



Alton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 14th January 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), Councillor S. Beardmore (SCC).

Mr S.J. Burton (Clerk).

One member of the public.

Apology: Councillor N. Conway.

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

1/26. Declarations of Interest.

- i. None.

2/26. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10th December 2025.

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

3/26. Action Updates.

- i. Cllr Beardmore stated she did not know why a broken stile was not showing on the SCC system. Action closed (minute 86/25 ii).
- ii. Cllr Shepherd reported he has arranged for improvements to be made to alleviate the flooding on footpath 29 in the spring (minute 188/25 i).
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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.**

4/26. Alton Towers.

- i. Cllr Moulton reported that it has been agreed to have a meeting with Alton Towers but the date has still to be arranged. Cllr Shepherd stated that if Cllr Conway was committed with his work he would be happy to attend with Cllr Moulton. Cllr Beardmore is also happy to attend. Cllr Moulton will arrange a meeting in February. **Action: Cllr Moulton.**

5/26. Footpaths.

- i. Cllr Wood reported that the stile on footpath 43 (junction with Saltersford Lane) is broken. Cllr Shepherd will check and report. **Action: Cllr Shepherd.**

6/26. Village Hall.

- i. Cllr Ballard reported there has not been a meeting since the last council meeting.



Alton Parish Council

7/26. Lengthsman.

- i. Cllr Gwinnett gave a very detailed explanation of her work preparing a plan for the tender documents for the Lengthsman and ground maintenance contracts. She recommended that the two contracts are offered separately and that two differences businesses have the work. **Cllr Gwinnett proposed and Cllr Shepherd seconded that the lengthsman's contract is offered separately to the ground maintenance contract and that the two contracts are not awarded to the same party, this was carried.** The Lengthsman's contract will be advertised locally as well in local shops, notice board etc. **Cllr Gwinnett proposed and Cllr Shepherd seconded that the tender documents be adopted, this was carried. Action: Cllr Gwinnett to arrange with the clerk for the tender to be advertised in due course.**

8/26. Highways and Road Safety.

- i. Cllr Wood reported that the bollards to be placed around the Round House have arrived but there is no date for SCC to fix them in place.
- ii. Cllr Wood reported that two potholes in the High Street have had a temporary repair.
- iii. Cllr Beardmore was asked to check if the gully in Hurstons Lane by the village hall has been cleared properly by SCC. **Action: Cllr Beardmore.**

9/26. Parish Cemetery and St. Peter's Church Yard.

- i. Cllr Dronzek reported that he has not had a response from Mr Massey at SMDC regarding the tree work requested in St. Peter's Church Yard, more than 6 weeks has passed so the work may go ahead. Three quotes will be required. **Action: Cllr Dronzek to obtain three quotes.**

10/26. Planning and Licensing Applications.

- i. DET/2025/0021. Appeal against refusal of planning. Bradley Hall Farm, Bradley Lane ST10 4DF. The parish council have already commented on this issue and had nothing to add.
- ii. SMD/2025.0426. 1, High Street, Alton. Listed building consent to inspect and repair the professionally observed chimney and roofing faults, to expose and re-instate two original fireplaces as part of improvements to enhance the original features of the listed property, to re-instate an original stone staircase as part of improvements and to remove a redundant vent pipe from the rear of the property. **The council had no objections to this application.**

11/26. Planning decisions.

- i. SMD/2024/0182. Hurston House, Hurstons Lane, Alton. Partially retrospective application for tractor and hay store. Planning Permission – Refused.
- ii. SMD/2025/0442. Fair Holme, Limekiln Lane, Alton. Single storey rear extension to replace the existing conservatory. Resubmission following previous refusal. Planning Permission – Approved

The planning decisions were read out by Cllr Shepherd.

12/26. Section 106 funds for playing field and play area update.

- i. The clerk reported that he has now arranged a telephone meeting with Angela Dale from SMDC to further clarify how the 106 funds can be spent. He will then circulate to the 106 group and the council the advice he receives. **Action: The clerk.**



Alton Parish Council

13/26. Parish Council Updates.

- i. Round House maintenance: No further update other than the repair of damaged stones mentioned at minute 3/26 ii.
- ii. **New clerk update.** Cllr Gwinnett gave a comprehensive update on the advert for a new parish clerk and the clerks responsibilities. Cllr Wood asked if the hours should be reduced to six from eight hours, following a discussion, the idea was not supported. **Cllr Gwinnett proposed that the advert be placed as she had written it, this was seconded by Cllr Wakefield and carried. Cllr Wood abstained on the vote.**
- iii. Cllr Gwinnett went on the explain again in detail her recommended recruitment process, with the interviews for the post during the first week in February, appointment of the new clerk 1st March with the current clerk completing a handover and both the outgoing and new clerk attending the parish council meeting on Wednesday 11th March and the current clerk ceasing employment with the council after the meeting. The interview panel recommended was Cllr Shepherd as the Chairman of the council, Cllr Gwinnett as the Vice Chair and for her experience in interviewing, Cllr Wakefield also volunteered and she also has experience in interviewing. Cllr Gwinnett proposed the recruitment process as she had explained be adopted, this was seconded by Cllr Wood and carried. **Action: The clerk to arrange for the advert to be publicised and to liaise with the interview panel to arrange interviews.**

14/26. Correspondence requiring response.

- i. Precept documents received from SMDC, requesting precept requirement.

15/26. Correspondence for Information.

- i. Planning for non-planners (circulated).
- ii. Cemetery charges circulated to local funeral directors/stone masons.
- iii. Emails with APC accountant re Pension Regulator letter - Auto-enrolment redeclaration (admin task dealt with).
- iv. Email re Alton Towers meeting with APC.
- v. Email re check of de-fib.
- vi. Updates to SMDC re new councillors.
The clerk read out the correspondence.

16/26. Finance.

- i. Precept 2026/27. The precept was discussed in detail with the council considering carefully the amount the precept should be always bearing in mind that the two highest costs for the council amounting to circa £19-20,000 are the clerks salary and Lengthsman/ground maintenance contracts. Also, extra cost may be incurred now that the council has taken responsibility for the Round House for insurance and maintenance and the tree work in St. Peter's Church Yard amongst other more routine costs. **Cllr Shepherd proposed and Cllr Wood seconded that the precept should be £20,500. This was carried.** The charge is an increase of 10.61% it is only an increase of £3.39p a year on a band D property. **Action: The clerk to submit the precept requirement the SMDC.**



Alton Parish Council

- ii. Clerk salary £467.48
- iii. Buxus Green invoice December £724.27 (paid).
- iv. Interest income November £51.46
- v. Nettlebank income £45.00
- vi. Field Funeral Service income £400.00
- 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 were no items to vote on other than 16/26 i as detailed.

Cllr Shepherd concluded by thanking Cllrs Gwinnett and Wood for their work on the Lengthsman/ground maintenance tenders and the clerks advert and recruitment process.

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

Signed..... Chairman Wednesday 11th February 2026

Signed..... Clerk