

# ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2024]

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

held on: Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024, at 6.00 p.m.

*Present:* Cllr John Drew – Chairman elect (JD)  
Cllr Joy Parks – Vice Chairman elect (JP)  
Cllr Di Smith (DS)  
Cllr Suzanne Sawyer (SS)  
Cllr Imelda Spencer (IS)  
Cllr Shane Axtell (SA) (from 6.25 pm.)  
Cllr John Spencer (JS)

*In attendance:* Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk), Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC) and one member of the public.

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- 1. (2024/043) - Election of Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.** This being the first meeting of the Parish Council for the new Council year, nominations for the office of Chairman of the Parish Council for the Council year 2024/25 were called for. Councillor John Drew was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Sawyer and **SECONDED** by Councillor Imelda Spencer. There being no other nominations, **Councillor John Drew** was duly and unanimously **ELECTED** to serve as Chairman of the Parish Council for the Council year 2024/25.
- 2. (2024/044) – Councillor JD then formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Joy Dennis (WSSC).
- 3. (2024/045) – New Chairman signs Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** Councillor Drew signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, in the presence of the Clerk, who also signed and dated the document.
- 4. (2024/046) – Election of Vice Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.** Councillor Drew, having duly taken the Chair, called for nominations for the office of Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the Council year 2024/25. Councillor Joy Parks was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Sawyer and **SECONDED** by Councillor Imelda Spencer. There being no other nominations, **Councillor Joy Parks** was duly and unanimously **ELECTED** to serve as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the Council year 2024/25.

5. **(2024/047) – Declarations of interest.** There were none declared on this occasion.
6. **(2024/048) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** There were none were raised at the meeting.
7. **(2024/049) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 were duly approved and will be signed, as a true record, by the Chairman, as soon as possible.
8. **(2024/050) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ).** Cllr GZ mentioned that the next MSDC full Council meeting is on 15<sup>th</sup> May. He will now be preparing his reports for Parish Councils around the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month and this should better fit the Parish Councils meetings schedules. Also, there has been a recent purdah on Council business, given the recent local elections on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. He said that there has been a delay in publishing the responses to the Regulation 19 consultation on the District Plan, but they should be on MSDC's website soon (there were about 1,300 responses). He is pursuing a carbon literate initiative at MSDC, and has attended some training. It is hoped that a series of pledges will come out of the initiative in order to help people across the District reduce their carbon footprint. The controversial planning application at Wickwoods is ongoing, but it is likely that the application will be called in, so that it is dealt with at member level within the South Downs Park Authority rather than being officer delegated. Progress on the various issues at the Recreation Ground was noted, and the MSDDC officer, Elizabeth Nelson, was particularly thanked for her help in having these matters looked into and dealt with.
9. **(2024/051) - Appointment of the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC).** Under its constitution there are five Councillor Members to be appointed to the Committee. However, there are only four nominations, and so it was **RESOLVED** that the VHMC for the municipal year 2024/25 should comprise a membership of Councillors Smith, Sawyer, Axtell, and John Spencer. Councillor Imelda Spencer had stood down from the Committee, and there is therefore a Councillor vacancy for filling by the Parish Council at a later date if possible. However, it was decided that the Committee should proceed with just four Councillors in the meantime. It was noted that the three appointed co-opted representatives on the Committee are currently Eve Gerhold, Christopher Davies, and Dave Robson. Those appointments will be confirmed at the next VHMC meeting at the end of June. Finally, it was **AGREED** that Councillor Smith should act as the Village Hall's Safeguarding officer, this role having formerly been carried out by Councillor Imelda Spencer.
10. **(2024/052) – Wellcroft Green (Inspired Villages).** The recent news that ARJ (the building contractor) had gone into administration was noted with disappointment and concern. Work on site has stopped pending the appointment of a new contractor. However, Phil Docherty from Inspired Villages will be attending the Parish meeting of electors later this evening, in order to update on how this will affect the progress of the development. There are a number of issues that residents would want to see resolved, such as flooding and run off, and security dogs barking at unsociable hours.

Nonetheless, it was noted that on the whole, there has been positive engagement with regard to the management of the project.

## 11. (2024/053) – Planning matters.

10.1 One planning application was considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It being proposed by Cllr JS and seconded by Cllr SA, it was therefore **RESOLVED to comment to MSDC as follows:-**

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
DM/23/2382 - Wick Farm House, Truslers Hill Lane	Replacement of one existing barn and the erection of a second barn. Change of use to class B8 storage and distribution use (Amended plans and planning statement 23/04/2024)	The Parish Council repeats its response to the previous amended application. That is that Albourne Parish Council notes that the application still seeks to deal only with the look of the building, but does not address any of the concerns raised in our response to the original application, such as the proposed use, access, and traffic issues. We must therefore continue to register our objection to this application.

11.2 Cllr JD confirmed that the complaint about the approach taken by WSCC to the TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) applications had been lodged, and a response recently received. This is regarded as unsatisfactory, and so the matter is ongoing. It will need to be escalated up the complaints chain under the procedure. However, WSCC Has recently accepted the need to reduce the speed limit along most of the B2116 to 40 mph and is consulting on the TRO. On the school parking issues, it was felt that this needs a working party (to include the Parish Council, the School, and WSCC) in order to take this forward and to come up with some appropriate solutions.

11.3. On planning generally, Cllr JS has met with WILD (the campaign group) regarding the District Plan and the Sayers Village proposal. The matter is ongoing, and WILD is preparing for the next steps, and the appointment of the Planning Inspector. There will be further work to do on the transport side of things. The review and updating of the Neighbourhood Plan is ongoing, and outside help will be needed. Quotes and pricing will therefore need to be taken forward in due course.

## 12. (2024/054) – Finance report and matters.

11.1 The financial summary and the Bank reconciliation for the month, were received, noted, and approved. It was noted that the first half of the annual precept for 2024/25 in the sum of £7,511 has been received from MSDC, and should be on the next Bank Statement. It was also noted that following issue of the invoices, four of the six allotment fee payments for 2024/25 had already been made. However, the Clerk reported that one of the plot holders had just given notice of relinquishing her allotment, and there was therefore a vacancy for the plot. A number of people on the waiting list had declined the offer, and it may be that the

Council will have to re-advertise. It could also be mentioned at the Parish meeting of electors later this evening.

11.2 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 (April)	West Sussex County Council
£2,754-00	Remedial work done to streetlights as detailed in Service Inspection Report	Streetlights
£217-33	Payment 1 of 2 for annual street lighting maintenance contract 2024/5	Streetlights
£25-00	Grass cutting at the Millennium Garden x 1	Brian Truran
£211-21	Annual grounds maintenance – High Cross 25/03/24 to 24/03/25	Mid Sussex District Council
£210-00	Ditch clearing works at Church Lane (agreed under delegated authority on the grounds of urgency)	J Millam
£1,026-90	Annual Council insurance renewal due on 02.06.24 (premium)	Arthur J Gallagher
£325-00 *	Grant/donation to air ambulance service *	Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance *

\* For confirmation/information only, as payment was agreed and made at the last meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

11.3 On the Parish Council's annual insurance arrangements for 2024/5 it was **AGREED** in principle, to accept the recommendation from the broker, Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited, to accept the quote from Hiscox Insurance at the annual premium sum of £1,026-90, including IP tax and all fees, subject to any further quotes being obtained by the Clerk. On that basis, the Clerk will arrange with the broker to put the Parish Council on cover as from the renewal date of 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 for the year ahead as appropriate.

**13. (2024/055) – Current issues.** Cllr JD went through the rolling list of actions that had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, and this is attached for the record. The main points were (i) the gateways will be cleaned when there is better weather, (ii) Speedwatch has conducted another session on the B2118 and 6 warning letters issued. The next one is scheduled for the B2116 from the junction with the B2118, (iii) flooding issues and Operation Watershed investigations are ongoing, and some ditch clearance work at Church Lane has recently been carried out. There has been significant flooding again at Oakvale Cottages, and this is being taken up by Cllr SA and the Clerk, (iv) progress is being made on having dedicated Councillor email addresses, and have already been provided to members of the Village Hall Management Committee, (v) filling of the grit bins is being dealt with, and one way or another this should be resolved by next winter, (vi) clearance of the Pound is work in progress, but is now firmly on the Parish Council's radar, (vii) there are still a number of pot hole issues that people are encouraged to report directly to WSCC. The Parish Council has

done so itself, (viii) there is still some signage, sand bags, etc., left over from road works that need to be collected up by WSCC, (ix) it was **AGREED** to acquire a second Silent Soldier for the remembrance period (and to be situated in the Millennium Garden) at a cost of between £250-£300. It will either be an airman, or sailor, so as to reflect additional military service personnel, (x) there is no response yet from the School on the issue of the open gate from the Millennium Garden to the School, (xi) there is a blocked gully and sunken drain by the School gate from the Street, and this has been reported by Cllr SA, (xii) there are 2 trees in the Recreation Ground that have broken, hanging branches, and could be a danger. The Clerk will report this to MSDC.

**14. (2024/056) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters.** Cllr DS updated on the Black Locust plant invading the footpath hedge by the Village Hall and that the resident in whose garden the tree grows, has agreed to allow the matter to hopefully be dealt with at source. Elizabeth Nelson (MSDC) is assisting with this. Cllr JD referred to the sewer survey that the Council has been asked to complete, which highlights the difficulties of development without the matter being addressed, and once a map of the sewer infrastructure in the Parish is obtained, this will help. Cllr SS indicated that she will not be able to attend the next meeting in June.

The meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.

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

***NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024 @ 7.00 p.m.***