



Minutes of the Meeting of Rottingdean Parish on Monday 3rd of November 2025 at the Whiteway Centre

Present. Cllr Nixon (Chair), Cllr Lawrence, Cllr Levins, Cllr Snow, Cllr Cherrie, Cllr Poole, Cllr Evans.

Public Gallery. Ward Cllr Fishleigh, Dylis Brown.

Dyllis Brown asked if Councillors would comment on Cllr Taylor's comments about Rottingdean library reported in Brighton and Hove News. **Cllr Nixon** said this would be discussed later in the meeting.

Ward Cllr Fishleigh provided the following update.

- The Queen Victoria public house had been bought by an Ovingdean resident who had plans to re-open the pub and seek planning permission for three holiday lets above the ground floor.
- Cllr Fishleigh had been engaged with BHCC in considering how powers that allow unitary authorities to require tenants to be found for retail premises empty for 2 years. In this context she had discovered that someone was interested in renting the former NatWest Bank.
- Three tenants remain in the Dene nursing home, and the owner does not yet have a plan for its future
- In Cllr Earthy's absence Ward Cllr Fishleigh said a plan was being developed to carry out seawater quality tests off Saltdean Beach, but the costs may prove prohibitive. Cllr Earthy had also said he would update Cllr Lawrence on progress on work to provide energy conservation advice to residents.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Cllr Lowery and Cllr Earthy had advised he would be late.

Signed

Date

2. **Declarations of interests**

None

3. **Agreement of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 6th of October.**

The minutes were agreed as drafted and sign by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

4. **Matters Arising.**

None

5. **Action Log.** The following updates were provided.

- i. 0110. Cllr Poole to provide a quote for the Chapel window protection. **Cllr Poole** said an updated price had been received amounting to £8975 plus VAT, an increase of £380 on the previous quote mainly due to the need for scaffolding. Although the proposed polycarbon protection was susceptible to scratching it was preferable to the much more expensive stainless steel grill that had been considered and provided a better aesthetic. He proposed that the quote be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Lawrence and agreed by unanimous vote subject to a detailed quote being of obtained
- ii. 0201. Cllr Cherrie to obtain an up to date quote for an alarm system for the Chapel and Pavilion. **Cllr Cherrie** said he had circulated the new quote that amounted to £2081 plus VAT and included an optional sim card that would message a pre-set phone number should the alarm be triggered. **Cllr Cherrie** said there would also be maintenance charges amounting to £335 per year. He then proposed that the quote be accepted including the optional sim card. This was seconded by Cllr Lawrence and agreed by unanimous vote. Cllr Cherrie said he would take this forward with the provider. Closed.
- iii. 0301. Cllr Lowery/Clerk to begin by compiling a list of the properties that would be the subject of a Land Registry search from which an estimated cost could be presented. Carried Forward
- iv. 0410. The Clerk to write BHCC officers to get an assurance that the RPC response would be drawn specifically to the attention of the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet members as part of the review of the consultation process. **The Clerk** said he had received some assurance from BHCC, but the paper published for the scrutiny committee meeting on the 10th of October had not included the RPC response, so he had written again to Ceris Howard, BHCC's Head of Library Services. **Cllr Nixon** said that the Council would

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Date

discuss how to ensure that the scrutiny committee were made aware RPC concerns with the consultation process later in the meeting. Closed

- v. 0510. Cllr Lowery to compile and circulate a list of vacant High Street properties suitable for an HSRA for discussion with SCAG who would make a recommendation to the Council. Carried Forward.

6. Finance Update

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

		VAT
HMRC October	£778.96	
C Hayes Salary October	£918.09	
Room Hire	£20.00	
Affordable Waste (DD)	£142.84	
Sam Cocks (Field Maintenance)	£300	£60
New Wave Property Management (Bin Emptying)	£100	
Total	£2259.89	

Payment was proposed by Cllr Levins, seconded by Cllr Poole and agreed by unanimous vote.

- ii. October 2025 Accounts. The October accounts were presented and agreed. The Clerk advised Councillors that during October the following payments were as made as per paragraph 5 of the financial regulations.
 - a) Gary Steel £55, for fitting a post box and key box to the Chapel and repair of the Sweeps gabions; and £28 for a remembrance day wreath (para 5.15)
 - b) Evergreen Waste Management £384, for removal of pond waste from the Green (para 5.18)

Cllr Lawrence said that the waste left on the Green had not been collected as normal by BHCC as they had been incorrectly informed that it also included dumped domestic waste. She said the amount of waste seem unusually large and that she would speak to Peter Birchall, the pond maintenance contractor, and City Parks to prevent a further occurrence.

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Date

Action. 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.

- iii. Bank Balances. The Clerk advised that at the end of October the bank balances were as follows.

Unity Trust Bank Current Account	£108.87
Unity Trust Bank Instant Access	£432,783.47
C&C savings account	£88,037.62
HSBC	£83,000
Cash at Bank	£603,929.96
Less St Aubyns Maintenance Fund	£426,360.78
Net Cash Available	£177,569.18

The Clerk advised the meeting that he had opened two bank further bank accounts with HSBC and the Bank of Scotland for the transfer of St Aubyns maintenance funds and applications with Barclays Bank and NatWest were being processed. Balances would be kept below £85,000 to ensure the maintenance fund was protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme

- iv. 26/27 Budget and Precept Setting Timetable. The Clerk took the meeting through the following timetable.

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Date</u>
Draft budget paper circulated	Clerk	<u>w/c 17 November</u>
Draft Budget Paper agreed by SCAG	Clerk	<u>27th November</u>
Council approval of operational/grants budget for 26/27	All	<u>1st December</u>
<u>January workshop</u> to discuss. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The infrastructure development plan (IDP). • New projects for 26/27 • Allocation of surplus funds • Level of precept 	All	<u>8th January 2026</u>
Review the workshop outcomes and make recommendations on priorities and infrastructure/projects budget allocation.	Clerk	<u>January</u>
Advice paper on 2026/27 precept.	Clerk	<u>Mid-January</u>
SCAG discuss budget and precept requirement	SCAG	<u>January</u>
Formal approval of spending plans, budget allocation and precept level.	All	<u>2nd February</u>

Signed

Date

Clerk to inform BHCC of precept requirement	Clerk	<u>3rd February</u>
Press release on budget/precept and revised IDP published.	All	<u>March</u>

At this point following a representation from the residents present the Chair proposed that the agenda items on the Library Sustainability Plan and Community Asset Transfer be brought forward, which was agreed.

7. Library Sustainability Plan Consultation.

- i. Scrutiny Committee Meeting. **Cllr Nixon** said that as the Scrutiny Committee's role was to agree that the process to develop the plan had been carried out properly the Parish Council should consider writing to the Scrutiny committee pointing that this was one of RPC's major concerns. This was agreed and Cllr Lawrence agreed to work with the Clerk on a letter to be circulated for Councillors to agree.

Action. Cllr Lawrence to work with the Clerk on a letter to the Scrutiny Committee pointing out RPC concerns with process undertaken to develop the Library Sustainability Plan to be circulated for Councillors to agree.

- ii. Cabinet Meeting 11th of December. **Cllr Nixon** said this has been discussed by the Strategy and Communications Advisory Group (SCAG) who proposed that the Council be represented at the meeting. In discussion Councillors agreed that Cllrs Nixon and Lawrence would attend and deliver a 3 minute speech exemplifying the key concerns set out in the RPC response. In addition, **Cllr Lawrence** agreed to contact the schools about their responses to the consultation.

Action. Cllr Lawrence to work with the Clerk on a speech for the Cabinet Committee meeting on the 11th of December to be agreed at the December Council meeting.

Action. Cllr Lawrence to contact the schools about their responses to the Library Sustainability Plan Consultation.

- iii. RPC response to the Brighton and Hove News Article. **Cllr Nixon** asked if Councillors thought the Parish Council should respond to Cllr Jacob Taylor's comments in the Brighton and Hove News Article. The following points were made in discussion:
 - It was important to set the record straight about the position of the Parish Council
 - The comments risked misleading residents

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Date

- The inference was that RPC was doing a deal with BHCC about the future of the Library

Councillors agreed a letter should be sent to Cllr Taylor reiterating RPC position on the future of the library as set out in the Parish Council response and that the letter should be published.

Action. Cllr Lawrence to work with the Clerk to draft a letter to Cllr Taylor.

8. **Community Asset Transfer.** The Clerk said he was in contact with BHCC estates to ascertain the costs of running the Grange so Councillors could consider if a transfer to the Parish Council was something they wished to pursue. The Clerk said he had received some information on the costs of routine and unplanned maintenance work on the fabric of the building but was still pursuing information about the costs of utilities, cleaning, security, waste removal, etc. **Cllr Nixon** that SCAG proposed that once this information had been received a meeting would be arranged with Rottingdean Heritage. He said that RPC had consistently stated that any proposal for a community transfer of the Grange would need clarity on associated liabilities and potential options to mitigate them before any further discussion could take place. He also stressed that RH are very key stakeholders in this discussion and will be kept informed and involved.

9. Major Projects

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

- The final payment of the maintenance lump sum had been paid by Fairfax
- Fairfax had also completed the re-seeding of worn parts of the Field including the bund, and the wildflower meadow had been cut by the maintenance contractor
- Cllr Lawrence had organised an event for the tree guardians at 2 pm on the 17th of November with Brighton Permaculture Trust in attendance to provide advice. Helen Clark from Rottingdean in bloom was also expected to attend.
- The Group was currently considering the option of a lockable post at the Steyning/Newlands Road entrance that would allow access to BHCC and the Field maintenance contractor but prevent unauthorised vehicular access. Consideration was also being given to the installation of grid force at this entrance to protect the grass.
- The maintenance contractor was working on a quote for a chestnut wood log fence around the wildflower meadow.
- The protruding wire from the Gabions on the sweeps was still a potential safety hazard. Gary Steel had done some work on them and Bernard Turnbull had volunteered to see what he could do. It had been agreed that Cllr Evans

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Date

would contact CODA to discuss a longer term solution to Sweeps design issues.

- Arrangements were being made for a planning workshop on the 8th of December to develop a management and maintenance plan for the Field and buildings and consider longer term aspiration for the assets. All Councillors were invited to take part.

ii. **High Street. Cllr Nixon** provided the following update.

- The preferred option to replace the kerbing on the eastern footway, replace the paving with alternative blocks and resurface the wearing course of the carriageway would cost about £260,000. The cost was to be met from £120,000 Section 106 funds with BHCC and RPC sharing the balance. BHCC had confirmed this arrangement.
- The BHCC funded traffic management (TMS) study had been delayed and would not now report until the Spring. BHCC wanted to wait for the recommendations before moving forward in case it provided options to better manage traffic flow that could be incorporated into the project. Once the TMS had reported, the Working Group and relevant BHCC Cabinet member would meet to discuss the next steps.

10. **Planning.** Cllr Poole Provided the following update in addition to the note circulated.

BH2025/01886 21 Chailey Avenue Rottingdean Brighton BN2 7GH

This application had involved a very large side and rear extension (approximately a third wider at the front and a similar amount front to rear) with an extended roof ridge along the full width of the property substantial extension. A site visit had been done, and it was clear that it would not be in character with other properties in the immediate locality in terms of scale, mass and proposed density. This would be contrary to a number of policies and guidance including S1 and H2 Rottingdean Neighbourhood Plan; Policies DM18 and DM21 BHCC City Plan Part 2; The guidance within BHCC Supplementary Planning Document 12 – Design guide for Extensions and Alterations. In addition, the size and design of the proposed extensions and both rear balconies would have a significant impact on the neighbours living on both sides of the property and lead directly to an unacceptable loss of privacy and outlook for the residents, together with overshadowing causing loss of sunlight / daylight. Rottingdean Parish Council therefore objected to the application.

Cllr Lawrence said that the planning application to place a 5G mast on St Margarets Flats was to be re-submitted which the residents were very unhappy about. In the meantime, an extension would be sought for the temporary mast in the long Stay card Park. RPC would monitor the situation.

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11. **Advisory Group Meeting Updates**

i. Strategy and Communications

a) Co-option. The clerk advised that no applications had been received to date.

ii. Village and Community. **Cllr Lawrence** provided the following update.

- Proposals were being developed for an event, after Christmas, to celebrate the volunteers in the village This would provide an opportunity to discuss the range of skills of the volunteers and options for fund raising.
- **Cllr Snow** said that the group had received an application for a grant of £1731 from the Friends of Kipling Gardens for tools and equipment to enable the woodland area to be improved by clearing it, planting new trees and providing some seating. The grant had also asked for a Green House at a cost of £199 but this had since been provided by Rottingdean Heritage. **Cllr Snow** therefore proposed a grant of £1532. This was seconded by Cllr Evans and agreed by unanimous vote.
- **Cllr Nixon** said he had had correspondence from BHCC about £9600 Section 106 money that was available to Kipling Gardens for their proposed project to improve the North section. However, BHCC had also said the £55,000 to improve Beacon Hill accessibility was no longer showing in the Section 106 register. He suggested that the Council invite Michael Harris, from BHCC City Parks, to visit the Village and discuss the Rottingdean S106 projects and clarify the Beacon Hill funds.

Action Cllr Lawrence to invite Michael Harris, from BHCC to visit the Village and discuss the Rottingdean S106 projects.

iii. Natural Environment. **Cllr Evans** provided the following update.

- The Beacon Hill Stewardship Group AGM was to take place on Thursday the 6th of November
- The Friends of Beacon Hill had made good progress on the new notice boards, and an inspection had shown the existing posts to be in a good condition, The Ranger was to organise the installation hopefully before the end of the year.

iv. Built Environment. No further update

The meeting closed at 21.16. The next meeting is on Monday the 1st of December 2025.

Chris Hayes, Parish Clerk

November 2025

Signed

Date