



EARNLEY PARISH FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Earnley Parish Council held on 23rd March 2026 which commenced at 7.10pm at Bracklesham Barn, Beech Avenue, Bracklesham.

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

In attendance: Vicky Middleton-Head (Clerk), District Councillor Iain Ballintyne and 2 members of the public

17.26 APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE – Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Martin.

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

19.26 PUBLIC QUESTIONS – Council were asked to purchase new batteries by a member of the public that has accepted responsibility for the positioning of the speed indicator devices around the Parish. Council agreed that the Clerk will purchase two new batteries at a cost of £99

20.26 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

County Councillor Montyn was not present at the meeting

21.26 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

District Cllr. Iain Ballantyne advised that CDC have agreed financial support of £500k to Hyde Housing for 15 new social housing properties in Birdham.

CDC has received a planning application for development of the old House of Fraser building which would combine residential properties with a ground floor retail unit which is expected to be permitted.

A new leisure contract has been agreed for Westgate Leisure Centre.

The land opposite Birdham stores is still on hold as CDC are awaiting CEMP (Construction Environmental Management Report) report before agreeing that work can start.

Food waste collections are due to start in May.

On 26th March between 9am and 11am in the Minerva Bar in Chichester there is a meeting to discuss re-branding for Chichester to encourage tourism to the area.

Finally, an update on Local Government Re-organisation and an announcement is expected by next Tuesday.

22.26 MINUTES

On a proposal by the Chairman it was **RESOLVED** to agree and sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 26th January 2026 and the Extra Ordinary Meeting held on 23rd February 2026 and this was duly completed.

23.26 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA - None

24.26 FINANCE

1. Bank Balance as at date of meeting **£138,829.41**
2. On a proposal by the Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the payments made on 20th January 2026 and 10th February 2026

Vicky Middleton-Head	£645.14	EWBPC	£39.00
HMRC	£215.10	MWHG	£200.00
WSCC Pensions	£194.11	Youth Dream	£170.00
EE Mobile	£15.00	St Wilfred's Hospice	£500.00
Unity Trust Bank	£6.00	Vicky Middleton-Head	£645.14
		HMRC	£215.10
		WSCC Pensions	£194.11
		Mulberry LAS Ltd	£253.10
		Celia Price Consultancy	£450.00
		Unity Trust Bank	£6.00

3. Cllr. Carey confirmed he had reviewed the Financial Report and the Budget report up to 28th February 2026 and confirmed that the budget is fine and there will be savings made at the end of the financial year and in particular in relation to salary costs.
4. Finance Review for the fourth quarter will be completed at the end of March but Council **RESOLVED** that the expense for the legal costs following the successful purchase of footpath in December should come from Code 43 (Parish Plan Reserve) which the Clerk has noted for when the Accounts are finalised later this month.
5. Cllr. Carey advised that the budget monitoring for the year ending 31st March 2026 shows that there will be savings of £4-5k which is why the budget adjustment was made for the next financial year so that residents would benefit from the savings made.
6. On a proposal by the Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to note the Interim Audit Report 2025-26 and the recommendations made by the Auditor as follows:
 Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the electronic receipt of Council related documents.
 Council **AGREED** that copies of the Members Register of Interest should be published on website but that the addresses for each Councillor would be redacted by the Clerk and that no telephone numbers would be published.
 GDPR refresher training will be arranged for all Councillors, the Clerk will email training slides and Councillors to email the Clerk to confirm that they have watched the training.
 Council **AGREED** that all future CIL working group and Employment Committee meetings would be added to the Full Council Meeting Agenda to avoid separate meetings.
 Council **AGREED** that the Clerk will update the existing Financial Regulations using the NALC Model 2025 Financial Regulations for the next meeting.
7. On a proposal by the Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to agree to renew the contract with Mulberry LAS Ltd as our Internal Auditors and year end External Auditor for the years 2026-2029

25.26 NEW POLICIES

1. On a proposal by the Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Data Protection Training Policy and the Privacy Notice. It was also resolved to adopt the IT Policy but with the following deletions: Section 2.2.1 (the second one!) delete sentence 2 beginning "For continuity purposes...."; Section 2.2.2 delete final two sentences beginning "This is irrespective...".
2. On a proposal by the Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to adopt NEW Own Devices Policy
3. On a proposal by the Chairman, it was **RESOLVED** to agree the NEW Electronic Mail Consent Form and these were duly signed by Cllr's RC, JS, FD and JW.

26.26 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

1. Flood Prevention

Cllr. Carey advised that during the extensive recent rainfall, a house located on Bell Lane was flooded.

Cllr. Doel advised that the road from Earnley Grange to the bridge has flooded badly this time and suspected that the culvert goes under the road and could be blocked. **CLERK TO SEND WSCC** a letter with photos asking if they could investigate and advise that this could be causing the repeating problem with potholes. In addition, the Clerk will try to establish with WSCC the ownership of a blocked culvert located outside 131 Almodington Lane.

2. Public Rights of Way

Cllr. Carey advised that Barrett David Wilson Homes have confirmed that they will take the footpath from Fossil Bay to the edge of their land and Council **RESOLVED** to cover the cost of installing a new bridge from development to the new footpath in Bracklesham enabling residents to access Bracklesham without using Clappers Lane and Bracklesham Lane and CIL monies will be used to cover the cost.

Cllr. Stant will continue to investigate plans for the footpath from Almodington to Somerley Lane, firstly trying to liaise with the Church Commissioners who own the land to gain permission.

3. Sea defences at Medmerry

Cllr Stant suggested the need to go down and take photos which can be sent to EA to highlight lack of sea defences now that the shingle has been washed away again.

4. Update from Environment Group

Cllr. Doel advised that the hedge directly opposite Poplars Farmhouse still hasn't been cut back – The Clerk will contact WSCC for an update

By resolution the Parish Council may decide to exclude the Press and the Public from any part of the meeting¹

¹Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Cllr. Doel requested that a request is made to cut back the hog weed in the verge north and south of Almodington Lane (from Earnley Grange to Earnley Manor) as if left the hog weed will be 7-8 foot tall and creates visibility issues. Ideally it needs to be done twice (April and July) to kill it off and the Clerk will contact WSCC to see if they have scheduled this for this year.

27.26 HIGHWAY MATTERS

1. Bus Shelter and Notice board First Avenue maintenance

Cllr. Doel will put together details for cost of installing of a defibrillator and the contractor will be completing maintenance during April to the exterior.

2. Bike Stands Bell Lane and Bracklesham Lane – Clerk advised that once the weather improves the work will commence

3. SIDS – Council expressed their gratitude to the local resident that is now overseeing the use of the SIDS with the Parish and the Clerk will order new batteries as requested.

4. Litterpicking – Council agreed to schedule a litter picking event after Easter, weather permitting to cover areas of Bookers Lane, Clappers Lane, Drove Lane and Almodington. This will be arranged for a Saturday and the Clerk will send an email to residents requesting assistance and will arrange to borrow litter-pickers and purple bags for the day.

5. Land for Sale

Cllr. Carey advised that he had been notified that an offer has now been accepted for £230k from Earnley Manor Close residents. Earnley Parish Council no longer need to consider any financial support for the purchase but Council agreed that once the purchase has been completed, support for planting trees or hedges could be considered subject to public access being agreed by the landowners.

28.26 REPORT ON EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Cllr. Stant advised that he had attended the recent GLAM meeting and discussed the Green cycleway from Chichester to Selsey which has got as far as a path north of Hunston and the footpath that runs parallel with the canal but the Church Commissioners will not allow a permissive pathway.

A map of hot spots has now been created and Cllr. Stant requested the addition of a section of Almodington Lane being dangerous to pedestrians is added.

Cllr. Carey attended the MPP meeting this morning which covered Planning and land supply matters. In addition they discussed that the salary for the MPP Officer is now covered by Chichester District Council and previously Parish Council's had contributed to her salary. This year they have requested a contribution of £238 as normal and the money will be used to fund some of their projects along with training and expenses. Council **RESOLVED** to agree to continue the funding of the MPP as this is already in the budget.

Cllr Carey attended the All Parishes Meeting that discussed Devolution and confirmed that the Mayor will cover the whole of Sussex and part of the handover will be to create a board set up with two members each representing West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove authorities.

Food waste collection services are soon to start as already aware

Renter Rights Bill takes effect in May and there will be an Ombudsman to cover private rentals with protection for tenants for no fault evictions and no more short term or periodic tenancies or discrimination for pets or benefits.

29.26 ITEMS FOR NOTING ON FUTURE AGENDAS - None

Meeting ended at 8.29pm