

RUSTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: of the Monthly Meeting held on 28 July 2025

PRESENT: Councillors A Cooper (Chairman), Mrs V Allen, J Bennett, Mrs C Broomfield, M Broomfield, J Ceiriog-Hughes, Mrs A Cooper, G Lee, Ms M Revell, D Rogers and P Warren

In attendance: Mrs C Ward (Clerk of the Council) and Ms R Costan (Deputy Clerk of the Council)

188/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Gregory (previously approved Leave of Absence), Grevett (Personal), Ms Lloyd (Work Commitment), Mrs Partridge (Indisposition) and Mrs C Stevens (Personal). These apologies were accepted by the Council.

189/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bennett declared a personal interest in Minutes 193/25. He remained in the Meeting during consideration of this item and took part in the discussion thereon.

190/25 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 June 2025 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

191/25 SUSSEX POLICE

Apologies for absence had been received from Sergeant West and PCSO Raju.

(a) Matters Arising

The Clerk referred to Minute 160/25(a) and said that the concerns regarding the e-bike that had been causing issues, e.g. speeding and inconsiderate/reckless riding in general were continuing to be addressed with the Neighbourhood Policing Team. She said that the issue had been ongoing since late 2024 and was the cause of much frustration to members of the Council's personnel, as CCTV had clearly identified the individual concerned and a statement had been made, at that time by a member of the personnel team. She said that this had been raised by the Deputy Clerk more recently with Inspector Wickings, and he was hoping that the individual concerned could be spoken to about his behaviour, as well as trying to find any other useful tools that had been used elsewhere in the Police Force to deal with similar issues.

She said that she had reported the presence of an individual, possibly homeless, begging outside of Tesco Express on a number of occasions over the past two weeks. She said that she had also been told that the individual concerned had been shoplifting in at least one of the retail units in the Village Centre. She confirmed that she had reported this to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team at the Arun District Council, who had advised that they would link with the Police and the Rough Sleeper Team to make them aware of the situation, but also stated that any complaints or other associated issues in respect of the aforementioned individual should be reported directly to Sussex Police.

Councillor Ms Revell advised the Council that there had recently been two different individuals sitting outside of the Tesco Store on different days. She said that the first individual had been a younger male who had been seen for a period of about four consecutive days, and the second individual who had been in situ over the past few days was an older male.

The Council NOTED this information.

Councillor Bennett then advised the Council that a recent Report by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services had found that Sussex Police did not have enough capacity to ensure it progressed a large number of open serious crime investigations. The Inspectorate found the Force to be 'adequate' in most areas of policing, and stated that it was pleased with improvements made in the past year. He said that according to the Report, only one in 20 victim-based crimes dealt with in the year ending 30 June 2024 had resulted in a charge or court summons.

The Council was concerned to NOTE this information.

(b) Arun All Parishes Meeting - 18 July 2025

The Deputy Clerk advised that she had attended the above Meeting, hosted by Inspector Ross Wickings.

She said that Inspector Wickings had provided an overview of the Police Operation Nationally and Locally as follows:-

Force Updates

- NPT Review - Ongoing and in second phase. The alignment of coaches to teams will be occurring but will take some time, this would mean a more consistent presence around who is available to each Sergeant and when
- 72-hour Contact Guarantee - This is a Government Directive and one that has been committed to by Sussex Police. For example, when emailing arun@sussex.police.uk with a general enquiry, there is now a commitment to responding within 72 hours - **this does not include reports of crime**
- Website updates - The Sussex Police external website has been updated under the 'My Area' section, the webpage pertinent to Rustington is: <https://www.sussex.police.uk/area/your-area/sussex/arun/rustington/about-us/top-reported-crimes-in-this-area>

Two forthcoming events are listed on this page:-

- **Chat with Your PCSO: Concerns & Crime Prevention**
10:00AM - 11:00AM, Thu 14 August 2025, The Street, Rustington
- **Chat with Your PCSO: Concerns & Crime Prevention**
5:00PM - 6:00PM, Sat 13 September 2025, Woodlands Avenue, Rustington

Divisional Update

- No specific updates

Local Updates

- Street audits were completed with various partners around Bognor Town Centre and in Littlehampton Town Centre, looking to identify crime prevention opportunities
- PC Recruitment - 1x PC for Bognor Regis and 1x PC for Littlehampton currently being recruited
- Unauthorised Encampment season has begun and this does have an impact on the delivery of other duties. Advised to ensure that vulnerable sites are made as secure as possible.

The Deputy Clerk said that she had also provided the Meeting with an update on the Council's ongoing concerns in relation to the inconsiderate riding of electric bikes across the Recreation Ground.

The Council NOTED this information.

192/25 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

An apology for absence had been received from Councillors Ms Edwards and Gunner.

Councillor Mrs Cooper, in her capacity as a District Councillor, reported on District Council matters as follows:-

- *Angmering Sports Hub - Now officially added to the Capital Programme*
- *Budget process commenced*
- *Medium Term Financial Forecast issued for 2026/27 to 2030/31.*

The Council NOTED this information.

(Prior to consideration of the following item, Councillor Bennett had declared a personal interest in his capacity as a School Governor for Georgian Gardens Community Primary School)

193/25 COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Councillor Mrs Cooper, in her capacity as a County Councillor, reported on County Council matters as follows:-

- *West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board - New three-year Strategy and Action Plan published*
- *Waste Prevention Community Grant Fund - Operated in partnership with Biffa - 10 community groups already awarded grants up to £10,000.00*
- *Fair Funding Review 2.0 - 8-Week Consultation on the reform of local Government Funding Reform from 20 June to 15 August*
- *Sexual Health Needs Assessment of West Sussex undertaken by the Public Health Teams*
- *School Health and Well-Being Survey Pilot - Taken place during School half term holidays - 59 Schools participated with circa 7,000 children completing Survey*
- *Health and Well-Being Board Strategy 2025-2030.*

Councillor Rogers referred to the fact that in years past, Parish and Town Councils had received a percentage of the Business Rates' Income and was wondering if there was any indication that this could be introduced in the future. He asked if it would be possible to ask WSALC to request that NALC lobby the Government in this regard.

The Clerk said that she would contact the Chief Executive of WSALC and ask him to raise this issue with NALC.

Councillor Bennett expressed his concern that the predicted intake in Primary Schools for the next three years was dropping which, in turn would mean that the funding from the County Council would reduce and, therefore, result in job losses. He asked if County Councillor Mrs Cooper was aware of implications of the Fair Funding Review on Schools' Funding.

Councillor Mrs Cooper said that she would look into this with the appropriate Officer/s and report back to Councillor Bennett in this connection.

The Council NOTED the above information and the Chairman thanked Councillor Mrs Cooper for her Report.

194/25 CLERK'S REPORT

(a) Grant Aid

The Clerk reported the receipt of letters conveying thanks and appreciation from the following recipients of Grant Aid:-

Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex
Arun Community Transport
Arun Youth Aqua Centre
Chichester Diocesan Association for Family Support Work
Home-Start Arun, Worthing and Adur
Lavinia Norfolk Centre Charitable Trust
Rustington Community Primary School PTA
Rustington Heritage Association
Rustington In-Bloom

The Council NOTED this information.

195/25 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported on his official representation and attendance at Meetings, Events and Functions since the last Monthly Meeting as follows:-

- Bishop of Chichester's Afternoon Reception for Civic representatives, Military, the NHS and Emergency Services - 24 June 2025 - Accompanied by Councillor Mrs Cooper
- Judging - 2025 Annual Gardens Competition - 7 July 2025 - Together with Councillor Lee
- Rustington Street Fayre - 12 July 2025
- Presentation of Awards to Winners/Runners Up - ArtWorks Art Competition - 12 July 2025

The Council NOTED this information.

196/25 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Council NOTED the Reports of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 2 June 2025 and 30 June 2025.

197/25 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Council received the Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 28 July 2025. (Verbal Report from the Chairman of the Committee).

The Council RESOLVED that the Recommendations contained in the Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 28 July 2025 be APPROVED.

198/25 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - AUGUST RECESS

The Council AUTHORISED the Finance and General Purposes Committee to deal with any urgent matters that might arise, in addition to the payment of accounts during the August recess.

199/25 ANNUAL CIVIC THANKSGIVING & PRESENTATION RECEPTION - 21 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Clerk reminded Members that the Annual Civic Thanksgiving Service was scheduled to be held on Sunday 21 September 2025, with St Andrew's United Reformed Church hosting the Service.

She said that the Chairman, Mrs Lamb and herself were due to meet with representatives from the Church to finalise arrangements within the next couple of weeks. She confirmed that the Civic Reception and Award Presentations would, as in previous years, be held in the Village Memorial Hall at The Woodlands Centre, following the Church Service.

The Clerk reminded Members that Joan Salmon, the recipient of the Individual Parishioners' Award had now indicated her preference in respect of the Award. She said that the recipient of the Group Parishioners' Award, Arun Community Transport, had also indicated their Award preference.

She then reminded the Council that an invitation would again, be sent to both of the recipients of the Parishioners' Award, and also to the Winners in the Gardens Competition, to attend the Civic Service and Presentation Reception to receive their Awards.

The Council was pleased to NOTE this information and, following a brief discussion, RESOLVED that the Clerk should continue to liaise with the Chairman regarding the detailed arrangements for both the Service and the Civic Reception and Presentations.

200/25 THE WOODLANDS CENTRE - PROPOSED MAJOR REDESIGN AND REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

(a) Progress Report

The Clerk referred to Minute 171/25 and said that the Public Works Loan Board had advised the Council that the most recent minuted Resolution as submitted, did not fulfil the entire criteria required. It had advised that the Council could redraft and resubmit its Resolution at the next scheduled Full Council Meeting. She said that there were also a small number of points of clarification requested and queries raised, which had now been responded to.

The Council NOTED this information.

(b) Resolution - Public Works Loan Board Loan

The Council then considered and unanimously APPROVED the following Resolution:-

At the Rustington Parish Council Meeting held on 28 July 2025, it was resolved to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, to apply for borrowing approval for a Loan of £550,000.00 over the borrowing term of 15 years for Phase 1 of the Re-design and Refurbishment of The Woodlands Centre Project. The estimated annual loan repayments will be £53,931.36 (payable on a six-monthly basis - two equal payments per annum)

Provision of £20,000.00 has been made in the current financial year to cover 50% of the estimated annual repayment, which did not necessitate any increase in the Council Tax Precept on the previous year. The estimated balance, namely £6,965.68, will be borne from the Council's General Fund Balance

It is also intended to increase the Council Tax Precept for the purpose of the estimated future loan repayments, commencing in the financial year 2026/2027, by 4.48% which is the equivalent of an additional £33,931.36 per year

The total estimated cost of Phase 1 to be £771,703.10, with the balance of the funding required, namely £221,703.10, being borne from the Council's Reserves.

(c) Fee Proposal for Project Management Services for Phase 1 of the Project

The Clerk reminded Members that she had previously circulated an email received from Scott Taylor, together with a Fee Proposal for Project Management Services for Phase 1 of the Project. She said that this was in the sum of £22,750.00 (excluding VAT), which represented 3.5% of the estimated total construction sum (£650,000.00).

She said that the Fee Proposal was for RIBA Stages 4-7, after planning approval, to Project completion. She reminded the Council that Scott Taylor had carried out all of the work for the RIBA stages from the Project's conception in 2021 to date, and were now very familiar with the building, and the Council's requirements. She said they also had excellent local knowledge.

If appointed, Scott Taylor would manage the delivery of the Project through technical design, procurement, construction, and handover - ensuring compliance with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations, applicable public sector procurement rules, and local governance procedures.

She concluded that in view of the above information, she had not obtained any additional estimates to date.

Following a detailed discussion, the Council RESOLVED that the following RECOMMENDATION be APPROVED:-

Taking account of the following information:-

- Scott Taylor had undertaken all of the work for the RIBA stages from the Project's conception in 2021 to date, and were now very familiar with the building, and the Council's requirements. They also had excellent local knowledge
- Scott Taylor would manage the delivery of the Project through technical design, procurement, construction, and handover - ensuring compliance with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations, applicable public sector procurement rules, and local governance procedures

and in the interests of best value and project continuity, Financial Regulation 5.7 should be waived:-

For Contracts less than £30,000.00 including VAT, the Clerk, Deputy Clerk or RFO shall seek at least three fixed priced quotes

in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.11 (iii):-

The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:-

- (i) specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
- (ii) repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
- (iii) works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
- (iv) goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

The Council then RESOLVED that the Fee Proposal for Project Management Services for Phase 1 of the Project received from Scott Taylor in the sum of £22,750.00 (excluding VAT), which represented 3.5% of the estimated total construction sum (£650,000.00), be ACCEPTED.

201/25 REVIEW OF YOUTH PROVISION WORKING PARTY

The Clerk referred to Minute 172/25 and said that Mr Jolly, Executive Leader of Arun Church, had recently responded to say that having discussed the suggestions made by the Working Party with the Youth Worker in Charge, there were a number practicalities and other issues that needed to receive further consideration. She said that Mr Jolly had requested a Meeting to further discuss the Working Party's suggestions in respect of the preferred way forward, and it was anticipated that this would take place during week commencing 11 August 2025.

She advised that she would, hopefully, be able to report back to the Finance and General Purposes Committee at its Meeting on 18 August 2025.

The Council NOTED this information.

Councillor Lee referred to Minute 173/25 and said that two new parishioners had recently joined the Committee. He then referred to the Committee's participation at the Street Fayre and said that it had been most successful with £295.00 being raised from the sale of home-grown plants and ceramics made by Councillor Stevens, and Bird Boxes, some of which were not sold, made by Councillor Broomfield and himself.

He said that the Committee was now in the process of considering new ideas and projects for the future, and also investigating possible future fundraising events.

He concluded by thanking the Council for its kind award of Grant Aid in the sum of £350.00, and said that he was also applying for other grants to assist the Committee with its projects and vision for the future.

The Clerk confirmed that the new seat, purchased by the Committee to replace the dilapidated commemorative seat (in memory of the late Councillor Mrs Sue Axtell) was due to be delivered on 29 July 2025 and would be being installed shortly after.

The Council was pleased to NOTE this information.

The Clerk reminded Members that 15 August 2025 would be the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day, marking the anniversary of Victory in Japan, effectively bringing an end to World War II on 15 August 1945.

She said that bespoke flags would be flown at the War Memorial and at Abbotswood Corner and the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman would lay a wreath at 12.00 noon when observing the National 'Two Minute Silence' to mark the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day. She said that she had approached Reverend Bawcutt from St Peter and St Paul Parish Church to ask her to lead a brief informal commemoration, to which all Members were very welcome to attend and should arrive by 11.50 am. She said she was currently awaiting a response from Reverend Bawcutt.

She then reminded Members of the previous decision to purchase a bespoke 80th Anniversary of VE/VJ Day Seat, as a permanent memorial in respect of both of the above-mentioned historic occasions, on the north side of The Street, opposite the War Memorial. She said that the seat was due to be delivered on 29 July 2025 and installed as soon as practicably possible after that date. She said that this could be officially acknowledged by the Council immediately following the Wreath Laying and 'Two Minute Silence'.

The Council was pleased to NOTE this information.

The Chairman referred to Minute 151/25 and reminded Members that the Clerk had previously circulated a letter received from Mike Jennings, Deputy Chief Executive, Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, in this regard.

The Clerk then reminded Members that a Meeting had subsequently been held with Mr Jennings and Hannah Duce, the Associate Director of Communications and Engagement, at which the majority of Members were present, together with District Councillor Gunner.

She then provided the Council with a Report of the proceedings of the Meeting as follows:-

Mr Jennings addressed the Meeting and gave a brief outline of the Trust's position to date. He said that the Sussex Community Trust had acquired the Site from NHS Property Services on 1 August 2023. He advised that the Trust was aware that there were problems with the building but none had been identified

in the facet Survey as needing immediate attention. Within three months it had become evident that there were major issues with the building that needed to be addressed imminently in the interests of Health and Safety in particular, including the failure of the central heating system, water ingress and burst water pipe/tank in the roof.

He said a full fabric Survey was then carried out and it was at this point that it was found that the works to restore the building to be fit for purpose would cost £8M. At this point the Hospital was closed temporarily. He said that the Trust had spent the past 18 months trying to seek funding from NHS Sussex and England, etc., to no avail, and so the decision was made not to re-open Zachary Merton Hospital.

He said that he understood that this was a great disappointment to the Council and the local community and no use for the land had been identified to date.

He said that the Trust had been stepping up more and more health services, including providing virtual wards and care for people in their own homes.

He advised that the Trust had engagement with other health providers to establish whether there were any other services that the Site could be used for but, to date, no definitive responses had been received.

He said that the purpose of the Meeting was to try to gauge the best way to now engage with stakeholders and the local communities to find out their views on the need for health facilities locally.

Several questions were then posed by Members regarding the first (facet) and second (fabric) surveys, whether the Trust felt there was a continuing need for the facility and whether it would have continued to operate if it had not been deemed unfit for purpose. Other questions posed/suggestions made included the possible use of the existing house on the site being utilised for a Health Centre, and why the Trust acquired the Hospital.

District Councillor Gunner then expressed his own concerns that the Arun District had far less NHS facilities available to the ever-increasing populations, than in other parts of Sussex, believing that additional facilities, maybe in the form of Neighbourhood Health Centre or an Integrated Health Centre could be delivered. He asked about how 'need' was assessed and about what the timeline would be for the future of the site.

Mr Jennings hoped that following more engagement with stakeholders, etc., there would be a clear plan by the end of the current financial year. He referred particularly to the need for engagement to be had with NHS Sussex about the Health facilities that the Council believed were needed in the locality.

He also addressed the question as to why the Trust had acquired the site and said that it had been running services from Arundel Hospital, Bognor Regis Hospital and Zachary Merton Hospital and had wanted to have more control on the maintenance and usage of the buildings. He said that, unfortunately, due to the rapid deterioration, this didn't happen for Zachary Merton. He reiterated that whilst the Trust was aware at the time that there were issues, none of them had been flagged up from the first Survey as being imminent. The three facilities were transferred to the Trust by NHS Property Services.

He was also asked about the nearest alternative rehabilitation facilities and said that these were at Salvington Lodge and Bognor Hospital. The need for rehabilitation beds in the locality, and in particular, those lost as a result of the hospital closure, were felt to be a vital need by those at the Meeting.

The question of whether the other assets at Bognor Regis and Arundel were under threat due to the lack of funding for capital expenditure, to which the response was that there was no threat at the present time. Councillors then asked numerous questions including:-

- *Why was only one Survey done of the building and why was no further more comprehensive/detailed Survey done - Mike Jennings - Trust undertook due diligence and business case*
- *Could Parish Council have a list of Stakeholders - Hannah Duce to arrange.*

Mr Jennings reiterated that the Trust had yet to meet with West Sussex and Arun District Councillors to gauge their views/opinions/ideas in respect of the local need for health services.

He said that the Trust very much wanted to engage on a wider basis and was looking for a steer from the Parish Council as to the best way forward in respect of who should be approached. It was acknowledged that NHS Sussex and Properties would need to be involved in any discussions regarding the possible future use of the site for some form of health service facility. Councillor Mrs Cooper also said that she believed it would be beneficial for the local GPs to be involved.

It was understood by all present that the need for the site to be retained by the NHS for a Health Facility, e.g. Neighbourhood Health Centre, Integrated Health Centre, would have to be proven.

At the conclusion of the Meeting, it was agreed that the next steps would be a wider engagement Meeting, to which other neighbouring Parish Councils and the League of Friends, GPs, MPs and other interested parties would be invited. It was also agreed that other NHS Trusts would need to be present to provide information and respond to questions on retaining the site for a future Health Facility. It was left with Mr Jennings and Ms Duce to arrange such a Meeting.

The Clerk then reported that following the departure of Mr Jennings and Ms Duce, the Council discussed the content of the Meeting and the following was agreed:-

- Meeting to be requested with District Council Planning Officers to discuss the Site, the likelihood of any Section 106 monies held for NHS Facilities to be utilised to help to close the financial gap for a much-needed Health Facility on the Zachary Merton Site.

Following a further discussion, the Council RESOLVED that:-

- Contact should be made, once again, with Mr Jennings to enquire as to when the wider engagement Meeting with the appropriate NHS Trusts, and Departments would be taking place, to discuss securing the site for future uses by the NHS for community health facilities

205/25 LINK SCHEME HOLDINGS LIMITED

The Clerk referred to Minute 181/25 and the Chairman then reported on a Teams Meeting held on 10 July 2025, that she had attended with Councillors Bennett and Mrs Cooper and the Deputy Clerk, together with representatives from LINK.

He said that the following concerns and issues had been raised by the Council's representatives as follows:-

- *The needs of the demographic of Rustington won't be met without a Banking Hub. For example, the Village has a population of circa 15,000 people and the largest population of over 80's in Sussex. It has a thriving retail centre that attracts many visits from the wider population including the Parishes of Angmering, East Preston and Ferring, e.g. the two main car parks experience 68,000 car visits per month*
- *During a Radio Sussex interview the Chairman, Councillor Cooper was assured that Rustington would be reassessed*
- *The cash access assessment that had taken place in March 2025 had stopped at Step 1 concluding that there were already suitable cash access and facilities available to meet the needs of the local area. RPC representatives felt that there were valid reasons that it should have been extended to Step 2 including that there was not a Deposit ATM as stated in the*

assessment (what weighting did that hold?), nor was it felt that the Banking Hub in Littlehampton was of a suitable location in terms of the travel expectations placed upon the elderly population. It was stated that carers/elderly population are less likely to travel to another area

- The Post Office does not necessarily fulfil all of the requirements laid down in the assessment e.g. there is not a private space at which to discuss financial matters, the space is very cramped when busy, accessibility for wheelchair users may prove more difficult during busy periods etc.*
- The amount of housebuilding, particularly in Angmering, should have been considered as part of the assessment*
- Data used may have included 2020 statistics which would automatically illustrate a diminished footfall as a result of the Pandemic*
- The single point cash point in the Village has been repeatedly out of order*
- Younger people/children cannot easily access face to face banking and experience in person cash transactions*
- The High Street Banks remained within Rustington longer than elsewhere, this must have been for a customer need – these needs would no longer be met*
- The older generation risks social isolation and loneliness without the opportunity for face-to-face contact*
- Worthing and Shoreham are in similar proximity to one another as are Littlehampton and Rustington - why would Rustington not qualify?*
- The new Banking Hub in Littlehampton is currently temporary whilst trying to secure a permanent venue - Rustington could accommodate the Hub within a very short timescale.*

He said that the LINK representatives had responded as follows:-

- The current Legislation provides only to protect the access to cash, it does not include or add weighting to the benefits derived from the provision of face-to-face banking. However, this is an issue that is being lobbied in Parliament and the concerns raised by RPC during this meeting would echo this*
- House building numbers are taken into account during an assessment but would most likely be those completed or under construction - would not include those developments that had yet to start. NB This will be important when the next Rustington assessment is requested*
- To inform the assessment Post Office transaction data was used and it concluded that there was still capacity, locally, despite the Santander closure*
- The Post Office in All Seasons and the one at Station Parade are considered as adequate*
- The Deposit ATM is not listed as being on Rustington as per the assessment. It was not confirmed but thought that it may actually be located in Littlehampton?*
- The Littlehampton Hub was decided following an assessment in Autumn 2024. Once this decision had been made an alternative Town or Parish location could not be considered despite no permanent location yet being secured. RPC would have to contact Cash Access UK for further questions relating to the proposed location of the Littlehampton Hub*
- The Financial Conduct Authority shape the criteria (the focus being on access to cash) by which the assessments are conducted. Under this criteria Rustington did not and would not qualify for a Banking Hub of its own*
- The Littlehampton Hub would be re-assessed after a couple of years to see if it is meeting the anticipated need*
- Rustington would be re-assessed earliest March 2026 - RPC would need to request this*
- Shoreham is 11 miles from Worthing so not the same as Rustington/Littlehampton travel times*
- The Post Office can provide all of the same services as a Banking Hub with the exception of Personal Banker being on site. Therefore, Rustington well served in this respect*

- *Alternative to a Banking Hub is a model called a Cash Hub (a cash counter service without the presence of a Community Banker) - Rustington would only be considered for this if Post Office not able to meet the demands placed upon it. Post Office is in effect already a Cash Hub of sorts.*

He concluded by advising that he was strongly of the opinion that the Council should continue to push for a Banking Hub in the Village at every opportunity.

Following a detailed discussion, the Council RESOLVED to wholeheartedly support the sentiments of the Chairman in that it should continue to lobby for a Banking Hub in the Village, and that, an approach should be made to Cash Access UK regarding securing a permanent location for a Banking Hub to serve the East Arun area.

The Council also AGREED that the Chief Executive of WSALC should be asked to request NALC to lobby Government, without delay, to maintain, and reinstate where appropriate, face to face banking.

206/25 BLIND VETERANS UK

The Clerk reminded Members that she had previously circulated a letter received from the Chair, Barry Coupe. She said that she had a hard copy of the Summer issue of Debrief referred to in the letter should any Members wish to have sight of this.

The Council NOTED this information.

207/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL - DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION - UPDATE JULY 2025

The Chairman referred to Minute 91/25 and said that the Clerk had previously circulated the July 2025 Update in this regard.

The Council NOTED this information.

208/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL - LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LFR) IN WEST SUSSEX - STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND EVALUATION PROCESS

The Clerk reminded Members that she had previously circulated a letter received from Dawn Hudd, Chief Executive, issued to all Town and Parish Councils in the Arun District, providing more information on the on-going work being undertaken to explore Local Government Reorganisation in West Sussex and to detail Stakeholders' engagement in the evaluation process.

The Council then considered the following Report of the Meeting held on 17 July 2025 from Councillor Bennett:-

On Thursday 17 July 2025, along with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, I attended a briefing on the formal consultation regarding the Local Government Reorganisation.

Mike Dearing (Local Government Reorganisation Programme Director for West Sussex) and Dawn Hudd (CEO Arun District Council) updated us on the progress of the Unitary Council proposals. A Public Consultation has been launched, by way of a Survey, with three proposals they are:-

1. *West Sussex forms one Unitary Council*
2. *West Sussex is split into two Councils with a choice of:*
 - 2a. *West Area (Arun, Chichester, Worthing)*
 - East Area (Adur, Crawley, Horsham, Mid Sussex)*

*2b. West Area (Adur, Arun, Chichester, Worthing)
East Area (Crawley, Horsham, Mid Sussex)*

We were also updated on the time scales which are:-

- *17 July - 13 August - Public Engagement*
- *12 September - Final Business Case*
- *23/24 September - Approval by District/ Borough/ West Sussex Councils*
- *26 September - Submission of proposal to Government*
- *Late 2025 - Government Consultation*
- *Early 2026 - Secretary of State Decision*
- *April 2026 - Planning stage starts*
- *May 2027 - Shadow Council elections*
- *April 2028 - New Council/Councils take over and current structure ends*

I asked if there was an update on Town and Parish Councils to which I was told no. Dawn Hudd said she did raise this with the Government at the last Meeting they had had, but no answer was forthcoming, so we are just carrying on as normal until we hear anything more.

The key concern in my view is that from May 2027 until April 2028 the taxpayer will be paying for an extra layer of Council which will have no responsibility and there is no budget allocated for this.

I don't believe as a Council we should get involved in making a decision on what option we would like to support, as I think that whichever option could be seen as a political decision and we should wait to see the outcome of the public engagement which we have been told will be shared with us.

The Council also NOTED a subsequent email received from Dawn Hudd, together with associated information in connection with the aforementioned Meeting.

Following a further discussion, during which Councillor Bennett elaborated further on his attendance at the above Meeting, the Council RESOLVED to take no further action in respect of making any response as an Authority to the Survey or by making a direct response to the Local Government Reorganisation Programme Director for West Sussex, in respect of the three shortlisted options. It was further RESOLVED that Members should be urged to respond to the Survey on an individual basis.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, expressed thanks and appreciation to Councillor Bennett for his most comprehensive Report.

The Council then AGREED that Councillors Bennett and Mrs Cooper should act as the lead Members for the Council in respect of the process and progress in respect of Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.

Councillor Rogers then asked if WSALC could be approached to establish whether there was any information available regarding how Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation operated, and how this affected/impacted on Parish and Town Councils in other parts of the Country.

The Clerk then advised that hard copies of the Survey were available for members of the public to collect at both the Samuel Wickens Centre and the Council Offices.

**209/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL - WESTERN SUSSEX RIVERS TRUST EVENT
AVAILABILITY**

The Chairman reminded Members that the Clerk had previously circulated a letter received from Jonathan Letendrie, Project Support Officer, Climate Change.

The Clerk said that Mr Letendrie was providing Town and Parish Councils with an opportunity to send two representatives to attend an Event being hosted by the Western Sussex Rivers Trust, which would look at the problems facing water environments and how they impacted communities and environment, and the actions Town and Parish Councils could take to address these problems.

She said that she had now received confirmation that the Event would be taking place on Wednesday 10 September from 10.30 am to 1.30 pm, at the Arun Civic Centre.

Following a brief discussion, the Council RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Stevens should be asked if she would be prepared to represent the Council at this Event.

**210/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL - WEST SUSSEX FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
- LAUNCH OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION - PROPOSALS FOR NEXT COMMUNITY
RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Chairman reminded Members that the Clerk had previously circulated an email received from the Interim Chief Fire Officer, together with comments on the Plan received from Councillor Warren.

The Clerk reminded Members that the Fire and Rescue Service had launched a Public Consultation on proposals for its next Community Risk Management Plan - 2026-2030 on 1 July 2025.

Following a brief discussion, the Council RESOLVED that Councillor Warren's comments should be used to form the Council's response to the Consultation, with Members being encouraged to also respond on an individual basis.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, expressed thanks and appreciation to Councillor Warren for all of his hard work in this regard.

**211/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL - STREET LIGHTING - PARISH
MAINTENANCE AND ENERGY 1 APRIL 2024 - 31 MARCH 2025**

The Clerk referred to the recently received Invoice and Street Lighting Inventory, previously circulated, from the Traffic Signals and Street Lighting Team at the West Sussex County Council.

She explained that the total cost for the 44 Units owned by the Parish Council would be £3,629.16 for the 2024/2025 Financial Year which included the cost of maintenance and energy used. She added that this represented a decrease of £240.83 on the previous Financial Year.

The Council was pleased to NOTE this information.

**212/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL - DRIVING TOWARDS A GREENER FUTURE
WITH NEXT PHASE OF EV CHARGEPOINT SITES AGREED**

The Clerk reminded Members that she had previously circulated a News Release dated 2 July 2025 in this regard.

She said that 30 additional (EV) Chargepoints on-street sites had been confirmed and would be being installed, but none of the aforementioned were located in Rustington.

The Council NOTED this information.

213/25 DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS CIRCULATED

The Council NOTED the following Documents and Publications previously circulated for Members' information:-

- (a) Arun District Council - News Release - 15 July 2025, 16 July 2025 and 17 July 2025
- (b) CAGNE - July Bulletin
- (c) CAGNE - New Runway - 28 July 2025
- (d) Carers Support West Sussex - Latest News
- (e) Chestnut Tree House - The summer holidays are all about making memories!
- (f) East Preston Parish Council News - 25 June 2025, 3 July 2025, 9 July 2025 and 24 July 2025
- (g) National Association of Local Councils - Chief Executive's Bulletin - 26 June 2025, 3 July 2025, 10 July 2025, 17 July 2025 and 24 July 2025
- (h) RHS - Your July Gardening Update
- (i) Rustington Residents Association - July 2025 Newsletter
- (j) St Barnabas House - Take a summer stroll and made memories this summer
- (k) St Barnabas House - Get a head start on your school's festive planning
- (l) St Barnabas House - How Adrian's memory lives on through his photographs
- (m) St Barnabas House - What could be better than a summer stroll?
- (n) West Sussex County Council - Emergency Management - UKSA and Met Office Amber Heat-Health Alert is in effect between 12PM on 11/07/2025 until 9AM on 14/07/2025
- (o) West Sussex County Council - Experience Sussex - Plan a summer full of family fun with Experience Sussex
- (p) West Sussex County Council - Health and Wellbeing Summer Special eNewsletter
- (q) West Sussex County Council - Highways, Transport and Planning - News and Updates - 25 June 2025
- (r) West Sussex County Council - News Release - 2 July 2025, 4 July 2025, 7 July 2025, 8 July 2025, 10 July 2025 x3, 16 July 2025, 17 July 2025 x3 and 23 July 2025 x2

There being no further business the Meeting concluded at 8.43 pm.

Chairman:

Date:

There were no questions received either preceding, or at, the Meeting for consideration during the Public Question Time, held prior to the commencement of the formal proceedings.