

Apuldram Parish Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of Apuldram Parish Meeting held on 8th January 2026 which commenced at 6.45pm at the Education Centre, Dell Quay.

PRESENT: Matthew Higgs (Chair), Marsha Jones (Vice Chair), David Bagnall and Helena Dupee.

In attendance: Louise Chater (Clerk), District Councillor Stephen Johnson, District Councillor Adrian Moss, County Councillor Sarah Sharp. Louise Barneston (Western Sussex Rivers Trust – Water Champion), Kate Whitton (Western Sussex Rivers Trust – Chalk Stream Resilience Officer), Jim Lines (Chichester Harbour Conservancy – Vice Chair) and eight members of the public.

01.26 APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and noted from Mark Morrane, Graham Pound, District Councillor Richard Bates and Richard Austin Director of Conservation Chichester Harbour Conservancy.

02.26 MINUTES

On a proposal by Marsha Jones, it was RESOLVED to agree and sign the minutes of the meeting held on [22nd May 2025](#) ; this was duly completed.

03.26 MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

04.26 SPEAKERS SEGMENT

1. West Sussex Rivers Trust Officers; Louise advised on the role of the trust and the officers and reported that she is currently working with the Parish Meeting in relation to riparian responsibilities.

The Trust also work with landowners to balance the responsibilities of being a landowner in relation to keeping the waterway flowing but also the duties to provide wildlife habitats.

Kate reported that she is responsible for raising the awareness of the River Lavant and the River Ems, reducing the pollution events and litter, slowing the

flow, creating wetlands, tree planting and enhancing the habitat. They are proposing to carry out a litter pick near the parish boundary, and volunteers would be most welcome.

Kate requested resident report pollutions to the Environment Agency but would be very grateful if you can also advise [Western Sussex Rivers Trust](#).

They are also in discussion with Southern Water, in relation the sewage discharge into the harbour.

Louise highlighted the issue of dog and cat flea treatment which kill the invertebrates. The ingredient in these treatments has been banned in agricultural use and therefore the ingress in the water is from domestic usage. It was highlighted that it is not just from dogs swimming in the rivers and streams it is when you have stroked your pet and wash your hands it gets into the sewage system and cannot be removed from water.

There are lots of volunteering opportunities with the Trust, Louise provided an update on the River Guardian scheme, volunteers water tests their nominated location once a month, the kit tests for phosphate (sewage) and nitrates (agricultural runoff). There is a volunteer for this area, and they have been carrying out testing for just over a year. The test results for this section of the Lavant are not too bad, which is causing a conundrum as further upstream they are very high. Therefore, if anyone has historical information on where there are any springs this information would be very much appreciated.

Q: hedgerows removal when clearing the ditches; what is the landowner's responsibility to replace them.

There is no duty to replace the hedgerows, however, the hedgerows are important wildlife corridors, the Trust want to build relationships with the landowners to encourage planting.

The Chair raised concern about the managed realignment project at Apuldram Meadows. District Councillor Moss highlighted that there is a live planning application in relation to this project ([25/01160/FUL](#)) and comments should be submitted to the District Council.

A resident expressed concern about the pollution in the harbour and asked if it was conducive to natural thriving saltmarsh. Louise responded that they work closely with Southern Water in relation to the issues associated with pollution. She was of the view that it is a good place to create habitat; reed beds are very

good for filtering pollution, however she also understood some residents have concern about the loss of the seawall in relation to their walking routes.

She highlighted that Sewage Treatment works is not a miracle worker; it only treats wee and poo; currently it does not filter out the pharmaceutical product, road run off, cleaning chemicals and micro plastics. She encouraged residents to engage with Southern Water, write to your District and County Councillors and your MP to highlight your concerns.

Concern was expressed about the harbour water ingress into the River Lavant. Kate responded that there will always be an interface between the sea and the river the brackish water is an interesting study area.

2. Chichester Harbour Friends – Jim reported that the Friends supports the Harbour Conservancy and provide grants to enable them to achieve their objectives.

They hold events and provide talks for their members, members volunteer to help with maintenance of footpaths, maintain oyster boat Terror, citizen science projects and habitat enhancement.

Jim encouraged the residents to join and highlighted that they are looking for volunteers and trustees.

05.26 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor Sharp reported that a meeting was held with West Sussex County Council highways officers, this meeting came away with 11 action points.

The officers are currently working on the budget; the Labour Government has reallocated funding, and therefore the County Councils central funding budget has been reduced, County Councillors Sharp will be putting forward a motion to encourage sustainable transport within the budget.

The County Council continues to work in the background in relation to the Local Government Reorganisation.

The breadth of the services provided by the County Council, 11.6% of adults in the County smoke, this has a massive effect on the public health in the county. She highlighted that vapes and batteries should not be put in the bin, as this causes fires in the dustbin lorries and at the waste treatment centre, which has a huge financial impact on the County Council.

Sarah highlighted the services provided by the library which includes free blood pressure monitors, the buddy system to bring housebound residents books, services for residents with dementia and young children.

There were no questions for County Councillor Sharp.

The Chair thanked Sarah for her time today.

06.26 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

District Councillor Moss reported that the District Council continues to work towards the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation. He highlighted that although the government have delayed the election of the mayor, the strategic authority will continue to be formed and will be managed by the chief executives of the existing county and unitary authorities.

Local Government Reform is continuing, the consultation ends on Sunday, he requested residents take the time to submit their comments. The District Council and his personal view is there should be two unitary authorities.

The County Council have put forward a proposal to cancel the elections, his view is that this is undemocratic, the District Council have the means and capacity to enable the County Council Elections to take place. County Councillor Sharp responded that if the County Council elections take place there would be significant cost implications for the County Council as the members will only be in place for one year prior to the next round of elections for the shadow authority.

The Local Plan has been adopted; however, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has changed and therefore this has affected the local plan. The District Council must increase its 5-year housing supply buffer by 20% from July.

Budget; there are three funding streams, income, investment, and the government settlement. In December the District Council received notification of the government settlement which was £1 million less than expected; the District Council is reviewing its budget, but it will balance its books and invest in new services.

District Council Moss highlighted that when the Local Government Reforms have taken place the council tax for residents in Chichester District will increase because of harmonisation between Chichester District Council, Adur District Council and Arun District Council. The Mayoral Authority Council Tax will be an additional charge.

07.26 ELECTION OF ADDITIONAL MEMBERS TO THE CHAIR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

On a proposal by Marsha Jones, Zarina Chatwin agreed to become a voting member on the Chair's Advisory Committee. The acceptance of office was duly signed.

08.26 REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING POLICY

1. Replacement Standing Orders – to review the number of parish meetings held per year. The Standing Orders currently state that in addition to the Annual Meeting (which takes place in May) there will be at least three other ordinary meetings. Following discussion, it was agreed to reduce the number of ordinary meetings to two per year.

09.26 FINANCE

1. Overview of current financial year the Clerk reported that at the end of November, that 56% of the year's budget had been spent. There is currently £9,204.20 in the parishes bank account. The invoice for the new website was currently outstanding.
2. On a proposal by the Chair, it was RESOLVED to approve the budget and set the precept for 2026/27 at £5,821.00 which will equate to £60.83 for a band D property.
It was noted that the precept request was a reduction of 5% on the previous year.
3. Payments – On a proposal by the Chair it was RESOLVED to make the following payments:
Mrs Louise Chater, cheque number 100233, £383.33, Clerks Fees and Expenses Month 8
Information Commissioner, cheque number 100234, £52.00, Registration Fee
Mrs Louise Chater, cheque number 100235, £274.25, Clerks Fees and Expenses Month 9

10.26 HIGHWAYS UPDATE

1. A286 Speed Reduction project – Marsha Jones reported that work has progressed, the Manhood Peninsula Partnership held a meeting which highlighted the highways hotspots within the peninsula.

West Sussex County Council have carried out a safety audit on the B2145, and a similar audit is due to be conducted on A286 in 2026.

2. Speed Indicator Device (SID) funding, it was noted that the Clerk had applied to the Woodger Trust to provide the funding for this project, the application was unfortunately unsuccessful. The clerk has registered with the Road Safety Trust to be notified of the next funding window and is continuing to investigate funding opportunities. There are a number of reports on the website which highlight the effectiveness of SID devices.

The Clerk highlighted that Donnington Parish Council were considering purchasing a SID and there may be the opportunity to use their SID.

3. Dell Quay Road – yellow lines, road surface and bollards; the Dell Quay Road is due to have surface treatment in the summer, and the yellow lines will be reinstated following the surface treatment. A discussion took place in relation to the provision of the additional yellow lines on the corner opposite Saltings and Apuldram House, the consensus was that the residents supported a submission of a Traffic Regulation Order to enable this to happen. The Clerk requested evidence of poor parking at this location and photos of pedestrians, cyclists etc walking in the road. The highways officer accepted responsibility for the hedgerows at this location; the Clerk to follow up to request the hedgerow be cut back.
4. Apuldram Lane South – ditch depth and vehicles entering the ditch was discussed with the highways officer, evidence to be submitted to the County Council to enable the installation of Highway boundary Hazard Markers.
5. Operation Watershed – As part of Phase One of the Operation Watershed Scheme to improve the drainage in Apuldram Lane South a drain lines survey was carried out on the Birdham Road, Dell Quay Road and the top of Apuldram Lane South opposite Lane End.

The results were inconclusive on where the gulley at the corner opposite Lane End went. The report stated that they found a large root mass 2 meters along the culvert (pipe) which is probably expected with the amount of trees/vegetation on that corner. Though the survey is indicating as the water from the jetting wasn't coming back towards the gulley that it was going somewhere but just wasn't identified at the time. They also tried identifying any system by jetting/CCTV from the A286 along Dell Quay to Lane End, but this wasn't evident either.

The County Council have instructed Landbuild to provide a scope and a quote to re-establish the historic ditch line behind the existing road gully, heading east along Dell Quay, connect the existing road gully into the re-established ditch and lower the verges along Apuldram Lane South on both sides up to the layby to allow surface water to flow on to the verges. On a proposal by Hilary Caine, it was RESOLVED to submit a further Operation Watershed application to enable the final phase of this project to be completed.

11.26 FOOTPATHS

1. Footpath 179 (Donnington to Apuldram Lane South) Diversion and Salterns Way Diversion, the clerk is still working to obtain quotes to present to Donnington Parish Council for their consideration.
2. Harbour Conservancy proposed new footpath on Dell Quay Road - it was reported that the harbour conservancy were currently in negotiations with the landowner (Church Commissioners) and the tenant farmer to provide a permissive path within the field boundary to enable safe access to the visitors to the education centre. The view of the residents was that the preferred option would be on the northern side of the road, with the exit being near to the Beakeys Walk entrance. The Coach would park on verge near the farm track crossing Dell Quay Road

12.26 ENVIRONMENT

1. Ditch Maintenance - a site meeting has taken place in relation to the ditches to the rear of Church Farm and the Apuldram Centre and the ditch adjacent to the highway between the boundary of the apuldram centre and the entrance to the dog training field. West Sussex County Council have confirmed that the tenants will carry out the work, but no date has been provided. The Clerk is to follow up on this as the deadline to complete the work is fast approaching.

13.26 THE FUTURE OF APULDRAM PARISH MEETING

Number of current electors as of today is 145, to become a parish council there would need to be 150 registered electors.

To either disband the parish meeting or to become a parish council the District Council would need to carry out a community governance review, either option would require a vote to be held by the residents of the parish to instruct the Chair of the Parish Meeting to initiate the process.

It was agreed that District Councillor Adrain Moss facilitate an informal meeting prior to the next meeting, to discuss the process with the officers.

14.26 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW AND MAYORAL ELECTIONS

[Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove, and West Sussex](#) – consultation closes at 11:59pm on 11th January 2026 – no discussion took place.

15.26 CLERK'S REPORT

Nothing further.

16.26 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (questions to be submitted in writing in advance of the meeting)

No questions had been received, and no questions were raised.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed:

Dated: