Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Alderholt Parish Council held at 7pm on Monday 14th September 2026 in the Committee Room at Alderholt Village Hall.

Present: Cllr D Agent, Cllr S Butler, Cllr S Emberson, Cllr A Hibberd, Cllr G Logan, Cllr A Roche and Cllr M Smethers

In Attendance: Nicky Ashton (Parish Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

Due to Cllr A Butler not being present at the meeting, Cllr Smethers (Vice Chairman) chaired the meeting.

144/26 To receive and accept apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Cllr A Butler and Cllr Tooke due to being away. Members **RESOLVED** to accept their reasons for absence.

145/26 To receive declarations of interest and/or consider the granting of dispensations:

There were no declarations of interest or dispensation requests received.

146/26 To confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 27th July 2026 are a correct record of that meeting:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes as a correct record and they were signed by the Chairman.

147/26 Chairman's Announcements:

Cllr Smethers reminded everyone to speak up when talking to ensure everyone can hear. He also reminded everyone of the invitation from St James Church to attend a special service being held at the Church on Sunday.

148/26 To receive a written report from Dorset Councillor Dave Tooke:

No report was issued.

149/26 Public Forum:

A member of the public spoke to point out that works will be carried out to the Village Hall toilets this week and should hopefully be completed by Thursday and the posts at the front of the hall are being replaced.

150/26 Representative Reports:

Village Hall Committee – Councillor Logan reported on the meeting she attended. All progressing well at the hall. Front door has been repaired, work on drains to be finalised and timetabled. Kitchen refurbishment is paused as seeking further grant funding. Bookings holding up.

Dorset Council Planning and Building Control Town and Parish Council Forum – Cllr Logan reported on the meeting she attended. Synopsis of changes to the new NPPF of 17th August 2026:

- 131 Policies
- 52 used for Plan Making Ie Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans
- 79 for decision making ie Planning Applications

As a result, the DC Local Plan will now only contain policies that are relevant to local issues and sites as the other policies are now National in the NPPF – more standard criteria for planning in both terms of the making of Local Plans, and the determination of planning applications.

DC Local Plan

- First consultation 21st Sept – general question to Parish & Town Councils "What should be in the Local Plan re policies".
- A number of regulated stages within the 30 months commencing 30th November 2026, so anticipate adoption by May 2029.
- Housing numbers approx. 3,246 per annum as a result of requirement by HM Govt.
- NPPF states that 10% of housing needs to be on small sites DC have calculated they need to find 700 of these.
- DC also working on Design Codes for the area and are reviewing the car parking standards.

Planning Application determination

Various changes to Planning Committee procedures as a result of the NPPF come into force 31st October 2026.

- Schedule 1 - Developments of 1 to 9 dwellings will now be determined by Planning Officer under delegated powers – DC has generally been doing this, but now not able to refer to Planning Committee.
- Schedule 2 Development of more than 10 dwellings can be called to committee, but criteria have to be met, and the decision is to be made by Nominated Planning Officer, Chair of Planning Committee and ward member. (This is the current process)
- Thus, it is very important that the comments our Parish Planning Committee makes on any application are thorough, reflecting local knowledge and concerns as well as planning policy agreement or objections.

Alderholt Scouts Group – Cllr Emberson reported there had been some issues with leaders leaving and a decrease in the number of children. There is now a more positive outlook with leaders stepping back into the group and there also being new leaders. Now focusing on recruitment of scouts and looking to do something with the Scout land in the future.

ARA Quarterly Management Meeting – Cllr Smethers attended the meeting and the minutes of the meeting have been circulated to all Cllrs and received and noted.

151/26 To receive the minutes of the latest Planning Committee meetings:

The minutes were received and noted.

152/26 Clerks Report:

- The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan has been adopted.
- Attended Community Transport Roundtable event.
- Email received from Dorset Council to advise the Dorset Community Transport Grant for 2026-27 is now live and can apply for a grant up to midnight on 20/10/2026.
- The allotment water costs have increased quite significantly from last year due to weather conditions – increase of £112.57 so will exceed the budget limit this year.
- Annual Meeting with Alderholt Village Hall due to take place Monday 28th Sept at 5.30pm.
- Local Government National Salary Award for 2026-27 has now been agreed.
- New Internal Auditor carrying out interim audit next month on 27th.
- Received notification of the Proposed Temporary Closure of Ringwood Road. The closure has been requested to allow Openreach to carry out overhead cabling works. These works are programmed to commence from 09:30, 12th November 2026 until 15:30, 12th November 2026.

- Received notification of the 24 hour closure of Batterley Drove between 5th and 9th October to enable Dorset Highways to carry out essential highway maintenance works.
- Received notification that public footpath E34/33 will be closed from 1st Oct for 26 weeks due to National Grid carrying out essential works to their power lines.
- Removed the underground wasp nest located in the children's play area at the recreation ground.
- Email received raising concerns again about a commercial lorry parking on Ringwood Road very close to junction with Earlswood Drive and asked what the Council can do about the problem. Responded to inform them that the Parish Council has no authority when it comes to highways issues. The issue was raised before with both Dorset Highways and the Police.
- Ringwood Road water leaks – after the road was closed to carry out works by South West Water a few days later there was another leak. I contacted them to let them know and sent a video from a resident. They did come out again 5 days later to deal with the issue without closing the road this time. Cllr Tooke in his capacity as Dorset Councillor has been in contact with Dorset Council's Lead Streetworks Officer to point out how many times the road keeps being closed. The Officer has been in contact with the water company to raise the issue.
- ROI's – Confirmation from Monitoring Officer received stating that, If the parish council has adopted the LGA model code of conduct any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority should be declared under 'any other registerable interests'.
- BT contract renewed and looking at possibility of upgrading to full fibre, no extra cost for this.
- Bins not emptied on the Thursday of the last week of August raised by residents via email and on Facebook. Contacted Dorset Waste Services but didn't get a reply contacted Cllr Tooke who raised the issue with the Operations and Transport Manager and the bins were emptied the next day.
- Myself and Cllr Tooke met with the Principal Flood Risk Officer from South West Flood and Coastal who is assisting Dorset Council with their Community Flood Review.
- Attended SLCC meeting and Town and Parish Council meeting with Catherine Howe, Dorset Council Chief Executive last Wednesday.

153/26 Finance – to discuss and agree the following:

- To approve the monthly payments as listed in the schedule (i) and agree to delegate an authorised Cllr for online banking payments:
  Members **RESOLVED** to approve the payments and Cllr S Butler was appointed as the authorised councillor for payments until the next meeting.
- To receive the July and August bank reconciliations:
  Members received and approved the bank reconciliations.

154/26 To receive the External Auditor's Report and Certificate for 2025-26:

On the basis of BDO's review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in their opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The Report and Certificate and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit will be added to the Council website this week.

155/26 To consider approval of the insurance renewal quotation received from Gallaghers:

Cllr Smethers and the Clerk had jointly reviewed the quotation. The premium (including IPT and all fees) for the year will be £3,585.03 (an increase of £89.65). Members **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation and to opt for the three year Long Term Agreement.

156/26 To consider responding to the Dorset Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan Consultation:
Cllr Emberson reported that it seems to be a positive plan and it was agreed that he put together responses to the consultation to be circulated to all Cllrs for agreement prior to submission.

157/26 To consider being part of the Dorset Age Friendly cohort:
It was agreed not to be part of the cohort.

158/26 To receive the August Play Inspection Report and to agree any actions:
The report was received and noted. The Clerk reported that a quote had been received from Dorset Council for repainting of play equipment but works wouldn't be carried out until next year. It was agreed to obtain further quotes for repainting works and to obtain quotes for both the inspection and repair works for the cableway and also for its replacement. It was also reported that a handgrip was missing from the shoulder press and Caloo had sent a replacement grip. It was agreed that Cllr Agent and the Clerk meet at the recreation ground to look at installing the new handgrip.

159/26 To receive an update on the formation of the Community Speed Watch Team:
There are currently 11 volunteers including Cllr Smethers, the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk. A meeting is taking place on Wednesday with Dorset Police who will be providing speed watch training.

160/26 To consider responding to the NALC Neighbourhood Planning survey: NALC has launched a survey for the 2,850 parish and town councils currently leading and managing neighbourhood plans in England. The survey will gather evidence on the status of neighbourhood plans, councils' future intentions, the challenges they face, and the impact of the withdrawal of government support funding. The findings will help inform NALC's policy work and engagement with government on the future of neighbourhood planning:
Cllr Logan reported that she had reviewed the survey questions and compiled responses which were read out to the meeting. Members **RESOLVED** to approve the suggested responses and it was agreed that Cllr Logan would submit them on behalf of the Council.

161/26 To receive the Community Conversation Sessions Invitation and to consider attendance at both of the sessions being held:
Session 1: 29 October 2026, 9:30am to 12:30pm, St Leonards & St Ives Village Hall
Session 2: 27 November 2026, 1:00pm to 4:00pm, Verwood Hub, Verwood
It was agreed that Cllr Logan, Cllr Smethers and the Clerk attend both sessions.

162/26 To review the following policies:

- **General Expenses Policy:** Members **RESOLVED** to change the car mileage rate listed within the policy to the new HMRC rate of 55p per mile.
- **Social Media Policy:** Policy reviewed and it was agreed no amendments required.
- **Tree Policy:** Members **RESOLVED** to amend some of the policy wording and to add the policy to the Council's website.

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163/26 To approve the date for next year's Big Alderholt Fete and to discuss volunteers and extra activities:
Members **RESOLVED** to approve the suggested date of 12th June 2027 for next year's Fete. It was suggested the Clerk approach the Scout group to enquire if they would be willing to volunteer to help with the running of the Fete and to make further enquiries with the Alderholt Community Fund to clarify if the Council can submit a grant application to assist with funding extra Fete activities.

164/26 To consider attendance at the East Dorset Police bi-monthly Councillors briefing sessions with the first session being held on 18th September:
It was agreed Cllr S Butler and Cllr Smethers attend the sessions.

165/26 Agree attendance at Cllr surgery for 17th October, 21st November and 12th December:
It was agreed that Cllr Logan would attend October and November and Cllr Smethers to attend December.

With no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.58pm

Date of next meeting – Monday 12th October 2026.

(i) Schedule of Monthly Payments for Approval (Including In Between Meeting Payments)

Payable To	Amount	VAT	Total	Details
Assist Business IT	841.08	168.22	1009.30	IT Support and New Laptop
Source for Business	321.41	0.00	321.41	Allotment Water
South Coast Hire Group	1900.00	380.00	2280.00	Fete Stage
DM Payroll Services Ltd	72.00	14.40	86.40	Payroll
Alderholt Parish News	90.00	0.00	90.00	Articles and Fete Posters for May, June, July and August
Staffing Costs	5232.81	0.00	5232.81	July Staffing Costs
Staffing Costs	5232.81	0.00	5232.81	August Staffing Costs
Unity Trust Bank	28.80	0.00	28.80	Bank charges May £8.95 June £10.90 July £8.95 August £8.50
All Clear Pest Control	65.00	13.00	78.00	Removal of Wasp Nest at Play Area
BT	229.35	45.87	275.22	Phone Bill
Elite Playground Inspections	77.50	15.50	93.00	August Playground Inspection
Starboard Systems Ltd	768.00	153.60	921.60	Scribe Accounts Renewal
C Gill	44.95	0.00	44.95	Fete Banners
BDO	420.00	84.00	504.00	External Annual Audit
G Logan	4.05	0.00	4.05	Travel Expenses
D Agent	14.85	0.00	14.85	Travel Expenses
DAPTC	120.00	0.00	120.00	New Councillor Training Session (x2)
Assist Business IT	158.40	31.68	190.08	IT Support
Alderholt Village Hall	£2986.00	0.00	£2986.00	Office Rental 1st Sept to 28th Feb
ARA	£740.69	0.00	£740.69	Insurance Reimbursement

ARA	1076.92	215.38	1292.30	SLA Agreement 1st Oct Payment
Receipts				
Fete Stallholders			230.00	Stallholder fees and donation
ARA			4.00	Ground Rent
HMRC			2297.98	VAT Refund
East Dorset Environment Partnership			16.51	Refund of contribution