



EARNLEY PARISH FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Earnley Parish Council held on 28th July 2025 which commenced at 6.45pm at Bracklesham Barn, Beech Avenue, Bracklesham.

PRESENT: Cllr's Robert Carey, John Stant, Frank Doel, John Williams and Keith Martin

In attendance: Vicky Middleton-Head (Clerk), District Cllr. Elizabeth Hamilton and 2 members of the public

55.25 APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from County Councillor Pieter Montyn who is attending another meeting

56.25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA - NONE

57.25 TO CONSIDER THE CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR

A vote was taken with 3 for and 0 against. Keith Martin was co-opted onto Earnley Parish Council and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr. Doel joined the meeting

58.25 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Local resident Warren Butlin asked when will something be done about speeding cars in Almodington.

Cllr. Carey RC advised that the Parish Council need to supply data and evidence to support any requests for traffic calming measures. Council could apply for training from Sussex Police for handheld speed cameras but would need the support of residents to create a speed group to monitor and collect data. The SIDS record data of speeds but not the details of the vehicles. A handheld device does record the details of speeding vehicles which Cllr. Doel advised can be reported via Operation Crackdown. District Cllr. Elizabeth Hamilton advised that Birdham had successfully collected data to support a speed reduction to 20mph on two roads but believed the cost of the handheld camera was in the region of £2,400. Council agreed to look at re-locating the SIDS to Almodington Lane and reviewing the data regarding the speed of vehicles in this location.

Clerk to investigate how permission is obtained to locate the SID in Almodington Lane

59.25 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Apologies received from Pieter Montyn

60.25 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT – District Cllr. Elizabeth Hamilton advised that the Chichester Local Plan 2021-2039 will now go to Full Council on 19th August 2025 with a recommendation that the plan is adopted, incorporating the Main Modifications identified by the Inspectors as necessary for the plan to be sound, along with other minor Additional Modifications.

With regards to Local Government Reorganisation, Residents, businesses and community groups across the county are invited to share their views as well as their thoughts about how their council could be structured in the future. [Shaping West Sussex survey](#) is open until 13th August and Cllr. Carey advised that Councillors should respond individually.

61.25 MINUTES

On a proposal by Cllr. Carey it was **RESOLVED** to agree and sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19th May 2025 and the minutes of the Extra Ordinary Full Council Meeting held on the 30th June 2025 and this was duly completed.

62.25 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA - NONE

63.25 FINANCE

1. Bank Balance as at date of meeting £88,777.78
2. Payments – On a Proposal by the Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the payments made on the payment schedules 4th June, 24th June and 17th July, AGREED by Cllr's. JS and FD

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¹Public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

4th June 2025

Mrs Vicky Middleton-Head £291.76

HMRC £66.20

WSSC Pensions £83.27

EWBPC £25.50

Robert Carey £23.10

Wellers Law Group £1,800

Unity Trust £6.00

24th June 2025

Mrs Vicky Middleton-Head £584.13

HMRC £199.58

WSSC Pensions £183.17

Unity Trust £6.00

17th July 2025

EWBPC £25.50

Mrs Vicky Middleton-Head £648.15

HMRC £199.58

WSSC Pensions £183.17

EWBPC £51.00

Unity Trust £6.00

3. Financial Statement – On a Proposal by the Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the Financial Statement for April, May and June 2025
4. Finance Review first quarter – Cllr. Carey reported that he had reviewed the Accounts for the first quarter and checked bank statements against the cashbook and checked the bank reconciliation against the bank statement and signed selected invoices that he had requested and signed off the biggest cost which is the Clerks salary. There was a slight error found in VAT not separated on the cashbook but this has since been corrected.
5. Budget monitoring year ended 31st March 2026 - Cllr. Carey reported that admin costs were on budget and salary costs were under budget due to the new Clerk requiring less of a handover from Louise Chater. Cllr. Carey advised that there were still monies in the budget that could be used for future support from Louise Chater for VAT return and End of Year Accounts which the Clerk gratefully noted. Cllr. Carey also advised that the household waste was £242 less than expected and confirmed that there has been a payment of £1800 to the Solicitor for legal monies to be held for the legal costs relating to the Taylor Wimpey sale of the footpath. Finally, Cllr Carey confirmed that at the end of the first quarter we are on target with cashflow and budget.
6. Grant Application - On a proposal by Cllr. Carey, it was **RESOLVED** to award £300 to the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance which is the remaining funds available in the Power of Wellbeing Grants, but subject to the Clerk confirming that the payment can be made as Earnley Parish Council no longer hold the General Power of Competence.

64.25 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

1. Flood Prevention [Consultant Flood Report Storm April 2024](#) Cllr. Carey referred to the recent WSP Flood Report commissioned by West Sussex County Council, as the lead local flood authority (LLFA). Cllr. Martin had also read a copy of the report and was concerned at some inaccuracy in the findings. At the peak of the flood, the water was waist height and still high the following day. The culvert (DO1 on an Environment Agency Report that Cllr. Martin produced a copy of and a report conducted prior to the WSSC one) that takes water from Earnley Rife was reported as not being blocked but it is thought that the diameter of the culvert was insufficient to take the water. This wasn't mentioned in the WSP report but they suggested that a full study could be conducted by the EA unaware of the report that had already been completed. The WSP report also referred to a missing flap but this is understood to have not been in place for years, and as water needs to be free flowing it is unlikely that a flap will be fitted. The WSP report concluded that higher rainfall along with volume capacity from overtopping should be taken into consideration.

Cllr. Martin believes that some of the report is wrong and that Council should inform WSP, WSSC as the LLFA of the following error;

Report, page 8.4.2.2 refers to sea defences including a clay-cored shingle bund with a ditch running along the inland toe of the bund to take any overtopping. This is NOT clay-cored and has been replenished with

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just shingle taken from Bracklesham and the CORE HAS NOT BEEN REPLACED The Report concludes that work was started to raise the shingle bed but this wasn't finished although shingle alone is not sufficient as proven from the flooding. Council suggested that it may be beneficial for Chichester District Council to take over the management of the beach area in front of Earnley as they do in Selsey and Bracklesham. Cllr. Martin to prepare the response and the Clerk to send this to WSP, WSCC, EA and a copy to Dominic Henley (Coastal Partners) and AGREED that the EA should carry out the suggested study as stated in the report, to include the whole Earnley Rife.

Cllr Carey reported that Southern Electric has historically and illegally installed a culvert that is half the size required and without consent from the Environment Agency. Cllr Carey referred to a previous email from the Environment Agency that agreed that the culvert should be removed or replaced with a larger diameter one, but it is now 6 months since the email and a year since the culvert was illegally installed and local residents are increasingly concerned that this will cause flooding this Winter. Cllr Carey will contact the EA and request that they now put pressure of SE to ensure that this is done.

2. Public Rights of Way Cllr. Stant referred to Footpath 50 that we would like to see made a cycleway but advised that it is likely that we would need permission from the landowners for it to become a "permissive cycleway" Clerk to investigate to see what we need to do to this.

Cllr. Carey asked if a response had been received from the Landowners that were written to recently requesting that the area of Footpath 2 that was overgrown was cleared. The Clerk confirmed that no response had been received however Cllr. Carey had walked down the footpath today and it was reasonably clear and was able to walk to the end heading South without any problems.

3. Sea defences at Medmerry – nothing further to add

4. Update from Environment Group – Cllr. Stant confirmed that the reservoir that had raised recent safety concerns is owned by Newey's and the Clerk to send a letter to them asking that this area is made safe.

65.25 HIGHWAY MATTERS

1. Village Gateways phase two - REMOVE from future Agendas as now complete

2. Bus Shelter and Notice board First Avenue - Quotes had already been obtained to remove the bus shelter, erect fence panel to the gap left, replace with new freestanding noticeboard and install a seat. Council had previously agreed to proceed with the project in a CIL meeting and that CIL monies could be used. Clerk to locate previous quotes obtained and then proceed with quote that had been accepted.

3. Bike Stands Bell Lane and Bracklesham Lane

The Clerk reported that B&M Plant Hire could no longer complete the work as they no longer have the licence required to carry out street work. Council AGREED for another Contractor to provide a quote based on the specification used previously.

4. SIDS to be added to this part of the Agenda for future meetings

5. Litterpicking – Cllr. Carey noted that there was visible need for litterpicking in the Earnley area, CLERK to liaise with Louise Chater regarding how this was arranged previously.

66.25 TO CONSIDER FUTURE OF [Book exchange](#)

Council is confident that this facility is still being used, Cllr. Doel advised that the shelter could benefit from being treated with a wood preservative again but we still have willing volunteers to continue looking after it.

67.25 REPORT ON EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Cllr. Carey reported that he, along with Cllr. Stant and Vicky Middleton-Head (CLERK) attended a meeting held in Midhurst on Local Government Re-organisation and was impressed by the presentations given by Paul Marshall, Leader of WSCC and Diane Shepherd, CEO for Chichester District Council. Councillors are encouraged to comment on the consultation before the closing date 13th August 2025.

68.25 ITEMS FOR NOTING ON FUTURE AGENDAS - NONE

Meeting Ended: 8.06pm

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