



## Minutes of the Meeting of Rottingdean Parish Council on Monday the 6th of July 2026 at the Whiteway Centre

Present. Cllr Lawrence (Chair), Cllr Poole, Cllr Evans, Cllr Cherrie, Cllr Snow, Cllr Dawes and Cllr Course.

Public Gallery Phil Boucher, Bernard Turnbull, Ward Cllr Fishleigh.

### Public Questions

**Bernard Turnbull** asked the following questions

- Could the Parish Council look into a development at the end of Sheep Walk where the owner had knocked down a wall adjoining Beacon Hill nature reserve to provide an extension, the footings of which appeared to reach into the nature reserve.
- He expressed concern about the overgrazing of the reserve
- He said he had been asked by the owner of a local Ju-Jitsu club if the business could be included on the business directory sign in the West Street Car Park.

**Ward Cllr Fishleigh** said she would ask the planning enforcement team to look into the extension planned at the end of Sheep Walk. **Cllr Evans** said he would be updating the meeting on sheep grazing later in the meeting. **Cllr Lawrence** said the Council had been looking into updating the business directory sign in West Street Car Park and had discovered that it was a fairly simple matter of purchasing a plastic label, for which a quote had been obtained. She asked for the owner's details to be passed to her.

**Ward Cllr Fishleigh** said an enforcement notice requiring the owners to carry out building repair work had been served on the Old Tea Room in the High Street. She also advised the Council that Jess Gibbons, BHCC, CEO, had agreed to join her and Ward Cllr Earthy in a bike ride through Rottingdean in July and offered to guide her to any areas that the Parish Council wanted to draw her attention to.

**Phil Boucher** handed a note to Councillors setting out his concerns about the lack of a plan for the care and maintenance of Beacon Hill nature reserve. He said he had received a disappointing reply to a freedom of information (FOI) request sent to the Parish Council and had not received a reply to an FOI request sent to Brighton

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and Hove City Council. His main concern was that there was a lack of consultation with the public about future work on the reserve, which made it difficult for users of the reserve to understand what work was planned, what the volunteers were doing, what outcomes were sought, or whether the work undertaken had been effective.

**Cllr Evans** said that the Beacon Hill Stewardship Group, which brought together City Parks, the volunteer group the Friends of Beacon Hill (FoBH), as well as other relevant groups such as the Beacon Hub, met each year to discuss the work planned for the following year. He said the minutes of the meetings were published and the annual nature report reported on the health of the nature reserve. **Cllr Evans** also said that the detailed operational planning was a matter for City Parks. **Cllr Lawrence** said that the FoBH volunteers gave up their time to maintain the reserve, working under the direction of the Ranger, which deserved thanks and respect from Beacon Hill users.

The Clerk then read out an email received from May Thompson.

*“The situation with the gravel forecourt to Field House becomes more critical as the weeks and months pass by. My neighbours at flats 1 and 6 are now wheelchair bound and negotiating the driveway is very difficult verging on impossible. Everyone finds cycling impossible, dragging suitcases is difficult, ditto pushchairs and motorcycles. From the perspective of High Street users, the constant spillage onto the pavement embarrasses us and is deleterious to the ancient pavement.*

*Can we please ask for your support if we make an application to tarmac the forecourt? The cheapest option is straightforward black tarmac which might be affordable, the most expensive option is bonded gravel which will definitely not be affordable. We are now considering laying cobblestones (as per the 1m strip at the entrance). Any guidance you can give will be much appreciated.”*

**Ward Cllr Fishleigh** agreed to contact May Thompson and follow up on the matter.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Nixon and Cllr Levins

2. **Declarations of interests**

None

3. **Agreement of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> of June.** The minutes were agreed as drafted and signed by the Chair as a true record of the discussion

4. **Matters Arising**

None

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5. **Action Log.** Councillors provided the following updates

- i. 0202. Cllr Evans to report back on the completion and installation of the signs to protect Skylark nests. 0106. Cllr Nixon to organise a meeting with concerned residents and City Parks to discuss and review this year's grazing plan.  
**Cllr Evans** provided the following update covering these action points. He said that Cllr Nixon and the Clerk had met with the Ranger on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June. The Ranger said he had received a number of emails from reserve users, which he was intending to respond to, so he was fully aware of the concerns about sheep grazing. In view of this, he did not consider a meeting was needed and wanted to focus on next year's plan. He had explained that this year's grazing plan was unusual because it was intended to tackle a particularly difficult area of scrub in the north-east of the reserve. The plan aimed to start in January, later than in previous years, and complete by the end of April to allow the north-east section to be grazed twice, once at the beginning of the cycle and once at the end. The Ranger had confirmed that the 2027/28 plan would return to the normal timetable, with the sheep removed from the reserve before the end of March and before the start of the Skylark nesting season. **Cllr Evans** said that the Stewardship Group would look at ways to protect Skylark nesting during the 2027/28 season, including protection from disturbance by walkers and dog owners through the provision of information signs on ground-nesting birds and on the rules governing the use of the reserve, including those set out in the Countryside Code. Closed
- ii. 0105. Cllr Evans to speak to the field maintenance contractor about the condition of the wildflower meadow fence rope. **Cllr Evans** said that the concern had been that the tightness of the rope when wet might damage the posts. He had been reassured that this would not harm the posts and would ease over time as the rope wore in. Closed
- iii. 0206. Cllr Evans to check the accuracy of the maps on Beacon Hill notice boards. **Cllr Evans** said that the concern was that the map signs did not clearly show the bridle paths. He said the maps showed the main paths, including bridleways, but not every informal route created by reserve users. Bridle paths were clearly marked with signs at entrances and at various points throughout the reserve. Closed
- iv. 0306. The St Aubyns Working Group to consider future sponsorship opportunities and how best to gather ideas for the future use of the Pavilion. **Cllr Evans** said that this had been incorporated into the Working Group's plan. Closed

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## 6. Finance Update

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

		VAT
HMRC June	£866.28	
C Hayes Salary June	£1012.61	
Room Hire	£22.00	
Affordable Waste (DD)	£174.44	
Gary Steel	£200.00	
Sam Cocks (Grass cutting)	£770	£154
Clamp Boxall (payroll)	£82.50	£16.50
High Street leaflets (2000)	£650.00	
Toolkit	£216	£43
Parish Online (Web domain hosting)	£100	£20
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4093.83</b>	

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

- ii. Bank balances. The Clerk advised the meeting that, at the end of June, the Council's bank balance stood at £581,697.20 and that, after deduction of the balance of the St Aubyns Maintenance Fund, £179,384.58 was available to the Council.
- iii. June Accounts and quarterly reconciliation. The accounts were presented and agreed by Councillors. The Chair said she had checked that the bank statements reconciled with the accounts spreadsheet and then signed the reconciliation form.

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## 7. Major Projects

### i. **St Aubyns** Members of the working group provided the following feedback

- **Cllr Evans** said that the group was continuing to progress the workplan aimed at connecting with the public to support thinking about future uses for the Field, Chapel and Pavilion. Following the successful opening of the Chapel during May, the aim was to decide what further events could be tried out before coming to conclusions about the best use of the buildings and what this would entail in terms of building upgrades, such as washrooms. Cllr Lawrence had been engaging with community groups and local schools to find ways to make the most of the green space in the centre of the village. In addition, Cllr Evans had written to City Parks BHCC to enquire about the maintenance of the trees in St Aubyns Field during the hot weather and whether additional watering would be provided.
- **Cllr Cherrie** said he was continuing to try to contact David Smith, the Surveyor, about setting up a regular maintenance schedule for the Chapel and Pavilion following David's initial assessment. **Cllr Cherrie** said he was also obtaining a further quote for the restoration of the Chapel lighting from a local contractor.
- **Cllr Lawrence** said she had written to key community groups about the use of the Field, Chapel and Pavilion to begin to build up a picture of potential events. She had also been seeking the advice of Caroline Lane, a local resident and botanist, about maintaining and developing the wildflower meadow.

### ii. **High Street.**

- Meeting with Andrew Westwood. **The Clerk** reported back on the meeting he and Cllr Cherrie, along with Ward Councillors, had had with Andrew Westwood, now former Head of the Transport Process at BHCC, about the traffic management study. Mr Westwood had said that the study had looked at a number of options to better manage High Street traffic. The initial assessment investigated:
  - Full closure of the High Street
  - Make the High Street one way going north
  - Make the High Street one way going south

The options all had a considerable impact on the surrounding area, particularly on Falmer Road and Warren Road. Due to the impact on the wider road network, **none of the options** were considered to be viable solutions. At the group's request, a further option would now be tested to

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remove southbound traffic from the High Street and for Steyning Road/Newlands Road to be made one-way to provide access to the A259. Mr Westwood had now left BHCC, and the Clerk had made enquiries about who would now take the work forward. He had been advised by BHCC that a fast-track recruitment exercise was now under way to fill the post and that the aim was to keep to the agreed timescale for the project.

- High Street Survey. The Clerk advised that the High Street Survey had so far received 196 responses, mainly from long-term residents and older age groups, indicating that the findings mainly reflected the views of established local users. Most respondents visited the village centre at least weekly, with walking the main way people travelled there. The High Street was clearly valued for its cafés, independent shops, pubs, restaurants, everyday shopping and health and wellbeing services. Residents would like to see a wider mix of shops and services, particularly a pharmacy, more evening dining options, independent retailers and a bakery. The main barriers were parking, traffic, pavement quality, accessibility and limited retail variety. Respondents were concerned about the empty buildings and the amount of traffic in the High Street. The Clerk said that the survey would continue to run until the beginning of August.
- Engagement and Economic Regeneration Plan. **Cllr Course** provided the following update
  - He planned to begin distributing the leaflet highlighting the pubs, cafés, eating places and retail outlets around the village. With the agreement of Councillors, he would purchase leaflet distribution boxes to enable leaflets to be placed at key visitor spots, including the undercliff. He was also intending to hand out leaflets to people at the beach during the summer season. **This was agreed.**
  - Cllr Course suggested publishing an article in the autumn edition of Rottingdean Village News and would provide a draft for the September Council meeting.
  - In the meantime, discussions with five or so key business traders were planned in partnership with Cllrs Lawrence and Cherrie. The aim was to seek their views on how to regenerate the High Street and on how best to engage the remaining retail outlets, pubs and cafés. This would also provide an opportunity to share the results of the High Street Survey.

**Action.** Cllr Course to produce a draft article on the High Street engagement and economic regeneration work for the September Council meeting.

## 8. Planning

- i. Applications Received in June. Cllr Poole took the meeting through the following applications.

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**BH2026/01368. 98 Dean Court Road Rottingdean Brighton BN2 7DJ**

Prior approval for the erection of an additional storey. This had been brought to the attention of the Parish Council by the resident of No. 96 Dean Court Road, who was concerned about the loss of light. However, this was a permitted development and so had received prior approval, provided that the development followed planning policy rules. The Parish Council did not therefore object.

**BH2026/00825. 38 Dean Court Road Rottingdean Brighton BN2 7DJ**

Extend and remodel the existing bungalow with an additional storey to create a two-storey dwellinghouse. To alter the fenestration and add new glazing at first floor level, including fitment of a rear balcony and rear flat green roof. This was an alteration of an earlier application design that made the proposed development more in keeping with surrounding properties. The Parish Council did not object.

9. **Advisory Group Meeting Updates**

i. **Strategy and Communications**

- a) Policy Reviews. **The Clerk** advised he would liaise with Cllr Levins about the review of the Risk Management policy and report back to the Council.

**Action.** **The Clerk** to liaise with Cllr Levins about the review of the Risk Management policy

- b) Village Fair. **Cllr Lawrence** said that we now had cover on the RPC stall for the duration of the fair. The Clerk said he was currently working up posters on the progress of St Aubyns Field, Chapel and Pavilion and the High Street Plan for display at the stall.
- c) Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) **Cllr Lawrence** said that, following a couple of recent anti-social behaviour incidents in the village brought to the Parish Council's attention, she and the Clerk had met with PCSO Lottie Pullen to discuss the matter. Following this discussion and having looked at work on ASB done in other parishes, the group proposed that the Clerk should draft a policy. The aim would be to define the different types of anti-social behaviour (ASB), record all incidents reported, provide advice for residents on what to do if they witness or are victims of ASB, and define the role of the Parish Council, BHCC and the police in dealing with such matters. The draft policy would be brought to a future Council meeting.

**Action.** **The Clerk** to draft a Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour policy for Councillors to consider.

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- ii. **Village and Community.** **Cllr Lawrence** said she had attended the Local Action Team meeting set up to discuss ASB and youth provision across the Deans, which was also attended by PCSO Lottie Pullen. The PCSO, who covers East Brighton, had informed the meeting that Saltdean, Rottingdean and Ovingdean had the lowest reports of youth-related issues within the area.
- iii. **Natural Environment.** **Cllr Dawes** provided the following update. Rottingdean Beach had been awarded the Blue Flag beach status meaning it had passed water quality, environmental management and safety requirements. The flag was awarded annually provided the standards were still met and required information boards to be posted explaining the local ecosystem, water quality data, and community engagement programmes. The water quality would be tested every two weeks during the bathing season. Cllr Dawes said he was working with the Friends of Rottingdean Beach and Environment (FORCE) on the provision of the information signs.

**Cllr Evans** asked if the signage could include pedestrian and cyclist safety messages at the undercliff. He said he also understood that BHCC had a mandatory obligation to provide signage at beaches, so the Blue Flag information signs might need to be agreed with them. **Cllr Lawrence** added that improved signage about dog-free beaches was also needed, as this rule was being ignored by a number of dog owners. **Cllr Dawes** said his aim was to bring the various groups involved in the care and maintenance of the seafront and beach together to better coordinate work on the seafront.

- iv. **Built Environment.** **Cllr Cherrie** said that a road sign in the village that had been damaged by traffic had been reported.
10. **Communications.** Councillors agreed that key messages to communicate should include:
- i. The High Street Survey
  - ii. The Blue Flag award
  - iii. The RPC presence at the Village Fair

The meeting closed at 20.50. The next meeting is on Monday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August.

**Chris Hayes, Parish Clerk**

**July 2026**

Signed

Date