



## ALDINGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the ordinary meeting of the Finance Committee of Aldingbourne Parish Council held on Tuesday 24 February 2026 at Aldingbourne Community Sports Centre, Oliver's Meadow, Westergate, West Sussex PO20 3YA.**

**Present:** Cllr Harbord - Chair of the Finance Committee and Vice-Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr Foott – Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr Rickard, Cllr Stapley-Jones, Cllr Katherine Jarman and Cllr Denise Ramshaw.

Marie Singleton – Parish Clerk

**Members of the public present:** No members of the public were present.

**273 Agenda item 1 - Apologies for absence**

All in attendance.

**274 Agenda item 2 – Declarations of Interest**

None required.

**275 Agenda item 3 - Public Participation**

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

**276 Agenda item 4 - Minutes of previous meeting held on 21 October 2025**

It was proposed by Cllr Stapley-Jones and seconded by Cllr Rickard that the minutes of 21 October 2025 be RESOLVED and accepted as true and accurate. This was unanimously agreed and signed by the Chair of the Finance Committee Cllr Harbord.

**277 Agenda item 5 – Matters arising from previous minutes and action items listing 21 October 2025**

The Clerk confirmed that all matters for the action items listing 21 October 2025 had been resolved.

**278 Agenda item 6 - To view and discuss the Budget Financial Monitoring Report to 31.01.26 (Period 10)**

The Clerk advised that there is nothing of concern and notes have been provided in the monitoring report to show why and if there are any noted differences between the budget and actual expenditure as of 31.01.26.

The Clerk reminded councillors that full details of all the management reports are uploaded to TEAMS monthly for all councillors to see.

Overspend on grounds, will be taken at the end of the financial year from the Westergate Recreation Ground Fund as already approved, Street Scene Improvements and ACSC repairs and maintenance will be taken from CIL funding. A separate spreadsheet is attached so councillors can see what has already been claimed from CIL – see Agenda item 15.

**279 Agenda item 7 – To agree the draft Budget Plan 2026/2027**

A copy of the draft budget plan for 2026/2027 was attached and the Clerk advised that this is finalised in April following the end of financial year figures being known.

The information is taken from the Business Plan which was approved in October 2025 and then at Full Council in November 2025. Notes have been put in so that councillors could see what has been included in each cost center heading. As stated under Agenda item 11 earmarked reserves the parish council is at best cost neutral having budgeted for the remaining CIO funding that was agreed and the second year of the Centre Manager position at the ACSC.

Several queries were raised and the following points clarified: -

- Website costs - the Clerk advised that the figure had included moving to a new platform that was currently being undertaken as well as provision for a new website should it be required.
- Cllr's Harbord and Jarman questioned whether the costs of SID monitoring should be taken from CIL or revenue funds. The Clerk advised that this was an allowable activity that could be taken from CIL, which is an earmarked fund for certain projects only and it was best to use this fund which would release the pressure on the precept revenue. Following a discussion the Clerk clarified that the costs incurred would still be coming out of the same budget cost center, it was just whether this should be included on the ADC CIL spreadsheet, it was agreed that this would be left until the finance committee meeting in October 26, when a decision would be made on whether or not it should be included for CIL funding.
- Planning & Neighbourhood Plan Professional Fees – the Clerk had suggested a reduction in this cost centre, based on several years underspend and a figure of £7.5k from £12k was proposed (expenditure 2025/2026 only £94), Cllr Jarman challenged whether this was appropriate as there were concerns on needing more professional advice on any future potential planning applications. Cllr Foott advised that she was happy with the reduction as there is a separate earmarked reserves budget for the ANP currently standing at £80k which was unlikely to be needed in the short term, and this fund could be used as necessary.

The Clerk also advised that an additional line was needed to be added to the Budget Plan following receipt of correspondence from the pension fund managers for £14k which is the cost of cessation of the fund, previous underpayment and an update in its valuation. This had not been put in the Business Plan, as the invoice for this was due in January 26 and would have been included in the financial year 2025/2026 and may yet be received. Should it not, then provision will be made in the next financial year 2026/2027 and the draft budget updated.

**280 Agenda item 8 – To note Management Accounts for 2025/2026 and to review and countersign bank statements**

It was noted that all management accounts for October 2025 – January 2026 were signed monthly by the Chair Cllr Foott, and Cllr Stapley-Jones had reviewed the bank statements and countersigned all documentation for the same period. All details from the RBS finance module are available in TEAMS for councillors to review as required, along with copies of all invoices and payment lists.

**281 Agenda item 9 – To note cashbook balances at 31.01.26**

The Bank balances were noted as follows at 31.01.26: -

Community Account	£137,909.24
Business Premium	£429,788.47
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	£ 85,000.00
Total	£652,697.71

Interest in the Business Premium account is currently 1.10% but is being reduced from 24.03.26 to 1.05%. Interest earned to date £4,837 (31.01.26), budgeted amount expected to be £7,056.

All councillors agreed to transfer £75k from the Community Account to the Business Premium Account at the end of the financial year to maximise the interest rate on this account.

**282 Agenda item 10 – To note income for 2025/2026 as of 31.01.26**

The income for 2025/2026 as of 31.01.26 was noted as below: -

CIL Income	£ 36,810.00
Precept	£156,676.00
Bank Interest	£ 4,837.00
Allotment Income	£ 769.00
Total	£199,092.00

**283 Agenda Item 11 - Earmarked Reserves 2025/2026 to be agreed**

The Clerk outlined the current situation and advised that the only earmarked reserve that had approval at the last finance committee meeting 21.10.25 and Full Council meeting 04.11.25 are for the ANP of which £30k is to be transferred to this reserve cost center at the end of the financial year.

Comments had, however, been made by the internal and external auditors at the end of last financial year which mentioned the high amount that is sat in general reserves, in year 2025/2026 this is £55,685 (2 months to still go through the accounts). However overall, the cost center for general reserves at 31.01.26 is £177,496.45 (includes the £55,685 above). The best practice is only to have up to one year's precept in general reserves, i.e., for the parish council the maximum recommendation is up to £156,676.

**Current Earmarked accounts are below: -**

ACSC Rebuild	£204,320.00
Artwork Project Maintenance	£ 5,342.25 (to leave as this is based on an ADC grant)
CIL	£133,099.00 (end of year transfer to reconcile accounts is required)
ANP	£ 80,000.00

**The Clerk had suggested in the finance report the following actions for 2025/2026 could be considered: -**

- ANP - £30k has already been approved and the Clerk queried if this level was still appropriate, following a discussion by councillors on the likelihood of this fund being needed in the short term, it was agreed not to make any transfer for this financial year 2025/2026.
- ACSC re-build - following a lengthy discussion on this earmarked fund and the assumption by some stakeholders that this fund is to be used for one purpose only, it was agreed that the earmarked account should be changed to reflect the correct nature and the work that the parish council wanted to do on behalf of the community, the new name in the accounts will be changed to community facilities fund. Proposed Cllr Stapley-Jones, seconded Cllr Foott and approved by five councillors to one. It was also agreed that a transfer of £30k should be made for this financial year 2025/2026.
- To set up a new Playground fund for new equipment - £30k approved by all councillors.
- To set up a new Trim Trail equipment account - £15k (this was agreed in the Business Plan). Approved by all councillors.

The Clerk advised that following approval by the Full Council 03.03.26 that this will be actioned by 31.03.26.

**284 Agenda item 12 – To review the following policies for approval by Full Council**

- To note Interim Audit report from April Skies Accounting – circulated 12.02.26 and to provide comments on the one question in Appendix A – this was noted, particularly the query around the correct power and duties that the parish council could use on the funding provided on the Centre Manager position at the ACSC. The Clerk had advised the auditor and received agreement that the power was for Community Centres and Village Halls, power to provide and equip premises for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s 19. The recruitment of a Centre Manager allowed this provision to happen. This will also be minuted in the Full Council minutes 03.03.26.
- It was noted that the final internal audit has been booked for 13.04.26.
- The Transparency compliance document to 31.01.26 was noted.

**285 Agenda item 13 – To agree grant applications**

- ACSC - request for £1k for running community activities – this is to be deferred until such time as there is specific community activities identified and put in place. The ACSC will be advised and asked to re-submit as necessary.

- Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice - request for £50 (previously supported). Approved.
- Tylers Trust – request for £400 (previously supported). Approved.
- Bognor Regis Foodbank £1,320 (new request). Approved.

Proposed Cllr Harbord, seconded Cllr Foott that the Full Council should approve as highlighted above the grant applications. Agreed by all councillors.

**286 Agenda item 14 – To review Asset Register and Insurance for 2025/2026**

A copy of the draft Asset Register was circulated to councillors which shows all the new assets and is up to date as of 31.01.26, additions are added monthly as and when items are purchased. A review takes place in April each year which then takes any additions to the insurance into consideration when it is renewed in June annually.

The Clerk advised that a new laptop for the Clerk was required as the battery is no longer charging and that the laptop in the asset register should be written off. Agreed by all councillors.

The insurance was reviewed and new assets will be noted in the insurance documents.

**287 Agenda item 15 – To note CIL receipts and expenditure**

- The CIL receipts and expenditure at 31.01.26 was noted.
- The CIL parish meeting briefing papers and guidance – circulated 12.02.26 were noted.
- The ADC CIL Spending Strategy template – deadline 31.03.26 was discussed, the correct figures have now been agreed with ADC, and the following projects were identified to be included on the template.
  - New playground project £30k.
  - New exercise and fitness equipment - £15k.

It was also agreed that CIL funding should be used for the provision and development of community facilities, the exact details yet to be determined, but to ensure that this was part of the review of CIL expenditure. The Clerk advised that CIL Income is difficult to predict as it is dependent on approved developments coming online and CIL funding being received by ADC, this funding cannot be guaranteed, and any projects should be based on available funds only.

**288 Agenda item 16 – To revisit investments options**

The Clerk had provided an update on the current investment situation which included the following:-

- It was noted that the £85k has been deposited in the CCLA Deposit Sector Fund. It was agreed to leave this level of funding as it is, with no further transfers at this point.
- It was noted that the Unity Trust Bank Savings account has now been approved, a savings account was a requirement before being allowed to apply for a fixed bond – initial agreement was for an £85k transfer, however changes have been made to the FSCS limits which are now £120k. To note that is a free viewing account only, any transfers out require a CHAP'S payment at £25. Following a discussion regarding the

changes to the limit it was agreed that a transfer of £120k should be made instead of the original £85k. Approved by all councillors. Once this happens a fixed bond can be applied for and the Clerk will advise on the rates available.

The Barclays Premium Account even after a transfer to Unity Trust Bank still exceeds the £120k FSCS limit, the Clerk suggested that in the next financial year 2026/2027 the options previously explored should be actioned. It was therefore agreed that accounts at Cambridge & Counties Bank and Redwood Bank should be explored further.

**289 Agenda item 17 - To discuss the ACSC financial position**

It was noted that this was a specific request from the ACSC, with financial information having already been requested by the APC/ACSC Development Working Party 19.12.25 and again at the Full Council meeting 03.02.26. Information has now been provided by the ACSC, and this was circulated to councillors. The Clerk also provided councillors with a list of the funding requests that had been received from the ACSC which had prompted the necessity around transparent access to the ACSC accounts so that decisions could be made by the parish council on each of the requests made.

The following information was attached to the agenda for councillors to consider: -

- The submitted ACSC accounts as at 31.01.25 from the Charity Commission website.
- A separate briefing paper showing the number of grants now requested and the comments received on questions posed.
- The ACSC Finance report 2023 – 2027.

Each of the papers was reviewed and it was noted that there were still discrepancies in the revised finance report 2023-2027 provided, and that some figures were different to the accounts posted on the Charity Commission website. The estimated actual 2025/2026 figures in the same report also did not match with the figures showing in the balance sheet and profit and loss reports provided by the bookkeeper. There were also questions on the accuracy of the income outlined in the report.

A detailed and frank discussion took place by councillors on the information provided and it was then agreed by all councillors that the parish council should now put its position in writing to the ACSC regarding their ongoing expectations and the high number of requests made by the ACSC for funding. This decision was based on the information they had provided, and the budget decisions made by the parish council on its own budget, showing that 2026/2027 had an in-year deficit due to commitments already made on funding to the ACSC on its Centre Manager position and CIO Status.

**The following ACSC funding requests for financial year 2025/2026 had been made and each was reviewed:-**

1. £10k per annum to cover operational and ongoing costs. Funding to the ACSC has already been questioned by the auditor on the power that can be used by parish councils on certain funding requests, and following a review of these powers it was agreed that operational costs incurred by the ACSC, would not be considered by the parish council.
2. £4,080 grant application to cover the cost of a replacement boiler – invoice and quote received. The finance committee agreed to recommend to the Full Council at its meeting 03.03.26 that this could be approved under Community Centres and Village

Halls, power to provide and equip premises for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s 19.

3. £1k grant application towards community activities – it was agreed that there was not sufficient information provided on the type of activities that funding was being requested for, and that this should be deferred until this information is provided.
4. £2k to cover architect fees for re-looking at the re-development plans. (any plans must take into consideration the sqm footing of the development that funding from ADC is based on). On hold.
5. £35k to cover the cost of the Centre Manager for a period of 2 years – already approved, first year paid out in 2025/2026 and in the parish council budget for 2026/2027.
6. £20k to cover the cost of the CIO status – already approved and the carry forward figure available is in the parish council budget for 2026/2027.
7. New height barrier to protect the site – this was agreed in principle with CIL funding being considered, however the ACSC will need to answer questions on how the site would be accessed by emergency vehicles, ambulance, fire services and the arrangements in place for refuse collections etc, and the procedures for how the barriers will be operated out of hours will need to be provided before a final decision is made.
8. Between £25-£62k for a Trim Trail – the parish council is potentially able to re-purpose the MUGA funding and has been in contact with ADC, however this will not be in the short term as legal changes and permissions are required from the developer and then ADC – this proposal is therefore on hold until permissions are sought.
9. £1.8k for repairs to the access road. Cllr Foott advised that another tranche of funding from the Aldingbourne Village Hall Trust Fund (AVHT) was due to be made to the ACSC and that this income should be used for the repairs to the access road. The parish council therefore agreed not to approve this request.

The parish council reiterated its commitment to working with the ACSC on its ability to provide community facilities, however the ACSC must make provisions itself for its future and not be reliant solely on the parish council and to ensure that it is able to cover its own costs. Councillors felt that the precept provided by residents needed to be protected as public funds and should only be used on viable projects which align with the powers and duties that the parish council is legally allowed to use. The new Centre Manager needs to be allowed time to consolidate the role and spend time on income generation on behalf of the ACSC which will then allow it to be self-financing.

A decision has therefore been made that there will be no further funding from revenue available to the ACSC, other than already outlined above for the next financial year 2026/2027.

**290 Agenda Item 18 - To note the date of the next Finance Meeting**

The next meeting will be Thursday 23 April 2026, 7.00 pm at Aldingbourne Community Sports Centre.

There being no further business for discussion the meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

Signed .....(Chair)

Date .....

**PLEASE NOTE THESE MINUTES ARE IN DRAFT AND SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT UNTIL APPROVED  
AT THE NEXT FINANCE MEETING TO BE HELD 23 APRIL 2026**