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ALTON PARISH COUNCIL ("APC")
Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 11 November 2026 at 7:00pm

Present: Councillor J. Shepherd (Chair), Councillor P Gwinnett (Vice Chair) Councillor R. Wood, Councillor C. Nicholls, Councillor A Dronzek, Councillor N. Moult (Staffordshire Moorlands District Council ("SMDC")
Mrs A Barker (Clerk).
Four members of the public.

Apologies: Councillors J Wakefield, E. Brindley, P Ballard, S Beardmore (Staffordshire County Council ("SCC").

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

155/26. Declarations of Interest.
None.

156/26. Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 14 October 2026.
i. The minutes of the above meeting were declared a true record, proposed by Cllr Shepherd and seconded by Cllr Gwinnett, agreed by all, and were signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

157/26. Matters Arising/Action Updates.
i. The Clerk had been requested to instruct the lengthsman to carry out work to tidy the "triangle" between Station Bank and Malthouse Road. This had been done and the work had been carried out.
ii. Councillors had been requested to provide pot-hole details to Cllr Wood. Cllr Nicholls provided a comprehensive map of pot-holes, in the village, to Cllr Wood, at the meeting. Cllr Wood thanked Cllr Nicholls, and advised that he did not require any further information.
iii. Cllr Shepherd had agreed to provide full details of historical footpath issues, reported to SCC, but not actioned, to the Clerk, to raise with Cllr Beardmore. These had not been provided, as other events had superseded the need to do so. A member of the public had met with the Footpaths Officer for SCC and walked the Alton footpaths, identifying outstanding issues, including those at Footpaths 28, 45 and 48. There had also been a discussion with the landowner at Town Head, over whose land some of these footpaths crossed. Notice can be served on SCC, if the matters are not addressed.
iv. The Clerk had been requested to arrange a meeting with the Village Hall Trustees/Managing Committee. This had been arranged and taken place on 27 October 2026 – see minute 160/26 i. below.
v. The Clerk had been requested to contact the Village Hall Management Committee, and advise of the decision made at the 14 October 2026 meeting (minute 145/26 iv), regarding financial support for the fencing for the play-area. This had been communicated to the Village Hall Committee.

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vi. The Clerk had been requested to contact the lengthsman to provide an update on the decision, regarding planters, at the 14 October 2026 meeting (minute 146/26 i). This had been actioned.

vii. The Clerk had been requested to convey to the lengthsman the approved charge of £70, for clearing the triangle (minute 142/26 i. above). This had been actioned.

viii. Cllr Shepherd had agreed to liaise with Sue Green regarding a potential separate Facebook page for the Parish Council. He had contacted Sue Green, and she had advised that a separate Facebook page was not really necessary. It should be adequate to log onto the "Alton in Staffordshire Moorlands" Facebook page, and "create an event", to highlight Parish Council matters to note.

ix. The Clerk had been requested to arrange a meeting of the Section 106 Group. This had been arranged and had taken place on 27 October 2026 – (see minute 166/26 i below).

158/26. Alton Towers.

i. It was noted that the fireworks were good and that the traffic was manageable. Simon Birge from Alton Towers had been in touch with Cllr Moult proposing to meet for a further liaison meeting. **Action Point: Cllr Moult to liaise with Cllr Shepherd, and a further liaison meeting to be arranged.**

159/26. Footpaths.

i. Cllr Nicholls noted that Alton 19, at the bottom of Cedar Hill, is impossible to navigate due to brambles. **Action Point: Cllr Nicholls to report the matter on the SCC portal.**

160/26. Village Hall.

i. There was an update regarding the Village Hall Liaison meeting which had been held on 27 October 2026. Minutes of that meeting had been circulated to all councillors, and since the meeting, a Draft Memorandum of Understanding had also been issued, by the Clerk, to the Village Hall Committee, as well as all councillors. The draft Memorandum was generally accepted, with the exception of the section relating to insurance, notably in relation to the playing field, which requires further consideration. A suggestion had been made that a lease be created in relation to the part of the playing field owned by the council, in order to overcome the insurance difficulties. Comments on the draft were also awaited from the Village Hall Committee, which might necessitate amendments to the draft. **Action Point: Clerk to consider proposal for lease of part of playing field to the Village Hall.**

161/26. Groundsman/Lengthsman.

i. There was a brief conversation regarding renewal of the lengthsman (and grounds maintenance) contracts. These are renewable in April next year, if desired by both parties, subject to a potential inflationary price increase relative to CPI. The Clerk had been in communication with the lengthsman, regarding his contract.

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ii. There was a discussion regarding winter "tidy ups" to be carried out by the lengthsman. The contract in existence, allows for a tidy up between the end of October, and the end of December, and another one between the New Year and the end of March. Given the recent storm damage and the amount of leaf debris, notably in Hurstons Lane, Limekiln Bank, and the Doctor's Steps, it was proposed by Cllr Gwinnett, seconded by Cllr Shepherd and agreed that the lengthsman should undertake an additional visit (at a cost of £300), as well as the "tidy up" due before the end of December. **Action Point: Clerk to instruct lengthsman to undertake additional "tidy up".**

162/26. Highways and Road Safety.

i. Cllr Moult gave a brief report on the recent inaugural meeting of the Alton Traffic Working Group, which took place on 4 November 2026. The meeting was well attended. All who had indicated they would attend, did so. The Chairman and Cllrs Nicholls and Wakefield attended. The meeting was constructive and respectful, with lots of good ideas. Action Points and Follow Ups had been created, in relation to concerns previously raised by residents. A report of the meeting had been issued on the "Alton in Staffordshire Moorlands" Facebook page. There will be a further meeting in February 2027 to follow up on the action points. There was a discussion regarding the different issues, notably speeding and congestion. As regards standing traffic, it was stated that Alton Towers were intending to send up drones to observe this. There was also a brief discussion regarding Speed Indicator Devices – applications can be made to SCC but more information is required as to where the issues are. The Speedwatch Group needs to get up and running to assist in informed decisions.

ii. Community Speedwatch – plans are in hand to get this underway. Once the group is established, further plans can be made for financing. Su Beardmore has agreed to assist with funding.

iii. Pot-holes – Cllr Wood had received a detail map completed by Cllr Nicholls. Cllr Wood can utilise this to check that all required work is carried out when proposed (January 2027)

163/26. Parish Cemetery and St. Peter's Church Yard.

i. Cllr Dronzek queried whether the Industrial Bin had gone missing. Cllr Gwinnett observed that it had been present a few days earlier, **Action Point: Cllr Dronzek to make further checks.**

ii. Cllr Shepherd had received a complaint from Cllr Ballard regarding grass remains left on the cremation memorials. Cllr Shepherd had attended and removed/strimmed the debris.

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Action Point-Clerk to issue notice to the Grounds Maintenance Contractor regarding this point and that strimming was damaging wooden poles in the playground area, as noted at the recent Section 106 Group meeting.

164/26. Cllr Shepherd announced an open forum to allow members of the public to speak/ask questions.

i. A representative from the Royal British Legion thanked the council for its recent donation. Cllr Nicholls commented on the lovely service for Remembrance day, which was well attended.

165/26. Planning and Licensing Applications.

i. None. It was noted that planning permissions had been received earlier in the week, but these were too late for the current agenda, and would be held over to the next meeting. Cllr Wood queried whether there was a planning permission 2026/0437 which required consderation. **Action Point: Clerk to consider/action.**

166/26. Section 106 funds for playing field and play area update.

i. The Clerk had circulated the minutes of the Section 106 Group meeting which had taken place on 27 October, and issued a report on work undertake for the Section 106 Group. It was agreed that the Pitch Project Plan is to be updated and the Clerk will speak to the Grounds Maintenance Association regarding cost for the next phase of the plan. **Action Point: Clerk to Action.**

167/26. Parish Council Updates.

None.

168/26. Correspondence/Communications:
Requiring response:

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i. Various communications with Lengthsman
ii. Various communications re: Village Hall Liaison & Section 106 meetings
iii. Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal
iv. Following up Lengthsman Contribution
v. Liaison with Speedwatch Volunteers

For information only:

vi. Information re: New Staffordshire Mayor & Local Government Reorganisation
vii. Alton Traffic Working Group Update and date for First Meeting
viii. Details of Community Fund Grant Obtained
ix. Understanding Declarations of Interests
x. Information re: Carsington & Tittersworth Pipeline Project

The Clerk discussed the correspondence were required.

169/26 Finance:

i. Clerk Hours for Section 106 work – the Clerk had produced a schedule of work undertaken totalling 3 and a half hours (Half hour still owed for duplicate payment). It was agreed that 3 hours of additional salary would be paid to the Clerk for Section 106 work (to be paid in November salary – payable in December)

ii. The Council gave approval for the Clerk to attend Training Courses for Budgeting and Cemetery Management at a cost of £35 (plus VAT) and £56.40 (not clear if VAT inclusive or not), respectively.

Payments:

iii. Clerk Salary £845.16
iv. Clerk Mobile Phone £13.00
v. HMRC £663.65
vi. Village Hall £28.00 - (October Hire)
vii. Staffs Hedgelaying £300.00
viii. Key Maintenance Group £572.00 (£476.67; VAT £95.33)
x. Royal British Legion £75.00
xi. SPCA (CILCA Training Fee reduced fee negotiated) £354.00

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Income:

xii. Interest £22.68
xiii. Community Fund Grant £500.00

Final:

xiv. Councillors to consider budgetary items for next month's meeting
xv. Authorised payments signed off by the Council.
xvi. Current bank balances presented to the Council.

The finances were read out by the Clerk.

There being no other business the meeting was closed by Councillor Shepherd at 7:45pm

Signed..... Chairman Wednesday 9 December 2026

Signed..... Clerk

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