



## **Minutes of the Meeting of Rottingdean Parish Council on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2025 at the Whiteway Centre**

Present. Cllr Lawrence, (Chair), Cllr Snow, Cllr Levins, Cllr Cherrie, Cllr Evans  
C Hayes, Parish Clerk

Members of the Public: Rob Shepherd, David Hunt.

Public Questions.

**David Hunt** asked if the Parish Council would consider his idea to use the Chapel as a museum recording the effect of the first and second world wars on Rottingdean and surrounding areas. He said he had spoken to the Combined Cadet Force at Longhill Schools who would be willing help research the names on the Green and St Aubyns memorials. **Cllr Evans** said that the Parish Council were to consider the next steps for St Aubyns Field, Chapel and Pavilion at a meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January and would consider his idea.

**Rob Shepherd** said that BHCC had asserted in their new transport plan that there is not a problem of traffic queues around Rottingdean despite the fact that Brighton has the second worst main congestion of 190 local authorities. He therefore urged the Parish Council to become closely involved with the Traffic Management Study underway to ensure damaging assumptions weren't built into the study and that it responded to the needs of the Village. The Clerk said that Councillors were closely involved with survey, which was expected to report in Spring 2026, and would have the opportunity to see the emerging results before any recommendations were made.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

The Clerk said that apologies had been received from Cllr Nixon, Cllr Poole, Cllr Lowery, Ward Cllr Earthy and Ward Cllr Fishleigh

Signed

Date

2. **Declarations of interests**

None

3. **Agreement of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 3rd of November.**

The minutes were agreed as drafted

4. **Matters arising**

None

5. **Action Log.** The Clerk provided the following update on the outstanding actions.

- i. 0310. **Cllr Lowery/Clerk** to begin by compiling a list of the properties that would be the subject of a search from which an estimated cost could be presented. Carried Forward.
- ii. 0510. **Cllr Lowery** to compile and circulate a list of vacant High Street properties suitable for an High Street Rental Auction for discussion with SCAG who would make a recommendation to the Council. Carried Forward
- iii. 0111. **Cllr Lawrence** to speak to Pete Birchall, the pond maintenance contractor, and City Parks to ensure pond waste was not allowed to build up and would be collected by City Parks. **Cllr Lawrence** said she had spoken to Pete Birchall who had advised that the waste arising from the recent pond cleanance was not unusually large and similar loads had been collected by BHCC previously. **Cllr Lawrence** said that she would speak to BHCC and ask that if they had any problems in the future, they should contact RPC as soon as possible. Closed
- iv. 0311. **Cllr Lawrence** to work with the Clerk on a speech for the Cabinet Committee meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December to be agreed at the December Council meeting. **Cllr Lawrence** said that draft speaking notes had been circulated which would be reviewed following the release of the papers for the Cabinet meeting expected on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December. A final version would then be circulated before the 11<sup>th</sup>. Closed
- v. 0411. **Cllr Lawrence** to contact the schools about their responses to the Library Sustainability Plan Consultation. **Cllr Lawrence** said she had got a copy of the consultation response from St Margaret's school and that a quote from the response had been incorporated into the speaking notes for the Cabinet meeting. Closed

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- vi. **Cllr Lawrence** to work with the Clerk to draft a letter to Cllr Taylor following his article in Brighton and Hove news suggesting that RPC were in talks with BHCC about a community library. **Cllr Lawrence** said that a letter had been sent and that she had received an assurance from Cllr Taylor that he had made the Parish Council's position that no such talks had taken place clear to the journalist.
- vii. 0611. **Cllr Lawrence** to invite Michael Harris, from BHCC to visit the Village and discuss the Rottingdean S106 projects. Carried Forward

## 6. Finance Update

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

		<b>VAT</b>
HMRC November	£820.25	
C Hayes Salary November	£963.33	
Room Hire	£89.00	
Affordable Waste (DD)	£116	
Sam Cocks (Field Maintenance)	£600	£120
New Wave Property Management (Bin Emptying)	£100	
P Birchall (Pond Maintenance)	£3500	
Sussex Lead Lights (Chapel window protection deposit)	£4487.50	£897.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10676.08</b>	

Payment was proposed by Cllr Levins seconded by Cllr Cherrie and agreed by unanimous vote. The Clerk reported that during November a payment of £1103 was made to DMH Stallard for legal costs arising from the St Aubyns transfer as per paragraph 5 of the financial regulations.

- ii. Bank balances. The Clerk advised that at the end of November the total cash available after deduction of the St Aubyns maintenance sum stood at £173,302.51.
- iii. November 2025 Accounts. The accounts were presented and agreed.

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iv. 26/27 Operational and Grants Budget. The Clerk took the meeting through the following key points from the paper circulated.

- Operational expenditure increased only slightly over the previous two years but markedly in the last 12 months.
- The Clerk estimated that expenditure by March 2026 would reach just over £41,500, an increase from £32,657 spent in 24/25 mainly driven by expenditure on St Aubyns maintenance and increased PAYE costs.
- For 2026/27, The Clerk was proposing an operational and grants budget of £61,980 an increase of 8% on the 25/26 budget. This included £17,500 for St Aubyns maintenance funded from the maintenance lump sum.
- The Clerk said he had also included a working assumption for a grants budget of £7500, as in 2025/26, but this could be increased.
- The Clerk proposed to carry forward the modest budget of £2700 for infrastructure improvements that could fund improved signage following the planned upgrade of the High Street.
- The proposal was therefore
  - Operational budget - an increase from £47,450 to £51,780
  - Grants and Donations - to remain the same at £7500
  - Infrastructure - to remain the same at £2700
- An operational and grants budget of £61,980 would leave an estimated £170,000 available for allocation to projects which would be considered at the strategy workshop on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January.

### **Councillors agreed the proposed 2026/27 operational and grants budget**

## **7. Major Projects**

i. **St Aubyns**. Cllr Evans provided the following update

- Papers had been circulated for the planning and management workshop planned for the 8<sup>th</sup> of December. The aim was to discuss immediate and longer term management and investment priorities for the Field and buildings and discuss future management arrangements. All Councillors were invited to attend.
- The tree day on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November went well with a good turnout from volunteers and input from Brighton Permaculture Trust.
- The Clerk was to meet Meakers Fencing contractors on Tuesday to obtain a further quote for a knee-high fence around the Wildflower Meadow. In addition, Meakers would be asked about the installation of a lockable post at the Steyning/Newlands Road entrance. **Cllr Cherrie** also asked if Meakers could be asked about the lockable post on the Green that was cracked.

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**Action. The Clerk** to seek advice on a lockable post at the Steyning/Newlands Road entrance to St Aubyns Field and the damaged post on the Green

- Bernard Turnbull was to make a further attempt to make the fixings on the Sweeps less hazardous. Cllr Evans was also to ask the designer CODA for advice on a longer term design solution.

**Action. Cllr Evans** to contact CODA for advice on a longer term design solution to the make the gabions on the Sweeps safer.

- The Working Group had discussed the quote from the Chapel Window protection contractors, Sussex Leaded Lights, of £5750 plus VAT to repair the damage and fully waterproof the stained glass windows. The group had concluded that there were three options:
  1. To accept the quote and have the windows repaired and then protected. This would mean that the repair and protection could be done fairly quickly and reduce the risk further deterioration and/or damage whilst the protective polycarbon was being applied.
  2. To protect the windows and get a further quote for the repair. This would delay the work but would enable a cost comparison although it had taken over a year to interest a company in working on the windows.
  3. To postpone the protection while a further quote was obtained. This would delay the work and risked further damage. It would be likely to delay the removal of the boarding that had implications for the insurance cover provided.

The following points were made in discussion.

- The financial regulations paragraphs 5.12 and 5.13 allowed the Parish Council to waive the requirement to obtain a further quote if there was a risk of damage to Council property as long as the reasoning was recorded.
- A number of residents had already expressed disappointment that nothing happening to the Chapel
- Experience had suggested that getting further quote would be difficult and the quote did not seem unreasonable.
- There was a risk of further deterioration and full insurance cover did not apply until the window boarding had been removed.

**Councillors concluded that the current contractors quote should be accepted subject to the provision of a cost breakdown.**

**Action.** The Clerk to obtain a detailed quote from the Sussex Leaded Lights for the Chapel window repair.

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Date

- a. **High Street** The Clerk said that there no update and that Cllr Nixon continued to liaise with Andrew Westwood, at BHCC

#### 4. Planning

- a. **Applications Received in November.** Councillor Lawrence stated that she had reviewed an application to build a new external porch over the existing stairs at 7 Romney Road, Rottingdean, and noted that there were no objections.

#### 5. Advisory Group Meeting Updates

- a. **Strategy and Communications The Clerk provided the following update.**

- i. Community Library Review. The speaking notes for Cllr Lawrence to deliver at the Cabinet meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December had been circulated. This may need to change once the Cabinet paper on the consultation was available on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December. A final version of the speaking note would be circulated prior to the Cabinet meeting.
- ii. Community Asset Transfer. The Clerk reported that, with the maintenance costs for the Grange now provided by BHCC, he and Cllr Nixon would arrange a meeting with Rottingdean Heritage to discuss their interest in exploring a transfer of the Grange head lease. They will subsequently report their findings to the Council.
- iii. Strategy Workshop 8<sup>th</sup> January. The Clerk advised that the agenda for the Workshop had been circulated and further background reading would follow nearer the event.
- iv. Co-option. The Clerk advised that no applications had been received by the closing date of 28<sup>th</sup> of November. The group had concluded that the vacancy should be re-advertised early in the New Year but that a different approach would be considered to attract applicants.

- b. **Village and Community.** Cllr Lawrence provided the following update

- A grant application received by the Friends of Rottingdean Coast and Environment (FORCE) had been circulated seeking a contribution of £250

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Date

towards the purchase of the chemicals necessary for water quality testing. This was required to achieve blue badge status. Approval was proposed by Cllr Lawrence seconded by Cllr Levins and approved by unanimous vote.

- The Christmas tree supplier had advised that the cost of a 20 ft tree would be £350 up from £250 last year. Cllr Lawrence had made enquires at another supplier and was quoted £500 plus £30 delivery. The tree was funded by Colin Duffy, Director of Comms Council UK. Cllr Lawrence was to check if Mr Duffy was still willing to fund the tree but suggested the Parish Council make up the difference if not. **This was agreed.**
  - Cllrs Lawrence and Snow were planning to organise a volunteer celebration event for the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2026
- c. **Natural Environment. Cllr Evans** said that the new Beacon Hill Notice Boards had been delivered but four of the six had been damaged so were being returned for replacement. This would mean that the boards were unlikely to be installed before the end of year as hoped.
- d. **Built Environment. Cllr Cherrie** proposed that small self-adhesive reflective discs be placed on the new pond barrier posts to prevent vehicle damaged. The cost would be about £10. **This was agreed**

**The meeting closed at 20.40. The next meeting is on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2026**

***Chris Hayes, Parish Clerk***

***December 2025***

Signed

Date