



# Full Parish Council Meeting - Minutes Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Meeting held at Rogate Village Hall old youth club room, starting at 5.30pm.

Parish Councillors in attendance: Chair: Max Harwood (MH), Laura Craven (LC), Zoe Maclehose (ZM), Elena McCloskey (EM), Gerard McCloskey (GM), Octavia Pollock (OP) and Angie Simonds (AS).

WS County Councillor: Yvonne Gravely (YG).

Clerk: Debbie Harknett

There was one member of the public (the Western Rivers Trust representative) in attendance.

**Chair:** max.harwood@rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk  
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**Vice-chair:** adrian.collins@rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk  
**Clerk:** clerk@rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk

**1) It was noted the meeting would not be recorded.**

**2) Apologies for absence were received and accepted from** Adrian Collins (AC) and Mike Galley (MG) and it was noted that ZM and OP maybe late in arriving. Apologies were noted from District Councillor Tim O'Kelly (TOK).

**3) Declarations of interest in items on the agenda:** none.

**4) The minutes of the last meeting** held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 were approved by the Council as a true record and signed by Chair.

**5) Representations from the public – none.**

EM and GM arrived.

## **Reports from representatives of outside bodies:**

**6) West Sussex County Councillor – YG's** report had been included in the last R&T.

- a) YG reported there has been a lot going on behind the scenes about The Angel, Midhurst following the fire two years ago and they are due to hold a meeting with involved parties soon to consider commissioning a new survey to establish the current condition of the wall.

ZM arrived.

- b) The Clerk thanked YG for her involvement with Highways following the accident at Coombe crossroads.

YG left with thanks.

**7) Chichester District Councillor – TOK's** report had been circulated ahead of the meeting:

- a) Climate Emergency Action Plan 2025-30 that identified 11 key actions agreed. Councillors have set aside £1m for any projects that come out of the plan with actions to include significantly increasing the council's work to help reduce carbon emissions from privately owned and rented homes and continuing work on their existing Tree Strategy. Other projects include using planning policy to increase street tree planting and green travel plans as well as collaborating with other WS councils.
- b) Hyde housing – are offering parents of Primary school age children a £50 school uniform voucher.

**8) Chair's report – MH** reported there have been some discussions about the future of START – the community land trust that was put together a few years ago to represent Stedham, Trotton and Rogate. A great deal of work went into setting up the land trust but no opportunities came its way and, as such, it has been dormant for several years. It has been suggested it could merge into Midhurst Community Land Trust or put into hibernation until a suitable project comes along but it risks being forgotten. With possible sites across the parish being considered for housing it could yet be useful.

## **Matters for discussion:**

**9) Western Rivers Trust – water champion Louise Barnettson (LB)** addressed the meeting.

- a) Her role is part of the collaborative 'Downs to the Sea' project with aim to help parish councils and communities interpret, understand, and take action for their local rivers and wetlands.
- b) As river guardians they test the water quality monthly (working with ERA in this area) and report any concerns to the Environment Agency and Southern Water. LB offered to share quarterly reports.
- c) In response to GM's question, LB said the quality of the River Rother was generally good but they hope to improve it. Southern Water Garbitt's Lane treatment plant is due for upgrading after 2030



- though ZM noted it has been the subject of a recent planning application for permission to upgrade.
- d) Sewage spills tend to be low in dry weather as they are caused when too much rainwater enters the system and it can't cope.
  - e) As well as asking people to reduce their water usage they are encouraging sustainable drainage, water butts, rain gardens etc to reduce the amount of rainwater entering the system and are keen to talk to village halls, schools etc that have large buildings with massive roof space.
  - f) Clerk asked about information for free/reduced cost equipment to save water; LB will share what she can find and suggested volunteers could possibly help with installation of water butts.
  - g) They are holding a parish and community event on 7 October 2025 at South Downs Centre, Midhurst.
- OP arrived.
- h) Working with SDNPA they are tackling invasive non-native species (like Himalayan Balsam) on the river and its tributaries. It thrives in wetlands/riverbanks out competing native flora and leaving bare banks in the winter.
- LB left with thanks.

#### 10) Rogate village 20mph Community Highways Scheme –

- a) Information taken from the One.network shows these works are planned for 10-15 November 2025 and will involve overnight road closure of the A272.
- b) Highways have confirmed the project has been procured, the TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) is done and the road space secured with a diversion route – something substantial would need to happen for the scheme not to go ahead.
- c) MH reminded the meeting we are committed to purchase four village gateways to be installed (without cost to us) as part of the project. We have previously agreed this and allocated £10,000 in our budget as the estimate from Glasdon (a year ago) was £9,447.76+vat (which we can reclaim). It has been confirmed this still stands with anticipated delivery time of 4-6 weeks.
- d) The Clerk reminded members our financial regulations require us to obtain 3 fixed prices for expenditure over £3,000. She has approached two other suppliers and the contractor has also asked one of their suppliers but noted the gateways have to meet WSCC and DfT requirements.
- e) After discussion, to allow the gateways to be ordered before the next meeting, LC's proposal of **resolution 'to purchase 4 ornate village gateways at the best price while meeting WSCC and DfT requirements at a cost of no more than £10,000+vat'** was seconded by OP and unanimously approved on the understanding the final decision will be made by the Chair and Vice-Chair in conjunction with the Clerk when all prices have been received. Should 3 fixed prices not be received it was agreed to accept Glasdon's price as they recognised by WSCC as being the main supplier of this equipment.

#### 11) Local Government Reform

- a) LC and OP reported on the CDC Zoom presentation which had explained the timetable for events and options for the Unitary Council while considering the boundaries, economies, spending, deprivation and specific challengers of different areas.
- b) The two unitary models with an EastWest split was favoured with two options (we would be in West)
  - Variation 1 – West consisting of Arun, Chichester and Worthing and East with Adur, Crawley, Horsham and Mid-Sussex.
  - Variation 2 – West consisting of Adur, Arun, Chichester and East with Worthing with Crawley, Horsham and Mid-Sussex.
- c) Questions were asked about protecting the rural voice and what would happen to parish councils but there are not currently any answers.
- d) Services like rubbish collections would remain local.
- e) Being within the SDNP adds an additional layer of bureaucracy.
- f) There is a tight timetable - WSCC survey closes on 13 August 2025 and they must submit their preferred option to Government by 26 September 2025. Following this, the Government will consider all proposals before deciding how to proceed. A formal public consultation will be launched by the Government who are expected to make a decision in spring 2026. The ambition is for elections to a new shadow unitary authority to take place in May 2027 with the new authority formally coming into effect in April 2028.
- g) After some discussion LC's proposal of **resolution 'to respond to the survey in favour of the two unitary model – variation 1 - while commenting that we are concerned local rural issues will be subsumed within a large urban dominated bureaucracy and to seek more clarity as to the role of parish councils within the new governance arrangements'** was seconded by AS and unanimously approved for the Clerk to submit.
- h) Clerk noted Chichester District Council have some assets available for community asset transfer.



She has checked and there are none within Rogate Parish – she had been unsure about a section of land at the bottom of Parsonage Estate that had not originally been transferred to Martlett Homes but CDC have confirmed it was transferred in 2005.

## 12) Harting Coombe crossroads accident concerns

- GM had reported two recent accidents where cars have gone straight across from Bull Hill ignoring the 'stop' signs and colliding with cars travelling to/from Milland.
- AC visited the junction and felt re-aligning would be a major and expensive undertaking but that it needs better road markings and stop signage. He has raised the matter with Highways as has YG.
- WSCC have today responded they will refurbish the give-way junction markings on Tullecombe Hill/Bull Hill (no timeline) and have cut the vegetation back.
- Clerk noted WS accident data for 5 years (1/3/2020-28/2/2025) reports three accidents at this location; two of which were in July, the same as the most recent ones, which could suggest that overgrown vegetation could be part of the problem.

AS left with thanks.

## 13) Finance matters: AC's report had been circulated ahead of the meeting:

- The External auditors report for accounts year end 31 March 2025 has been circulated with no matters of concern. This is important affirmation of our governance and reflects the valuable work of our Clerk for which we are grateful. LC's proposal of **resolution 'to accept the External auditor's report for accounts year-end 31 March 2025'** was seconded by MH and unanimously approved with thanks to the Clerk.
- The Clerk noted the external audit's charge is almost half last year's £504.00 cost as it's based on the Council's income and the previous year's accounts included almost £73,000 Operation Watershed income/expenditure.
- AC reported after 4 months (33% of year) expenditure to date is 28% of budget but reminded the council the budget is not phased and significant element is for anticipated grants and other expenditure which will come later in the year.
- AC reported the Clerk had highlighted an error in the amount of authorised payments which has been rectified in this month's payments and reminded all bank signatories of the need to diligently check payment details as part of the authorisation process.
- Non-bank signatory to check reconciliation – EM.
- Bank payments authorisation – MH and GM.

<b>Payments approved: under LGA1972, Section 111 - anything "conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions" unless otherwise detailed</b>			
Clerk/HMRC/Nest	Bank	Salary/PAYE/NI/Pension	Undisclosed
<b>LGA1972, Section 112 - appoint officers as necessary for the proper discharge of their functions</b>			
Unity Trust Bank	d/d	Monthly transaction fees – June	£7.35
Microsoft	Bank	Annual 365 Office Cost	£84.99
Moore	Bank	External audit	£252.00
Zoom	Card	Video conferencing monthly cost – July	£15.59
Lloyds Bank	d/d	Monthly credit card fee – August	£3.00
Spusu	Card	Mobile monthly cost – August	£5.00
Business Stream	Bank	Fyning water supply – 3 months	£23.05
<b>Local Government Act 1976 s19 &amp; Open Spaces Act 1906 – 'power to provide and manage recreational land'</b>			
Sarah Redpath	Bank	SID electricity donation	£25.00
<b>Local Government and Rating Act 1997, Section 30 - to "take such steps as they consider appropriate for the purpose of promoting road safety"</b>			
Amazon	Card	Computer mouse	£9.50

## Committee/Working group reports:

### 14) Finance Committee

The Finance Committee meeting on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September was noted.

### 15) Planning

- The comments from the Planning Working Group discussion of 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025 were received.
- It was noted that a zoom Planning Working Group discussion would be held as required.
- MH reported contact from a parishioner about a recent planning application in the village. It was agreed the planning working group would look at the building and comment further if appropriate.



## 16) Open Spaces Committee

- a) The minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025 were received.
  - b) The Open Spaces Committee meeting on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 was noted.
- Update from Open Spaces Committee:
- c) LC reported the logs around the play area tunnel have finally been replaced. We understand the contractor is waiting for a spare part to finish one remaining repair.
  - d) MH noted a tree down across a bridleway in Terwick.
  - e) OP reported on the recent visit by the Swift conservationist who visited 17 properties in the village to advise on siting swift boxes. MH thanked OP for her involvement – the swift talk and following visits have been a really informative and engaging in the village and will hopefully encourage more swifts.
  - f) OP noted a wildflower area within Parsonage had been sprayed and destroyed by Hyde – she is corresponding with them and hopes to protect it in future.

## 17) Policy reviews: LC reported she had reviewed three policies:

- a) LC's proposal of **resolution 'to accept the revised Employee grievance procedure'** was seconded by EM and unanimously approved.
- b) LC's proposal of **resolution 'to accept the revised Lone worker policy'** was seconded by EM and unanimously approved.
- c) LC's proposal of **resolution 'to accept the revised Sickness & absence policy'** was seconded by EM and unanimously approved.
- d) It was noted these are outstanding:

a)	Risk register	AC
b)	Banking arrangements (at year-end)	Finance chair/clerk
c)	Transparency code	MH/Clerk
d)	Emergency/contingency plan	AS
e)	Winter plan & map	AS
f)	Accessibility statement	Clerk/Netwise
g)	Equality & Diversity	MG
h)	Co-option of Councillor procedure & application form	EM
i)	Remote Access to meetings	ZM
j)	Health & safety	AC
k)	Employee disciplinary procedure	AC
l)	Employee whistle blowing	OP
m)	IT (new)	OP
n)	Planning terms of reference	EM

## 18) Projects and grants – no update

## 19) Drainage issues/operation watershed – no update

## 20) Correspondence -

- a) Bank statements received – filed in finance file.
- b) Other information/emails – circulated as received.
- c) MH noted correspondence from a resident at Knowles Meadow, Hillbrow who are experiencing persistent driveway obstructions as a result of a neighbour's inconsiderate parking – preventing access to homes for residents and bin lorries. The owner has taken the matter up with CDC, Sussex Police, Hyde, WSCC Councillor and others. In response to a request the Clerk had advised the installation of yellow lines requires a TRO with an application supported by neighbours but there is no guarantee the restrictions would be enforced by Traffic Officers. If such an application is made the council would consider whether or not they support the application.

## 21) Information for the Council (for noting or inclusion on a future Agenda) – none.

## 22) Date of next meeting – the Full Council Meeting will be held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 5.30pm at Rogate Village Hall old youth club room.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.15pm.

Chair: .....

Date: .....