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## **Alton Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 7pm**

Present: Councillor J. Shepherd (Chair), Councillor P. Gwinnett (Vice Chair), Councillor E. Brindley, Councillor A. Dronzek, Councillor R. Wood, Councillor P. Ballard, Councillor J. Wakefield, Councillor C. Nicholls, Councillor N. Moulton (SMDC).

Mr S.J. Burton (Clerk).

Two members of the public.

Apologies: Councillor N. Conway, Councillor S. Beardmore (SCC).

Cllr J. Shepherd (Chair) declared the meeting open at 7pm and introduced Anthea Barker the successful candidate for the position of clerk to the council (Proper Officer and Responsible Finance Officer) who was present.

#### **17/26. Declarations of Interest.**

- i. None.

#### **18/26. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025.**

- i. The minutes of the above meeting were declared a true record proposed by Cllr Shepherd and seconded by Cllr Gwinnett and agreed by all and were signed by the Chair and the clerk.

#### **19/26. Action Updates.**

- i. Cllr Ballard reported that there had not been a meeting of the village hall so the action regarding ownership of the perimeter fence around the playing field is carried forward (minute 189/25).  
**Action: Cllr Ballard.**
- ii. Cllr Shepherd reported that he is still working to arrange a stonemason to repair/replace the damaged stonework on the Roundhouse (minute 197/25 i). **Action: Cllr Shepherd.**
- iii. Cllr Moulton reported that a meeting with Mr Ebison, Alton Towers has been arranged for Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February at 10.30am. Attending will be Cllr Shepherd and possibly Cllr Conway (minute 4/26i).
- iv. Cllr Shepherd has reported the broken stile on footpath 43 to SCC reference number 26022505 (minute 5/26i).

#### **20/26. Alton Towers.**

- i. There was nothing for this item of business.

#### **21/26. Footpaths.**

- i. There was nothing for this item of business.

#### **22/26. Village Hall.**

- i. Cllr Ballard reported there has not been a meeting since the last council meeting. But that there has been good work completed, like the new windows in the village hall.

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### **23/26. Lengthsman.**

- i. Cllr Gwinnett reported that the Lengthsman has bought a new disk for his mower so that is now working again.
- ii. Cllr Gwinnett has adjusted the document outlining the work the Lengthsman will be doing and the draft advert has been completed inviting applications for the job, this will be displayed prominently soon. **Action: Cllr Gwinnett.**
- iii. Cllr Wood stated that there is a lot of litter around the village which needs clearing. Cllr Shepherd stated that there would possibly be a litter pick in the spring.

### **24/26. Highways and Road Safety.**

- i. Cllr Wood reported that the new traffic bollard has been placed at the Round House by SCC Highways.
- ii. Cllr Wood reported that some work to repair potholes has been completed in the village but much has not been attended to.
- iii. Cllr Wood stated that 5<sup>th</sup> March is the date that the gully in Hurston Lane outside the village hall should be jet cleared and cleaned.
- iv. Cllr Wood will check the village and report any other problems to Cllr Beardmore (SCC).

### **25/26. Parish Cemetery and St. Peter's Church Yard.**

- i. Cllr Dronzek reported he will soon be able to have three quotes for the tree work in St. Peter's Church yard to present to the council. There are three companies/people interested in the work. **Action: Cllr Dronzek.**

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

- i. A member of the public mentioned the difficult road junction where Uttoxeter Road, Saltersford Lane and the B5032 meet. This is something that has been discussed by the council on many occasions. It was agreed that Cllr Wood would contact SCC Highways to see if a better road layout would improve the junction. **Action: Cllr Wood.**

### **27/26. Planning and Licensing Applications.**

- i. SMD/2026/0035. Jo Bartram, C/O Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy, Shaw House Farm, Cheadle Road, Alton. Variation of conditions on application DET/2024/0002 to alter the external appearance of barn 1. Change to list of approved plans on the decision notice along with changes to conditions 2 and 3 so that they refer to drawings 00851-005A. **No objections.**
- ii. SMD/2026/0036. Jo Bartram, C/O Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy, Shaw House Farm, Cheadle Road, Alton. Erection of outbuilding with bat loft. **No objections.**

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### **28/26. Planning decisions.**

- i. SMD/2025/0364. Barn off, Meadowside View, Alton. Conversion of barn to dwelling. Planning permission approved.
- ii. SMD/2025/0488. 24, Glen Drive, Alton. Variation of condition 2 relating to SMD/2025/0356. Planning permission approved.

**The planning decisions were read out by Cllr Shepherd.**

### **29/26. Section 106 funds for playing field and play area update.**

- i. The clerk reported that he has now spoken to Angela Dale (SMDC) regarding the use of the Section 106 funding for the play area and playing field. The details have been emailed to the 106 Group. Basically, the funds can only be used for capital spending not, for example to replace equipment such as a grass mower, grass roller or goalposts. Money could be used for example to improve drainage or increase the football pitch size.

### **30/26. Parish Council Updates.**

- i. **Round House maintenance:** No further update.
- ii. **New clerk update.** Cllr Gwinnett confirmed the new clerk will be Anthea Barker who will take up her role on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026, the outgoing clerk Selwyn Burton will cease employment after the next meeting on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2026. This will allow for an overlap between the clerks to allow for a proper handover of duties. There were four applicants for the post and the unsuccessful candidates have been informed by Cllr Gwinnett. The council thanks all the candidates for their applications.
- iii. Cllr Gwinnett went on to propose that the opportunity should be taken to for the council to purchase its own laptop computer for use by the new clerk together with a printer and the Microsoft Office Business package, the cost would be £400-£600 for the computer, maximum £100 for a printer and £16.95 per month (£203.40p per year) for Microsoft Office, this was seconded by Cllr Shepherd and carried on a vote.
- iv. The clerk reported he has arranged for dedicated email addresses for the Chairman, Vice Chair and Clerk. These are .co.uk email addresses. If other councillors want one of these addresses, it can be arranged.
- v. **Ground Maintenance Tender Update:** Cllr Gwinnett reported that the clerk had invited eleven companies to tender for the ground maintenance contract, including the current contractor. A number of replies have already been received and more are expected. Cllr Gwinnett will then examine the tenders and update the council. **Action: Cllr Gwinnett.**

### **31/26. Correspondence requiring response.**

- i. Email complaint re Town Head parking, work and footpaths covered by crops. The clerk explained he had advised the complainant how to report the issue to SCC on-line and had been thanked for the advice. There followed a discussion about the parking and mud on the road at Town Head. Cllr Shepherd stated he has spoken to the owner and told it will be tidied by June.

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The discussion continued with Cllr Shepherd volunteering to write via the clerk to the owner regarding the state of the road. **Action: Cllr Shepherd.**

- ii. Emails with Angela Dale SMDC re 106 funds.

### **32/26. Correspondence for Information.**

- i. Email-statutory consultation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) x 2 (circulated).
- ii. Thank you email from Cllr Deaville re support for LGR from the council (circulated).
- iii. Best Kept Village email (circulated).
- iv. Various emails and letters regarding change of ownership of a grave plot.

**The clerk read out the correspondence.**

### **33/26. Finance.**

- i. Precept 2026/27 of £20,500 submitted to SMDC and acknowledged.
- ii. Clerk salary £467.48
- iii. Buxus Green invoice January £724.27 (paid).
- iv. HMRC £1,097.94 (paid)
- v. Interest income January £45.93
- vi. Slater and Son Funeral Directors income £192.00
- vii. Authorised payments were signed off by the Council.
- viii. Current bank balances were signed off by the Council.

The finances were read out by the clerk.

There being no other business the meeting was closed by Councillor Shepherd at 7.50pm.

Signed..... Chairman Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Signed..... Clerk