

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL BALCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING (BPC)
HELD IN BRAMBLE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 7th MAY 2025**

	Present: Cllrs, Alison Stevenson (AS), Paul Williams (PW), Lloyd Thompsett (LT), Manouchehr Nahvi (MN), Nicky Gould (NG), Ian Black (IB).
1006.	Election of Chairman by the Councillors and to receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Alison Stevenson was elected as Chairman for 2025/26 – AS indicated that she was happy to remain in post for another year, unless there were any other nominations; agreed by all. Cllr AS signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
1007.	Apologies for absence: Helen Caudrey (HC), Jo Blundell (JB), Nick Major (NM), and Massi Smith (MS).
1008.	Declarations of personal or pecuniary interests in any item listed on the agenda Cllr LT – Item 9 – DM/25/0974 Oldlands, Oldlands Avenue.
1009.	Election of Vice Chairman by the Councillors for the coming year, and to receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Helen Caudrey was elected as Vice-Chairman for 2025/26 in her absence. No other nominations were received.
1010.	To approve the minutes of the meetings held on: 2nd April 2025 The minutes were agreed and signed by the chairman.
1011.	Chairman's announcements None
1012.	Public Participation 2 members of the public present.
1013.	Matters currently being pursued, report from the Clerk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bus Shelter outside the Rectory/ Half Moon Inn has been damaged by Compass Travel and the repair will be claimed though their insurance. • The Clerk suggested that Mid Sussex District Council take back the management of the recreation ground bookings; including the football team from next session – September 2025. The Cllrs were in agreement and Clerk to notify MSDC. • Clerk updated the Parish Council that she participated in a virtual meeting with an officer from MSDC to discuss a number of items including the issue with BPC not being able to make payment of the invoices by Cheque; and Barclays bank refuse to authorise BACs payments to another council. MSDC have also agreed to re-engage with BPC to try and bring forward the playground upgrades. • There will not be a Balcombe Play Day in August 2025 – there will be one in Ardingly and one in Handcross as well as free attendance for anyone who would like to attend any others scheduled in Mid Sussex. • A thank you Letter was received from 4 Sight Vision Support for the Parish Council's grant. • Clerk stated that an enquiry to WSCC had been raised regarding the junction with Paddockhust/Mill Lane and West Hill as the island is currently unsuitable to

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	reposition the refurbished fingerpost on. Clerk to follow up with WSCC and request made for this to be included during the Highways manager/ Assistant Manager meeting.
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1014. Planning Updates

Number	Site/ Address	Proposal
DM/24/2912	Equestrian Yard, London Road	Permitted 6 th May 2025
DM/25/0076	Flag Stone, Stockcroft Rd	Refusal 10 th April March 2025
DM/25/0364	Croft Corner, Oldlands Avenue	Permitted 4 th April 2025
DM/24/3069	Land in front of 18 & 19 Oldlands Ave	Withdrawn
DM/24/2137	Brantridge Park, Brantridge Park Drive	Permitted 29 th April 2025
DM/25/0949	West Up Farm, London Road	Permitted 1 st May 2025 Prior Approval not required

1015. Planning - to consider the following applications

Number	Site/ Address	Proposal
DM/25/0873	Blackbirds, Bramble Hill	Rear and side single storey extension, rear dormer extension, front porch extension, changes to fenestration and render to upper parts.

Balcombe Parish Council expressed a preference for retaining the existing exterior tiles rather than replacing them with render. While the Council did not object in principle to the addition of a window on the front elevation, they raised concerns regarding the proposed window's dimensions. Specifically, they considered the size to be disproportionate and overly large, making it out of keeping with the character and scale of the existing property.

DM/25/0974	Oldlands, Oldlands Avenue	Tree - T1 Hornbeam located at the southeast corner of the site - fell. (Note amended description)
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Balcombe Parish Council have no objections to the application but there appears to be some ambiguity over the application as to if the tree is to be reduced in height or felled. BPC would therefore defer to the tree officer to confirm the intention. A concern was also raised over bird nesting and therefore no work should be conducted until September/October.

1016.	Planning - To consider Planning applications received after publication of the agenda None
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1017.	Financials – a. To review and approve April's Cash Book Receipts & Payments b. To review and approve year end accounts.
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1018.	To approve the purchase and installation of the streetlight upgrades/repairs
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	<p>up to the value of £12,000 + VAT (budgeted amount) and give delegated power to the Clerk to manage in financial year 2025-26. The Council Resolved to give the Clerk delegated power to manage the Street light upgrades.</p>
1019.	<p>To grant The Clerk Permission to apply for grant funding to Repower Balcombe. It was resolved to grant the Clerk permission to apply for a grant.</p>
1020.	<p>To review the grant application received on behalf of The Victory Players to purchase a shed/storage – Amount requested £400. It was resolved to grant £250.</p>
1021.	<p>To approve the Safeguarding policy. This was deferred for a second time in the absence of Cllr MS.</p>
1022.	<p>To consider obtaining legal advice in relation to the Section 106 agreement for the Village Carpark, and to approve expenditure of up to £1,000. This was approved and Cllr NM volunteered prior to the meeting to oversee.</p>
1023.	<p>To consider taking further action/obtaining advice in relation to the closure of the doctor's surgery. This was agreed, and Cllr AS proposed that an Extraordinary Meeting be convened to allow for further consideration and to determine the maximum financial limit the Council would set.</p>
1024.	<p>To note that a Casual Vacancy will be advertised and any applications considered with a view to Co-opt at the June meeting.</p>
1003.	<p>Receive an update from working groups: Recreation, play, youth, halls & schools – A virtual meeting took place with an officer assigned to the proposed Safer Routes to Schools project (SR2S). It was suggested that the SR2S scheme takes into consideration our existing centre of the village and 20mph initiatives and see how well they might complement/enhance/dovetail into SR2S. It was suggested that the SR2S officer will engage West Sussex Planning design consultants to visit site and come up with costed options. Approx £10, 000 to hopefully be allocated from the S106 funds. Sadly no one has come forward to date to take the School Crossing Patrol vacancy. Clerk to instigate re-engaging with MSDC Parks department to attempt to bring about some updates to the play area. Neighbourhood Plan – no updates Planning & New Development- Cllr NM has volunteered to continue to progress the Village Car Park and the appointment of a solicitor was approved to obtain initial legal advice on the S106 agreement. Traffic- A meeting is being held with WSCC Highways to try and progress a number of unresolved issues. Public Transport- No updates. Admin and Assurance - No updates</p>

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	<p>Health/update on Surgery closure - Sadly no further responses have been received from The Ouse Valley Surgery and ICB. The Parish Council and Surgery working group are looking into following this up with formal complaints; despite the ICB already being written to.</p>
<p>1004.</p>	<p>Correspondence It was noted that the VE Day Volunteers thanked the Parish Council for their grant towards the Celebration on Saturday 3rd May in the Victory Hall. The volunteers were praised by the Parish Councillors who attended for organising a successful event with delicious food. Any funds raised will go to charity.</p>
<p>1005.</p>	<p>Exchange of Inform The Annual report will be delivered to properties in the centre of the village and copies will be available in the Shop, Pub and Victory Hall, and circulated electronically for more rural properties. The Annual Parish meeting will be taking place on Wednesday 21st May at 7:30pm in Bramble Hall, and copies of the report will also be available.</p>

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE
Wednesday 4th June 2025 – 8pm - Bramble Hall

Signed Chairman:.....

Date: