



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Rottingdean Parish Council Monday 12th of May 2025 at the Whiteway Centre

Present: Cllr Nixon (Chair), Cllr Lawrence, Cllr Levins, Cllr Evans, Cllr Poole, Cllr Cherrie, Cllr Lowery, Cllr Hickin.

C Hayes, Parish Clerk (minutes)

Public Gallery: Ward Cllr Fishleigh, Bernard Turnbull, Rose Daley, Janice Mead, Caroline Lane, Paul Lane.

Annual General Meeting

1. **Apologies for absence**

Cllr Snow and Ward Cllr Earthy

2. **Declarations of Parish Councillors interest in agenda items.**

None

Elections

3. **Election of the Chair.** Cllr Nixon was proposed by **Cllr Cherrie**, seconded by **Cllr Levins** and duly elected Chair by unanimous vote

4. **Election of Vice Chair of Parish Council.** Cllr Lawrence was proposed by Cllr Levins, seconded by Cllr Poole and duly elected Vice Chair by unanimous vote.

Signed

Date

Appointments

5. **To appoint the Deputy Responsible Finance Officer.** Cllr Nixon proposed that Cllr Poole continue as Deputy Responsible Finance Officer this was seconded by Cllr Lawrence and agreed by unanimous vote
6. **To agree Advisory Group membership and lead Councillors for 2024/25.** The following was agreed:
 - a Chair and members of the Planning Consultative Panel. Cllr Poole to remain as Chair with Cllr Lawrence as a member
 - b Chair and Parish Council members of the Beacon Hill Nature Reserve Stewardship Group. Cllr Nixon to remain as Chair supported by Cllr Evans as a member.
7. **To agree Parish Council representatives on Advisory Groups.** Project Boards and Working Groups for 2024/25. The following was agreed.
 - a No changes were proposed to the current membership of Advisory Groups with Cllr Hickin supporting advisory groups where required
 - b The Lower High Street Project to remain on hold.

Financial Regulations

8. **Review of Financial Regulations.** The Clerk advised that he had revised the Parish Council Financial Regulations in line with 2025 model regulations produced by the National Association of Local Councils. The Clerk then took the meeting through the minor changes to the auditing arrangements and updated delegation limits to the RFO and Chair and Deputy RFO. Adoption of the Financial Regulations was proposed by Cllr Levins seconded by Cllr Poole and **agreed by unanimous vote.**
9. **Review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and an annual governance statement (AGAR 2025/26 – Section 1)** The Clerk advised that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) required the Parish Council to report on governance measures in place to ensure proper management of public funds and financial risks; and an accounting return report on income and expenditure for 2024/25. Both would be published on the Parish Council website. The Clerk proposed that the governance report be discussed at this meeting and the accounting return at the June Council meeting following the completion of the internal audit. The Clerk then took the meeting through the governance statement. Approval of the governance statement was proposed by Cllr Levins, seconded by Cllr Poole and **agreed by unanimous vote.**

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Parish Council Governance

10. **Review of register of members' interests.** The Clerk advised that all Councillors had confirmed their declarations were up to date apart from Cllr Cherrie whose declaration required amendment.
11. **Review of the asset register and insurance arrangements.** The Clerk advised that an asset register had been drawn up and circulated which included the newly purchased benches and bins for St Aubyn Field. The Clerk also confirmed that Council insurance was in order.
12. **Review of standing orders and policies.** The Clerk advised that a number of Standing Orders and Policies required review. In discussion the following action was agreed:
 - a Financial Regulations – the Clerk had already revised
 - b Partnership working – Cllr Nixon to review
 - c Complaints Policy- Cllr Cherrie to review
 - d Co-option Policy - Cllr Lowery to review.
 - e The Parish Council Publication Scheme - Cllr Levins to review
 - f Communications Policy – Cllr Hicken to review.

Cllr Nixon (Chair) suggested that the Strategy and Communications Advisory Group (SCAG) would oversee progress of the reviews **which was agreed.**

Parish Council meetings for 2024/25.

13. **Dates of meetings.** The dates for Council Meetings and the annual village meeting for 2025/26 were agreed with one amendment to the August date.

Cllr Nixon (Chair) closed the AGM.

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Date

Ordinary Meeting

At the start of the meeting any member of the public is welcomed to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes, Councillors aim to provide a response during the meeting if possible, and if not will endeavour to respond in writing within the month.

Question from the Public.

Bernard Turnbull Asked if the Parish Council Notice Boards were on the asset register which was confirmed by the Clerk. Mr Turnbull also said the grant application from the Twiddlers Group for sound equipment had the full support from Rottingdean Arts and would be available for other Village events such as the summer fair.

Caroline Lane asked for an update on the handover of St Aubyns Field. **Cllr Nixon** said he would give a full report later on in the meeting. Mrs Lane also said she was concerned about how the red brick path on the south of St Aubyns Field that formed the border of the housing development and the future Parish Council land would be managed. In particular there was a problem with dogs fouling path and she wanted to know if notices could be installed. **Rose Daley** also mentioned that there was a dog litter problem in Nicholson Place. **Cllr Nixon** said the housing development, including the brick path, which was public right of way, was the responsibility of the Management Company and she should initially approach them about any issues. Mrs Lane also expressed concern about the safety of pedestrians exiting the Field and the Twitten on to Steyning road where people and children would need to pass between parked cars to cross Steyning Road. **Cllr Cherrie** said that this has been discussed with Brighton Hove City Council (BHCC) who had said current policy would exclude the installation of any additional safety barriers or a zebra crossing at this point.

Paul Lane said the Parish Council could at least restrict the exit from the Field to improve safety. **Cllr Nixon** said this would need careful consideration as a restriction could also affect people with mobility scooters and children's buggies. **Cllr Nixon** said there would be a period of learning for the Parish Council about how best to manage these and other issue with the Field that were bound to arise over the coming months.

Ward Councillor Fishleigh asked if the Parish Council had been consulted about a planning application for a 2 Bed Holiday let above the newly opened optician in the High Street. **Cllr Poole** confirmed no consultation had taken place. Cllr Fishleigh said she would forward the details for the Clerk to follow up. Cllr Fishleigh also said that Sussex police had said that CCTV enforcement of the yellow hatch area was a matter for BHCC, which she was to follow up with the City Council.

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1. **Apologies for absence**

Cllr Snow and Ward Cllr Earthy

2. **Declarations of interest.** Cllr Cherrie declared an interest in the Rottingdean Arts grant application to be discussed later in the meeting

3. **Agreement of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 7th of April.** The minutes were agreed as drafted and signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **Matters Arising.**

None

5. **Action Log.** The following update was provided.

- i. 0210 **Cllr Evans** to follow up the Friends of Beacon Hill (FOBH) notice board proposal. **Cllr Evans** said he was still trying to ascertain the supplier and designer of the Boards. Carried Forward.
- ii. 0104. **Cllr Cherrie** to follow the repair of the pavement outside properties on Marine Drive with BHCC. **Cllr Cherrie** said he had raised the matter with his BHCC contact with no success so had reported the matter through the resident portal. Carried Forward
- iii. 0204. **Cllr Evans** to approach the BHCC Tree Officer about the recovery of the cost of the repair to St Aubyns Field caused by their contractors and report back to the Council. **Cllr Evans** said he had written to BHCC who had committed to ensure damage was not caused in future and agreed that future watering sessions would be supervised by RPC. The had not yet responded formally to the issue of cost reimbursement. **Cllr Nixon** said given this and the fact that BHCC had agreed to maintain the trees for three years at no cost to RPC the St Aubyns Working Group recommended the matter of the cost was not pursued. **This was agreed.** Closed
- iv. 0304. **Cllr Lawrence** to draw up a detailed proposal for the St Aubyns opening event and circulate it to Councillors. To be presented later in the meeting Closed
- v. 0404. **The Clerk** to follow up a complaint from a resident about unauthorised vehicle entry and parking on the green outside the Bowling Club with the Club's Chair. The Clerk said he had written to the Chair of the Bowling Club who had

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said the club would plant shrubs in the bed near the removable post where the vehicle had entered to prevent this happening again. The Clerk had passed this on to the complainant. Closed

6. Finance Update

- i. **Payments and invoices.** The Clerk sought authorisation for the following payments

		VAT
HMRC April	£654.70	
C Hayes Salary April	£782.73	
C Hayes Comms (zoom) + (phone)	£37.99	£2.60
C Hayes Microsoft Subscription	£19.99	
C Hayes (Stationery)	£22.15	£4.43
Room Hire	£25.00	
One Digital (Newsletter)	£60.00	
C Dixon (welcome Pack)	£23.49	
Total	£1626.05	

Authorisation was proposed by Cllr Poole seconded by Cllr Lowery and **agreed by unanimous vote.**

- ii. **Bank balances** The Clerk advised that at the end of April the bank balances were:

Unity Trust Bank Current Account	£107.63
Unity Trust Bank Instant Access	£84,126.89
C&C savings account	£86,384.85
Cash at Bank	£170,619.37

The Clerk noted that the C&C account had exceeded the £85,000 covered by the Financial Services compensation scheme and he would need to transfer money to the Unity Trust account from which funds would be drawn for the authorised payments.

- iii. **April 2025 Accounts.** The Clerk presented the accounts and advised Councillors that during April a payment of **£375.00** became due for distribution of

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the Newsletter and payment was authorised under paragraph 7 of the current Financial Regulations. **The accounts were approved**

Major Projects

7. **St Aubyns.** The following update was provided by Cllr Nixon

- Fairfax had been asked to confirm the completion date for either Friday the 30th of May or Monday the 2nd of June as the end of May was a Saturday.
- A Completion assessment of the Chapel, Pavilion and Field would take place on Wednesday the 21st of May.
- Electronic signatures of the Completion documents would take place week commencing the 26th of May. **Cllrs Levins and Nixon** agreed to sign the legal documents of behalf of the Council.
- Fairfax were to install electricity meters in the Pavilion and Chapel before Completion but there was query about the readiness of the internal connections. Cllr Cherrie agreed to follow this up. This aim was to have power for the opening event.

Action Cllr Cherrie to follow up the internal connectivity to the meters with the electrical contractor.

- The contract for the maintenance of the Field had been finalised after discussion with the Working Group and circulated to Councillors. **Cllr Nixon** asked for approval to sign the contract. **This was agreed by unanimous vote**
- **Cllr Cherrie** gave the following update on progress to commission a waste bin emptying service..
 - Cllr Cherrie had located a company that were willing to empty the bins but would only the empty 240 litre bins or larger that they could load automatically onto their trucks. This would mean finding a way to remove the waste from the 120 litre RPC bins on the Field into the larger bins. This was being explored.
 - However, City Clean had got back to Cllr Cherrie after a six week delay and asked for a map so they could consider if they could provide a bin emptying service.
- **Cllr Nixon** suggested that it may be necessary to continue talking to the initial contractor as the Council needed an option for when the Field opened while waiting for City Clean confirm that they could provide an emptying service. **This was agreed.**

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- A 'soft' opening of the field in mid-June was proposed to allow RPC to ensure everything was in place after Completion and any cleaning was done. The Heras fencing would be left in place until that time.
- **Cllr Evans** said that the aim was to install the picnic tables and benches during the first two weeks of June.
- The planning application for the Chapel window protection was in progress and should be submitted to BHCC within the next two weeks
- **Cllr Poole** confirmed that a fire risk assessment was necessary but that because of the size of the buildings, legislation allowed this to be undertaken by the Parish Council with the support of the Sussex fire brigade, Cllr Poole said he would take this forward

Action Cllr Poole to take forward the fire risk self-assessment and come back to the Council with proposals.

Opening Event. Cllr Lawrence provided the following update:

- The intention of the opening event was to make people aware of this new community asset and interest people in volunteering to help with its future upkeep
- The invite would extend to around 1000 people from the Deans through social media posts and posters on notice boards. In addition, a letter was to be delivered to all St Aubyns residents.
- The event would start with the Big Band playing and community picnics followed by speeches from Cllr Nixon and Tim Prideaux on behalf of the St Aubyns School alumni. In Father Anthony's absence, Father Martin had agreed to return the School colours to the Chapel that were currently held in St Margaret's Church.
- The focus would then turn to the Field activities based around the planting and biodiversity including a children's painting competition. There would also be vintage games organised for children and tours of the Chapel and Pavilion.
- Local businesses were being approached to provide refreshments.

The following points were made in discussion:

- It may be hard to keep visitor numbers down given the spread of social media posts
- Additional parking was not planned as this could encourage greater attendance that would be unmanageable and cause congestion
- The local PSCO should be notified of the event
- Advice should be sought from the Summer fair organisers about staging such an event including a risk assessment and on site emergency medical support.
- Vehicles should not be allowed onto the Field and the loading area on Steyning Road should be coned off.

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- As part of the event the sponsoring of existing trees could be encouraged.

8. High Street. Cllr Nixon provided the following update:

- Parish Councillors had had a number of meetings with BHCC about the High Street and had made real progress. RPC now had the attention of both BHCC officers and politicians.
- At the latest meeting with officers BHCC outlined two options for the repair of the High Street pavement and road source.
- One option proposed a complete resurface of the High Street road and replacement of the brick pavement along both sides, with bricks with an abrasive surface, and the insertion of granite kerb stones and raising the pavement. The estimated cost was just under £500,000. The second option proposed repairing potholes, providing a less permanent road surface repair and replacing the brick paving in the worst affected areas on the west side of the High Street. This would cost about £150,000. There would be additional costs for road closures involved in both cases
- This second option was within the bounds of funding bearing in mind the availability of the Section 106 developer contribution towards infrastructure improvement of £110,000.
- RPC and Ward Cllrs would continue to discuss these proposals with BHCC in more detail including funding options. In the meantime, BHCC had offered to fund a professional traffic management study to look at how traffic flow through the Village might be better managed and congestion eased.
- After an 18 month wait, the Parish Council had also managed to obtain costings for the Lower High Street phase 1 design that aimed to create a pedestrian priority area by differentiating the entrance threshold, widening the pavement on both sides near the entrance and restricting parking, and access on a seasonal basis. BHCC had estimated the cost to be between £150,000 and £200,000 depending on materials. BHCC had also recommend not raising the threshold as planned because of potential flooding but suggested other ways to differentiate the entrance.
- The proposals on the High Street and Lower High Street would need further discussion and consideration before the Council were in position to come to any conclusions on the best way forward.
- However, the Strategy and Communications group recommended that the Parish Council should take up the offer of a traffic management study that would identify what was possible and inform the development of future plans.
Councillors agreed that BHCC should be asked to go ahead with the traffic management study.
- **Cllr Nixon** asked if one or two Councillors could look at what grant funding may be available. **Cllr Levins and Hicken** agreed to work with the Clerk on this and report back to the Council.

Signed

Date

Action Cllr Nixon to write to BHCC requesting that they proceed with the traffic management study.

Action Cllrs Levins and Hicken to research funding options for the High Street project and report back to the Council

Planning

9. **Applications Received in April.** None received

Advisory Group Meeting Updates

10. **Strategy and Communications**

- i. Risk Register – **for approval**. The Clerk advised the meeting that the risk register had been reviewed by the governance and strategy and communications group and circulated for approval. **The register was approved.**
- ii. Annual Village Meeting. Cllr Nixon proposed that the Annual Village meeting on the 19th of May commence a brief introduction from each Councillor about their work with the Chair then providing an overview of the work of Council and priorities for the coming year. The Clerk would provide a summary of the survey results. **This was agreed**
- iii. Village Survey. The Clerk took the meeting through the summary of results so far from the 243 respondents. The Clerk said the survey would close on the 23rd of May and the aim would be to publish the full results in June/July

11. **Village and Community.** Cllr Lawrence Provided the following update

- Grant applications had been received from
 - Rottingdean Heritage for £828 for replacement of the blue notice board on the terraces
 - Rottingdean Arts for £2000 towards the costs of staging the summer musical events
 - The Twiddlers for £965 for the purchase of sound equipment that would be used by a number of groups, for example, the Village Summer fair organisers and Rottingdean Arts.
 - The Nevill Road Residents Association for £789 for line painting to help prevent parking at the bottom of Neville Road.

Signed

Date

Councillors approved the applications from, Rottingdean Arts and the Twiddlers and agreed a grant of up to £828 for Rottingdean Heritage. However a number of questions were raised about the Nevill Road Residents Association application. It was not clear if the intention was to paint lines on the unadopted part of Nevill Road, which was the responsibility of residents but also a public highway, or the area lower down Nevill Road which was the responsibility of BHCC. Councillors agreed that further information was needed about where the lines were to be painted and if BHCC had been consulted. **Cllr Lawrence** agreed to find out more information and report back to the Council.

Action Cllr Lawrence to find out more information about the Nevill Road Residents Association application and report back to the Council

- The group were to contact community groups about the BHCC review of community libraries and report back to the Council
- Cllr Lawrence and Ward Cllr Eathy were holding an event on Carbon neutral energy general and conservation in the Black Horse on Wednesday the 14 of May which Councillors were welcome to attend.

12. **Natural Environment.** No update

13. **Built Environment.** **Cllr Cherrie** provided the following update.

- Work was underway off site on the construction of the pond barrier and the work was expected to be completed this month.

The meeting closed at 21.56. The next meeting is on the 2nd of June

Chris Hayes, Parish Clerk

May 2025

Signed

Date