) (SS)
Councillor Shane Axtell (SA)
Christopher Davies (CD)
Dave Robson (DR)
Tina Ware (TW)
Amanda Bevan (AB) (from item 4)

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

The meeting commenced at 7.07 p.m.

1. **Chairman.** This being the first meeting of the new municipal year, nominations were sought for the office of Chairman of the Committee for the year 2025/6. CD proposed **Cllr Di Smith**, and this was seconded by DR. There being no other nominations, it was duly **RESOLVED** that Councillor **Di Smith** be unanimously elected to serve as Chair of the Committee for the municipal year 2025/6. Nominations were also sought for the office of Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the year 2025/6. CD proposed **Cllr Suzi Sawyer**, and this was seconded by DR. There being no other nominations, it was duly **RESOLVED** that Councillor **Suzi Sawyer** be unanimously elected to serve as Vice-Chair of the Committee for the municipal year 2025/6.
2. **Housekeeping.** The Chair then opened the meeting, and welcomed everyone present. Councillor John Spencer had sent apologies for absence. There were no declarations of interest from Councillors or members on this occasion.
3. **Committee membership.** The membership of the Committee was confirmed, and it was noted that although there is a vacancy for the remaining Councillor

place (total 5), the Parish Council decided at its meeting on 6th May to once again take up only 4 places for the time being. Following the recent change to the constitution, as previously reported, there are now 4 co-opted member places on the Committee instead of the original 3.

4. In the light of item 3 above, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Amanda Bevan as the fourth co-opted member of the Committee, and she duly took her place on the Committee.
5. **Approval of minutes of the previous meeting.** The minutes of the last meeting held on 25th February 2025 were formally approved by those present, and duly signed off as a true record by DS.
6. **Decisions of the Parish Council to be noted.** (i) That all members of the VHMC are required to declare any conflicts of interest, and play no part in the discussions or decisions relating to such an item. Any member declaring such an interest should therefore leave the meeting for the duration of the relevant item. (ii) That a working group comprising Councillors Smith, Spencer (John), and Drew should look into the review of the hiring charges for the Village Hall, and make the appropriate recommendations to the VHMC in due course. There have been no meetings as yet, but it was confirmed that the work is likely to be done over the summer months in time for any recommendations to be agreed, and then to take effect in January 2026 (when the hire charges are next due for review).
7. **Matters arising.** The decision taken in correspondence (in view of the urgency) not to let the Hall out on Friday afternoons was noted and confirmed for the record. This is because of potential conflicts. DS will ensure that the Under 5s Group is informed as the request originally came from them.
8. **Domestic issues.** There were none raised on this occasion.
9. **Financial Statement and matters.** The Treasurer, Gail Murray, presented her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and forms part of these minutes. She went through the expenditure items, and it was noted that the accounts do not yet include the payments for the recent removal of the garage. The EDF energy contract ends in July, and Gail is looking into whether other providers could provide cheaper or better options. Overall, the VH is more or less breaking even, although with a small surplus this year. It was **AGREED** that in order to give members more time to review the accounts, they would be brought back to the next meeting for formal approval by the Committee, and then for signing off by the Chairman, so that they can be presented to the Charity Commission.
10. **Pop-up-pub proposal.** The proposal to open up the pop-up-pub (Albourne Arms) for other events was discussed and reviewed. DS gave the background to the matter, but re-iterated the difficulties against being able to agree the idea. It

was still hoped that Geoff Zeidler may be able to attend a future meeting, and explain how he sees this working, and to enable members to ask questions. There may for example be a half way house between what he is suggesting, and what the Committee could run with. For example, combining the pub for wider events, when it is already open on a Friday evening, when the License is operative, might be possible. Other events would need a separate TENS License. DS will re-send the background papers to everyone, so that everyone can review the matter with all the relevant information to hand.

11. Projects - Rolling list of actions. DS went through the three lists, which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting-

To be agreed list – see below for the charity Macmillan’s tea parties. No extra chairs would be purchased for the time being, and in the event (not that frequent) that more are needed for any occasion, they can always be hired in. The re-sealing of the WC floor was deferred as the view was that all it needs is a deep clean. It was agreed to join Action in Rural Sussex as they provide good support and help for Village Halls.

Completed list – items completed were duly noted.

To be completed – it was noted that on the issue of the lockable cupboards, which had been agreed, the Parish Council should be asked to make a contribution towards the costs, as many of the old records are theirs. Lighting issues are ongoing. DS’s idea of appoint a handyman to carry out all minor, or routine jobs at the Village Hall was agreed, and DS has someone in mind who has advertised locally. She will therefore look into this further and report back. SA confirmed that he has also set up a WhatsApp group for maintenance matters as they arise, and so that if members can carry out any work themselves, everyone is in the loop.

12. Social activities. Albourne Arms (Pop-up Pub). The pub continues to cover its costs, and it was noted that this is the tenth anniversary of it first opening, and so the Chair will look into celebrating this in some way later in the year. **Future Events.** Ideas include music quiz nights, bingo, race nights, and karaoke. There is a b-b-q on 3rd August for all Parish Councillors, VHMC members and officers to recognise the contribution of everyone towards the running of the Parish and the Village hall. Also, it was agreed to hold the first of the charity breakfast parties in aid of Macmillan’s charity on 16th August.

13. Any other business. It was reported and noted that John Parks has been added to the list of “key” holders so as to give more options of opening up the Hall whenever needed (i.e. in the event of an emergency), if any of the current “key” holders are not available. It was also reported that the boiler may need replacing, but it was felt that before this is considered further, it should be drained down and the system flushed, as that may be all that is needed to improve its efficiency.

14. Date of next meeting. This was agreed for Tuesday, 30th September 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