

MINUTES OF WHATLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15th MAY IN WHATLINGTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Cllrs Fisher, Sullivan, Davis, and White

Rother District Councillor Burton, East Sussex County Councilors and Rother District Councillor Field.

8 members of the public.

1) Election of Chairman

Cllr Sullivan proposed Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Davis. All were in favour. Cllr Fisher signed the declaration of office.

2) Election of Vice-Chairman.

Cllr Davis was proposed by Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Sullivan. All in favour.

3) Public Question Time

Battle Library has a mapping Sussex exhibition running until Saturday 12th May, with assorted maps. A mapping expert is available at set occasions.

Concerns about water run off in Whatlington Road, up the hill from the Hall. Highways were due to have repaired a pipe but this has not been done. The gulleys are full, and it affects the bridge. Residents to let the clerk know when this next happens, and to try and get pictures, to report to Highways.

The Village Hall Committee were keen for a memorial to Valerie, the previous clerk, but wished it to be outside, visible to all, and preferable improving the spring, this being the item Valerie had wanted to do. To get designs and prices for railings and brickwork and make it an agenda item next month.

4) Apologies: Cllr Clarkson

5) A. Disclosure of Interest - None

B. Dispensations - None

6) Minutes from 20th March 2025. Approved and signed.

7) A Clerks Report

The clerk had collected all paperwork and the filing cabinet from Valeries house.

Completed the year end accounts and had the internal audit done.

Updated all contacts and passwords.

Reviewed all the Councils policies and working practices.

Had made a claim against the insurance for the additional costs of the locum clerk.

Attended RALC meeting, Lorna Ford presentation on Devolution, and plans for Rother to devolve assets to Parish Councils. East Sussex will have a VETO power to prevent devolvment of all assets, particularly income ones. Ministerial Comment that the government do not intend to cap Parish and Town Council precepts.

Update from Trevor Leggo, ESALC. - Policing, every community should have a named officer for antisocial behaviour by July. Plans for Village Surgeries, Rural Crimes teams will need to rethink strategy as there are 240 rural communities in East Sussex.

Update from Kathryn Field on Climate Change, her Rother Cabinet portfolio. Climate

Minutes agreed by Council and signed as a true record

By _____ on _____

strategy is on the Rother website. Aiming for net zero by 2030. Encouraging Parish Councils to have a Climate Champion, use local experts in the community. Encourage digital communication, reduce paper use.

Actions from the previous Meeting:

Not yet looked at the pub becoming an asset of Community Value, but it has since closed and is up for sale.

Has received an email confirming that Rother DC do not own any parcels of land or other assets that could be devolved to Whatlington PC.

Will move forward with the plans for a permanent tribute to Valerie.

B. Chairmans Report

The bank mandate from Barclay's had arrived and was ready for completion and returning. A complaint had been logged due to the failure to send it originally.

C. Reports from the District and County Councillors

Cllr Burton reported that there had been lots of discussion about devolution. The Rother Community Grants administration would be passed to the Sussex Community Foundation, with the addition that Parish and Town Councils would now be eligible to apply for grants, having previously been ineligible. The grants would only be available annually, but there would be access to other grants which may be useful.

Cllr Field reported that there had been lots of work on devolution at County level. The new scrutiny group had met for the first time. The October meeting had been moved to September to meet some deadline dates for decisions.

8) Appointments and memberships to outside bodies.

RALC Cllrs Sullivan and Davis

ESALC Cllrs Fisher and Clarkson

Memberships to NALC and SLCC would continue.

9) To review Council Policies and Working Practices

A, Code of Conduct. No changes **ADOPTED**

B, Standing Orders. Updated to procurement levels only **ADOPTED with updates**

C, Financial Regulations. Updated to procurement levels, payroll and online banking. Levels set for spending and authorization requirements **ADOPTED with updates**

D, Other policies. A list of policies on the website had been circulated, many needed updating, along with suggestion for new policies required. **Clerk to update all policies and write the new ones required as per the suggested list.**

E, GPoC status. Council can retain GPoC as the new Clerk is CiLCA qualified. **APPROVED.**

F, Risk Management Schedule. No changes to current schedule, although it could benefit from an update. **APPROVED and plan to update next year.**

10) Scheme of Delegation for the Clerk.

A draft scheme of delegation had been circulated, which included delegated authority for planning, finance and general council work. No changes were requested at the meeting. **APPROVED as written**

11) Asset Schedule. There were no additions to the asset schedule, but the Clerk recommended that replacement values were added to it for insurance purposes.

APPROVED, with replacement values to be added for next year.

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12) Insurance for 2025-26.

Council was entering the second year of a three year agreement via Clear Councils. This would be with Ecclesiastical for 2025-26, and levels had been checked and were correct.
APPROVED

13) Annual Governance

A Internal Audit report **ACCEPTED**

B Annual Governance Statement for 2024-25. **APPROVED AND SIGNED**

C Annual Accounting Statements for 2024-25 **APPROVED AND SIGNED**

D Excise of Public Rights dates **AGREED**

14) Annual Finance Matters

A Direct Debits for 2025-26. Fasthost, HP ink, Norton and Hugo Fox to continue, Adobe to be stopped **APPROVED**

B Bank Mandate and Signatories Cllrs Fisher, Clarkson and White to remain on the mandate, Clerk to be added.. **APPROVED**

C Internal Auditor for 2025-26 Martin Humphreys of MFW **APPROVED**

15) Meeting Schedule for 2025-26

18th September 2025, 20th November 2026, 15th January 2026, 19th March 2026 (Parish Assembly at 7pm followed by a meeting), 21st May 2026 (Annual Meeting)

All in Whatlington Village Hall at 7.30pm. **APPROVED**

16) Updates to website.

The Clerk had reviewed the website, which appeared overcrowded and out of date in areas and had made suggestions. Clerk to update a few pages at a time, informing Councillors which pages were being worked on so they could be checked. **APPROVED.**

17) Planning

A Council submitted comments to the following planning applications.

RR/2025/269/P Chapel Cottage, Woodsman's Green Road, Whatlington TN33 0NL.
Single storey garage building within existing parking area

Council Comment: NO OBJECTION

RR/2025/523/FN Maddomswood Farm, Hoath Lane, Whatlington. TN33 0NP.

Proposed Barn.. **Council Comment: NO OBJECTION**

B Planning permissions granted by Rother

RR/2025/117/P The Nook, Whatlington Road, TN33 0NB. Erection of single storey rear extension **Planning permission granted**

RR/2025/523/FN Maddomswood Farm, Hoath Lane, Whatlington. TN33 0NP.

Proposed Barn.. **Planning required**

RR/2025/591/P Leeford Place Mill Lane. Installation of Air break switch Disconnector to existing pole 5811419. Upgrade PMT 474603 which will require installation of additional stub leg pole. Upgrade on line between poles 583132 and 573485 and replace pole 573485. **No objection**

C Planning permissions refused by Rother None

D Appeals and Enforcements None to note.

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18) General FinancePayments to Authorise **ALL APPROVED**

Payment Type	Payee and Details	Net	VAT	Gross
Debit card	HP Ink	4.57	0.92	5.49
DD	Hugo Fox, website	19.99	4.00	23.99
Debit card	Fasthosts	2.40	0.48	2.88
Debit card	hp ink	4.57	0.92	5.49
C 100893	Community Connectors grant	250.00		250.00
DD	Hugo Fox, website	19.99	4.00	23.99
C 100894	Whatlington Church PCC	300.00		300.00
C 100895	P Burgess Locum	509.65		509.65
C 100896	ESALC and NALC membership	99.46		99.46
C 100897	Clear Councils Insurance	360.05		360.05
C 100898	T Dixon Wages April and May	519.36		519.36
C 100890	HM Revenue and Customs April and May	129.60		129.60
C 100891	T Dixon Expenses (moneysoft)	86.00	17.20	103.20

19) A21 Update from Highways

There had been no mention about the footpath, yet there has been a consultation, Clerk to write a letter. The signs are still up for Leeford Place Hotel, which is now part of Battle Abbey School. To request signage is removed. The resurfacing has reduced road noise.

20) Grant Application from Action Against Abuse.

Councillors discussed the application, but felt that it did not meet the criteria of the Grants policy, that activities were based 'wholly or largely in the Parish'

NOT APPROVED**21) Items to note or for future Agendas**

The defibrillator position would need to be reviewed following the closure of the pub. Clerk to see if a battery pack can be obtained to supply the power required. To consider moving to the bus stop.

Clerk to contact Shepherd Neame about the maintenance of the lawns and grasses, after checking the cutting maps to see what ESCC own.

Cllr Sullivan will give a full report on the Climate Change meeting she attended yesterday.

22) Date of next meeting

Thursday 18th September 2025 at 7.30pm in Whatlington Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.40 p.m.

Minutes remain in draft format until approved at the next Meeting of the Council

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