ALTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 12 August 2026 at 7:00pm

Present: Councillor J. Shepherd (Chair), Councillor P Gwinnett (Vice Chair), Councillor R. Wood, Councillor P. Ballard, Councillor J. Wakefield, Councillor E Brindley, Councillor N Moult (Staffordshire Moorlands District Council ("SMDC")
One member of the public.

Apologies: A Barker (Clerk), Councillors C Nicholls, A Dronzek, S Beardmore (Staffordshire County Council ("SCC").

Cllr Gwinnett took draft notes for the minutes, in the absence of the Clerk, due to illness.

Cllr J. Shepherd (Chair) declared the meeting open at 7:00pm.

111/26. Declarations of Interest.
None.

112/26. Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10th June 2026.

i. The minutes of the above meeting were declared a true record, proposed by Cllr Shepherd and seconded by Cllr Wood, agreed by all and were signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.0pm 3 and reconvened at 7.14pm

113/26. Matters Arising/Action Updates.

i. The previously arranged litter pick took place on 25 July 2026. It was agreed that a further litter pick should be arranged, and this has been scheduled for Saturday 5 September at 10am, meeting at the Village Hall. It was reported that Alton Towers had carried out a litter pick over the preceding weekend. Cllr Moult had been advised that Alton Towers were resuming litter picking and he would circulate a letter which he had received, providing this update. **Action: Cllr Moult to circulate Alton Towers letter**

ii. Cllr Wood had drafted a letter to the landowner whose maize crop was overhanging Footpath 35, along similar lines to a letter issued last year, in relation to Footpath 38 (see next update). This had been issued by the Clerk, shortly after the last meeting.

iii. The Clerk had issued a letter (again shortly after the last meeting) to the landowner, whose crops grow alongside Footpath 38, noting that there had been no issues regarding overhanging crops, this year, and recognising his support. This letter had been gratefully received.

iv. The issue of the "no camping" sign for the Village Hall was adjourned to the next meeting, as more information is required from the Village Hall Committee.

v. Over-hanging trees at the front of the Village Hall had been raised at the previous meeting. Cllr Shepherd had trimmed back the trees.

vi. Various documents, and a summary of the currently identified position relating to the tenure of the land and property at Alton Village Hall had been circulated by the Clerk since the last meeting. The division of responsibilities, and confirmation of the relationship between the Village Hall Charity and the Parish

Council needs to formalised. **Action: Clerk to identify documentation required/draft documentation and arrange a meeting between representatives of the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee.**

vii. The Grounds Maintenance Team have agreed to attend to the previously unkempt section of the churchyard, and would now maintain that area, going forward.

viii. The Clerk had written to Cllr Beardmore regarding potential changes to signage in the Cheadle area to try to maintain better traffic control in the village. Cllr Beardmore had replied to the Clerk, setting out details of the priorities of the County Council, which had been circulated to councillors.

ix. The Clerk had written to the Churchwarden since the last meeting, advising that no funds could be paid for strimming and maintenance at the Churchyard extension, but details of volunteer councillors who had offered their assistance, were forwarded on.

x. Section 106 funds – research had been carried out by the Clerk and Cllr Shepherd, relating to potential grant funding. No definite opportunities had been identified, but enquiries were ongoing.

xi. No update was available regarding the charity bins – see minute 116/26 iii below.

114/26. Alton Towers.

Cllr Ballard raised concerns regarding traffic in the village, creating gridlock, and potentially creating risk to life and property, if emergency vehicles cannot easily navigate the village. There are ongoing communications/initiatives with SCC, in attempt to ease traffic congestion and other issues. **Action : Cllr Shepherd to raise the issue of traffic control at the next meeting with Alton Towers. Cllr Moult to request a follow-up meeting with Alton Towers.**

115/26. Footpaths.

Nothing reported

116/26. Village Hall.

i. There had been an anonymous complaint received by the Clerk regarding parking on the Village Hall car park at the end of the footpath, on the left-hand side when facing the Village Hall, which it was reported, caused difficulties for a wheelchair user. It was queried whether parking should be restricted, at this point in the car park. It was agreed that the footpath area was not an appropriate, or only access point, and therefore no action would be taken.

ii. Consideration to be given to a Heads of Agreement between the Village Hall and the Parish Council was discussed in Action Updates 113/26 vi.

iii. It was reported that the Village Hall had concerns regarding the clothing bins, one of which was potentially, location, as the Village Hall Committee were considering the installation of electric charging points.

iv. It was also reported that the Village Hall Committee have concerns regarding the gap in the hedge, now that the fencing has been removed on the perimeter with Uttoxeter Road. It was noted that whips will be planted in October.

117/26. Groundsman/Lengthsman.

i. Cllr Gwinnett reported lots of positive feedback. Cllr Gwinnett proposed and Cllr Shepherd seconded and all agreed, to instruct the lengthsman to tidy the hedge and verge at the front of the parish cemetery at a cost of £175. **Action: Clerk to instruct lengthsman to carry out work at parish cemetery.**

118/26. Highways and Road Safety.

i. Cllr Gwinnett provided an update on the inaugural meeting of the new Speedwatch Group which took place prior to the council meeting. The meeting was well attended, and next steps will be actioned in September.

ii. Cllr Beardmore had provided a written update, prior to the meeting, regarding various highways matters, currently under consideration - see 113/26 viii. A surgery will be held in the near future, at the White Hart, where residents can discuss road safety and highways concerns. This will be a joint surgery with Cllr Beardmore (SCC) and Cllr Moult (SMDC). **Action: Clerk to update councillors and promote the event, once a date had been fixed.**

iii. Cllr Wakefield suggested that a better way to disseminate information to resident, needs to be identified. This would be considered at the next meeting.

119/26. Parish Cemetery and St. Peter's Church Yard.

Nothing reported

120/26. Cllr Shepherd announced an open forum to allow members of the public to ask questions.

A member of the public made the following comments:

i. It would be a good idea to have some kind of bulletin or newsletter for the village, to include the Parish Council and other village groups

ii. It has been observed that people visiting the village are stopping in gateways to relieve themselves. It was considered that the village should have a public facility.

iii. Parking is becoming increasingly difficult, notably on Smithy Bank. Yellow lines were suggested, on at least one side of the road – this would be a suitable topic for the surgery referred to, at 118/26 ii. above.

iv. Quiet lanes status for Nabb Lane and Greatgate Lane should be resurrected.

v. There are lots of traffic issues on Cedar Hill and Dimble Lane – better signage in Cheadle may help.

vi. It was suggested that during the three-week school trip period, buses be encouraged to enter and exit Alton Towers in one direction (in through Alton and out through Farley).

vii. Overhanging trees and hedges, where Denstone Lane enters the village, require attention, as do similar, on Cedar Hill and New Road/Station Bank.

viii. The triangle area between Malthouse Road and Station Bank requires attention. **Action: Cllr Shepherd to look at this.**

121/26. Planning and Licensing Applications.

None.

122/26. Planning decisions.

i. SMDC 2026/0205 Ms Nicole Dempster, Humble Bee Bank, Red Road, Alton. Alterations and Extensions – Planning Refused

123/26. Section 106 funds for playing field and play area- update.

i. The Clerk has been looking into funding opportunities. Further information has been gathered and matters are progressing.

124/26. Parish Council Updates.

i. Clothing Bins - carried over to next meeting
ii. CILCA for Clerk -carried over to next meeting
iii. Councillor Vacancy- carried over to next meeting

Correspondence/Communications: Requiring response:

i. Various Cemetery Enquiries.
ii. Request to Reserve Burial Plot
iii. Request for Gritting Bin Inventory
iv. Request to Register for Online Portal for AGAR 2027 onwards
v. Explanations to Mazars to complete External Audit
vi. Request for Financial Support for Lawnmower

For information only:

i. Modern Slavery Training Session – 13 July
ii. Parish Assembly Minutes (Meeting 25 June)
iii. National Westminster Bank – response to complaint
iv. Request for Orders for Poppy Wreaths
v. Funding Opportunity Details including Support for Village Halls
vi. Briefing on Local Action Plans relating to Local Government Reorganisation
vii. Government Announcement re: New Council Structure for Loca Government Reorganisation
viii. Various notices of Temporary Road Closures in Alton
ix. Notification of Councillor Vacancy
x. Litter Pick Reminder
xi. Local Government Reorganisation Online Briefing
xii. Details of Health & Wellbeing Seminars
xiii. Call for Evidence – Shaping the Future of Local Government Reorganisation
xiv. Su Beardmore email re: highways/speedwatch funding
xv. Alton Towers update (including litter picking)
xvi. Request for Comments on Licensing Policy
xvii. Request for Comments on Dog Fouling Order
xviii. SPCA August Bulletin
xix. Details of Future SPCA Training Courses
xx. Reminder for Town & Parish Networking Event – 9 October 2026

All Communications marked as for information only had been forwarded to councillors prior to the meeting. Thes were treated as "read" – to be followed up in matters arising as required.

125/26. Finance:

Section 106

i. Clerk Hours for Section 106 work – The Clerk had submitted a report of work carried out for the Section 106 Group showing 3 and a half hours worked from 1 July to 10 August 2026. Cllr Shepherd proposed and Cllr Brindley seconded, and it was agreed, that these hours should be paid at the end of the taxation quarter, in September 2026. Keith Ford to calculate the payroll.

Payments:

ii. Clerk Salary £536.37 (includes arrears from June)
iii. Clerk Mobile Phone £13.00
iv. Clerk Expenses £9.78 (Printer Paper £7.98 & stamp £1.80 (for VAT return))
v. Village Hall £28.00 - (July Hire)
vi.Staffs Hedgelaying £1,195.00 (£285.00 regular contract plus £910.00 for Village Hall Fence/Hedge work)
vii.Key Maintenance Group £572.00 (£476.67; VAT £95.33)
viii.HMRC £543.92 (first quarter 2026/2027 tax year)
ix.Staffs Hedgelaying £285

Income:

x.Interest £16.26
xi.Nettlebank Memorials £140
xii.NatWest Bank Compensation £200
xiii.VAT Refund £6,527.15

xiv.Authorised payments were signed off by the Council.
xv.Current bank balances were signed off by the Council.

The details of the finances and copy bank statement were circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting.

There being no other business the meeting was closed by Councillor Shepherd at 8.25pm

Signed..... Chairman on Wednesday 9 September 2026

Signed..... Clerk