

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 5TH MARCH 2025 AT 7.00PM AT THE TOWN HALL**

Present: **Councillor** **Annette Eyre (Town Mayor)**
 Matthew Bayliss
 Don Hammond
 Graham Hill
 Matthew Kellermann
 Nick O'Brien
 Janice Treacher
 Peter Wadman

In attendance: **Pat Harris** - **Town Clerk**
 Hayley Carter - **Deputy Clerk**
 Samantha Brown - **Admin / Cllr Support Officer**
 14 Members of the public
 County Councillor Andrew Joy

128 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Mark Boyce-Churn, John Chubb, Doug Richards, Barbara Tansey and Jonathan Waugh

129 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Town Mayor:

1. Welcomed both councillors and members of the public to the meeting, then presented cards and gifts to the Very Reverend Andrew Micklefield and former Town mayor, Bob Booker, who are leaving the town.
2. Invited Adeel Shah to say a few words as he presented two fruit baskets to the Council on behalf of Jalsa Salana and announced that the dates for this year's festival are 25th, 26th and 27th July.
3. Offered the Council's sincere apologies to Cathy Wilson, who is the Chair and Programme Secretary for the Alton Natural History Society as her name was mis-spelt in the agenda papers under Agenda item 6. This was corrected immediately upon notification from Cathy on the website.
4. Reminded all those attending that in accordance with the Council's published Recording of Meetings Policy, as displayed on the doors and the table at the back of the hall, anyone wishing to make any recording of a meeting must let the Chair of the meeting know prior to or at the start of the meeting. If anyone does not wish to be recorded, they must make the Chair of the meeting aware. No filming of any member of the public is allowed without their consent, or of any child or vulnerable person without the consent of them and their parent, guardian or carer.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 paragraph 41 (1) only the official signed minutes of the council and its committees will be recognised as the formal, statutory and legally binding record of a meeting.

Councillor Kellermann asked for confirmation that the Deputy Clerk was not using any recording equipment or AI to write the Minutes.

The Town Clerk so confirmed.

130 **Minutes of the Full Council Meetings held on 5th February 2025**

Councillor Hill thanked the Deputy Clerk for another comprehensive set of minutes and thanked the Clerk and Deputy Clerk for two excellent workshops providing a wealth of information for councillors the previous week.

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED

to APPROVE the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 5th February 2025

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Wadman

Against: Councillor Kellermann

Abstained: Councillor O'Brien (due to absence in February)

131 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

No Declarations of Interest were noted.

132 **Correspondence Received and Questions to the Council**

Correspondence received:

132.1 Farnborough Noise Group February newsletter received 11th February and circulated to all councillors (a copy of which is included in supplementary papers)

132.2 E-mail correspondence was received from John Grace to Councillors Annette Eyre & Nick O'Brien:

Hello Annette Eyre and Nick O'Brien

As Mayor and Deputy Mayor of ATC I would like to ask you both why it appears that the only representation ATC have currently on the EHDC Planning Committee is solely Graham Hill who is a reserve member. In the past I know Graham Hill, and I believe Steve Hunt, have been full members of this extremely important committee.

Alton is the largest town in the EHDC area outside of the SDNP. It looks like some 3000 + houses are planned by the EHDC planners, for Alton Town in the emerging EHDC Local plan. This will have a massive effect on our town and the role of the EHDC planning committee will be extremely important in the coming years.

It would seem clear that we should have more of our Alton Town councillors on this committee. It seems equally clear that if we do not then others will determine the fate of Alton when it comes to future house building, infrastructure, GPs , transport etc. Please would you raise this with your fellow Town Councillors so that we have much better representation on this vitally important committee.

*Best regards
John Grace*

- 132.3 A statement was received from Louise Parker, Chair of the Amery Hill Residents Group (AHRA), which had been circulated in advance of the meeting to councillors, who had advised she will be asking a follow up question at the meeting:

There are three connected issues in the relation to the River Wey and the potential flood risk to the centre of Alton and properties adjacent to the River Wey:

The immediate issue relates to the regular and emergency clearance of the grill at Cut Pound.

A regular maintenance clearance service has been provided by East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) for over 20 years, but this was withdrawn in the autumn of 2024. Clearance of the grill is now the responsibility of Hampshire County Council (HCC); however, to date, no details about the service provision have been provided. Any clearance activities are now carried out on an ad hoc basis and also include local residents removing the debris themselves. We urgently require HCC to confirm the County's responsibilities and provide details of both routine and emergency arrangements. Cllr. Joy offered to liaise with the HCC officers; however, to date, we have not had a response to our questions.

Impact: if the Cut Pound Grill is blocked, then upstream properties are at risk of flooding.

The short-term issue relates to a proposal by South East Water (SEW) to cease abstraction at their Lasham pumping station.

We understand that the change in abstraction activities would occur within the next 12 months. The proposal is being considered as a contribution to improving the health of the river. This change would significantly increase the flow in the River Wey. A detailed survey has been carried out and the draft findings were recently presented to local residents and Alton Town Council members. The report confirms that the recent years of heavy rainfall / storm events have considerably increased the river levels and the modelling of the additional flow resulting from ceasing abstraction would produce a very significant risk of flooding beyond just the riparian owners with properties immediately adjacent to the River Wey. The proposal to cease abstraction needs to be withdrawn.

Impact: if abstraction were to cease, the flood risk within Alton would significantly increase.

The long-term issue relates to the need for a Town Flood Action Plan.

In 2022, HCC published the 'Hampshire Catchment Prioritisation'. This identified the town as an at-risk area in terms of flooding. It recommended that the local councils, both Alton Town Council and EHDC, should set up a working party to draw

up a plan of prevention and action to deal with the dangers identified. To date, no action has been taken to implement this and yet we continue to see parts of the town centre flooded after heavy rainfall. The chairman of Amery Hill Residents Association recently raised this matter with Damian Hinds MP who confirmed that HCC was the lead authority for this and was referred to Cllr. Joy who would follow up directly. Damian Hinds referenced that Farringdon was a good example of where a Flood Action Plan had been successfully adopted and arranged for Cllr Mark Kemp-Gee to liaise with Cllr Joy. At the time of writing, there has been no further information.

Impact: with the more frequent storm events, combined with the potential changes to the River Wey, there is a real risk that a significant percentage of the town's population would be affected in an emergency, and we don't currently have a plan in place to mitigate and/or manage such an emergency situation.

The Town Mayor invited members of the public to speak:

132.4 Louise Parker read the following question from Amery Hill Residents Association (AHRA):

“We submitted correspondence in advance in relation to the flood risk the Town faces both from intense rainfall and the River Wey. The statement illustrates how the community is currently vulnerable without a Flood Action Plan in place. Alton Town Council is named as a Key Stakeholder in Table 1 of Hampshire County Council's Wey Western Catchment Management Plan, and Table 3 lists establishing a high-level Flood Action Plan as an initial task. The Plan was published in May 2023.

What action is Alton Town Council, which represents the community at risk, going to take in conjunction with the other Key Stakeholders to establish a Flood Action Plan, and what is the ETA for this?”

County Councillor Joy offered thanks to Louise and the AHRA for raising this issue. He said that the perception is that EHDC's responsibility has been handed over to HCC but that is not the case. There have been various discussions and the AHRA has been involved in all of them.

He advised that he had just come from the service delivery side of the Highways Maintenance team and that their primary concern is to ensure the highway is not impacted by flooding. That includes inspection of the bridges and clearance of the grilles (such as at Cut Pound and Drayman's Way). They focus on active monitoring for debris blockages, which will include inspections during the 2025-26 programme year, but the frequency of these has not yet been agreed. He said that they are therefore undertaking frequent but not scheduled inspections, and if they decide to implement a schedule, he will make sure an update is provided to both AHRA and Alton Town Council.

Town councillors spoke about the meetings which had been held with residents which had been hosted in the Town Hall regarding flood prevention planning and chaired by EHDC as well as other meetings hosted by South East Water, again which representatives of the Town Council and AHRA had attended alongside residents of the riparian properties along the River Wey.

Councillors in responding to the specific request by AHRA advised that they would come back with an answer when they had had time to consider it.

133 **King's Pond: To appoint a Task & Finish Group**

Councillor Wadman referenced the report tabled and the process the council had gone through in recommending to Council membership and make-up of the Task & Finish Group. He also acknowledged the extensive publicity afforded to the appointment of a Task & Finish Group and they had been very pleased with the response, the number of volunteers and the skills and level of interest that each brought to the table which was noted by councillors.

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED to:

Endorse the recommendations to appoint:

(i) Angela Owens, Eric Phillips, Timothy Pinchen, Catherine Ayres, Paul Ebbutt, Ryan Doran & John Quincey be appointed to the technical team and

(ii) Terri Quincey, Patrick Swaby, Dr. June Chatfield, Olivia Paynter, James Willis, Jenny Griffiths, Cathy Wilson, Vicky Kuhn & Maggie Hage be invited to sit on the Community & Stakeholder team

(iii) representatives from the Environment Agency, River Wey Trust and EHDC Planning Department to be requested to attend meetings of Task & Finish Group Technical team

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

134 **Full Planning Application (EHDC-24-0027-FUL): Land NW of Ackender Wood, Basingstoke Road**

This planning application falls within the boundary of Beech Parish Council and Alton Town Council is being consulted based on development in a neighbouring parish.

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Treacher, it was:

RESOLVED:

To submit a response of NO OBJECTION with comments on Planning Application EHDC-24-0027-FUL regarding the screening of the site and the need for a formal pedestrian access into Ackender Wood as follows:

- 1. The Design and Access Statement (page 22 refers) states that the development will create a “new gateway development to Alton”. In**

the most recent draft (June 2024) of the revised Alton Neighbourhood Plan, the views across the site towards the town are denoted as “key views” in Figure 27 of the Alton Design Guidance and Codes, along with the following text:

“Development proposals that impact on key views and gateways [including the gateway at the junction of Basingstoke Road and Pertuis Avenue, alongside the site] into and out of the town, as defined in Figure 27...., must demonstrate how they have responded positively to these views and gateways.”

Thus, any development on the site should have sufficient planting to preserve as far as possible those green key views from Beech, Wyards Farm and the A339 east and south towards Ackender Wood.

2. There should be formal pedestrian access into Ackender Wood from the site, with the use of a kissing gate to prevent motor vehicle access.
3. Referenced the Transport Study of 2015 undertaken by Hampshire County Council & East Hampshire District Council and requested that proper consideration be given to the feasibility of creating a roundabout at the junction with Pertuis Avenue, given the potential development coming forward on Land to the north of Basingstoke Road.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Hammond, Hill, O’Brien, Treacher and Wadman

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

135 **Edgar Hall: renewal of fence along the north side of Anstey Park (to the rear of Edgar Hall and Energique)**

Councillors considered the three quotes before them to renew the dilapidated fence. On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Kellermann, it was

RESOLVED

to appoint Contractor C (John Hughes Fencing and Landscapes Limited) to replace the fence entirely with the Vmex anticlimb mesh fencing from Anstey Lane to the East of Energique at a cost of £8,994.90.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

136 **Town Council Insurance**

On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

**RESOLVED to
approve renewal of the council's insurance policy with its current
provider Zurich on a 3-year deal at the price of: £24,485.90
commencing 1st April 2025.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Hammond, Hill, O'Brien, Treacher
and Wadman

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

137 **Legal Agreements**

137.1 Citizens Advice Bureau

On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED to:

- (i) Formalise the current agreement by way of side letter to the current Lease for the use of Unit 16 based on usage of 3 days a week Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. with the unit being cleared down to allow for community use from 6.00 p.m. (No confidential material to be left in Unit 16)**
- (ii) confirm agreement to proceed to issue a new 2 Year Licence as detailed above for Unit 17 (exclusive use) and Unit 16 (exclusive use on a Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. each day removing all items) with a break clause at the end of Year 1 for a peppercorn rent of £1 with effect from 1st November 2025.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

137.2 Alton Gateway - S106 Agreement – transfer of open space

Councillor Hill asked the Clerk to ensure the land is passed over to the Council is as good a condition as possible. The Town Clerk assured the Council that she has been involved in the design and that it will be mostly hardstanding due to the nature of the site.

On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

**RESOLVED to
confirm agreement to the transfer of the open space land at the Alton Gateway entrance to the town, to Alton Town Council together with a**

commuted sum of £75,000 index-linked, subject to all conditions of the S106 Agreement having been satisfied

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

137.3 Aquiva – renewal of Lease at Windmill Hill – Heads of Terms

On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED

to confirm agreement to enter into a new Lease with Aquiva for the rental of agricultural land at Windmill Hill on the following basis:

- **Rental of £3,500 per annum payable in advance with the first payment due on signing of the Lease.**
- **Rent reviews set at 3 yearly intervals during the term and on the anniversary date of the**
- **Legal fees to be paid by Aquiva as agreed at £2,000**
- **The Lease will be for a 15-year term**
- **The rental payment of £4,141 received on 1st December 2024 (in advance) to be retained by the Council.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

138 **Calendar of Meetings 2025/2026 for approval**

On the proposal of Councillor O'Brien, seconded by Councillor Treacher, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the calendar of meetings 2025/26 as tabled

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

139 **Statement of Accounts to 28th February 2025, Asset Register and Review of Council Assets**

The reports were circulated prior to the meeting, as always, for councillors' consideration.

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Wadman, it was

RESOLVED

To confirm approval of:

1. **The balance sheet dated 28th February 2025**
2. **The Income and Expenditure account to 28th February 2025**

3. **The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit & Property Fund Accounts**
4. **The Payments over £500 covering 1st- 28th February 2025**
5. **The standing items on the Bank Account which includes Direct Debits & Standing Orders as at 28th February**
6. **The Asset Register and review of the Council's Assets as at 28th February 2025**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Hammond, Hill, O'Brien, Treacher and Wadman

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

Councillor Hammond asked that building valuations be redone for all buildings as the figures in the Asset Register seem a little low in some cases, especially for a rebuild. The Clerk agreed to bring this back to the April meeting for resolution, then they could be done over the course of the coming year.

140 **Event Grant: Dementia Friendly Alton**

On the proposal of Councillor O'Brien, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To APPROVE an Event Grant of £500 (five hundred pounds) to be used to assist in the hosting of two events, with the grant being paid under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Hammond, Hill, O'Brien, Treacher and Wadman

Against: Councillor Kellermann

141 **Fees and Charges 2025/2026**

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED

to endorse an increase of 5% in ATC pitch hire fees as per the charges table in Appendix A with effect from 1st April 2025.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Wadman

Against: Councillor Kellermann

Abstained: Councillor O'Brien

142 **Landlord's Consent: Alton Football Club: variation of consent granted to erect a structure**

Alton Football Club had requested Council to consider an alternative standing and wheelchair access in addition to that previously approved by the Town Council as they believe at this time that this could be a more suitable solution, however, they wish to keep their options open and obtain costings for both. On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED
to grant Landlord's Consent to Alton FC for both options as requested to improve standing and wheelchair access at The Enclosure.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

143 **Review of Alton Town Council Policies**

143.1 On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED
to adopt the Events Hiring Terms and Conditions as tabled

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

143.2 On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED
to adopt the Information available under the Model Publication Scheme as tabled

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

144 **Consultations**

144.1 South Downs National Park – Have your say on the Local Plan Review – 8-week consultation opened on 20th January 2025

Councillor O'Brien thanked the Clerk for the detailed response and Councillor Hill agreed, saying the draft response is excellent.

Three small amendments were requested:

- To correct the number of homes required in East Hampshire
- To change ‘equality’ to ‘equally’
- To change ‘immotive’ to ‘emotive’

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED

to submit the comments as drafted with these three minor amendments in response to the South Downs National Park Local Plan review which focus specifically on the proposed housing numbers

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

Councillor Hill reminded councillors that they could also submit individual responses.

144.2 Hampshire and the Solent Devolution Consultation – opened on 17th February and will close on 13th April 2025

It was noted that this consultation is now open.

145 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Eyre, it was

RESOLVED

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1, subsection 2, and, as per subsection 3A, where the public are excluded from a meeting of a relevant local government body under subsection (2), the body may also prevent any person from reporting on the meeting using methods-
(a)which can be used without that person’s presence at the meeting, and
(b)which enable persons not present at the meeting to see or hear the proceedings at the meeting as it takes place or later.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION

146 **Initial Assessment for a 3G/4G pitch in Alton**

See confidential minute

147 **Recruitment**

A verbal update was provided by the Chair of the Staffing Committee

148 **Code of Conduct Complaint**

A verbal update was provided by the Town Clerk

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

APPENDIX A

	2022 Charge	2023/24 Charges from 01/04/23	2024/25 Charges from 01/04/24	Proposed 2025/26 Charges from 01/04/25
<u>ANSTEY PARK</u>				
<u>RUGBY</u>				
<u>Adult Match</u>				
Pitch charge	£ 40.23	£ 42.24	£ 43.51	£ 45.68
Changing Room charge (exc VAT)	£ 19.67	£ 21.05	£ 21.68	£ 22.76
Changing Room charge (inc VAT)	£ 23.60			
<u>Junior Match</u>				
Pitch charge	£ 20.12	£ 21.13	£ 21.76	£ 22.85
Changing Room charge (exc VAT)	£ 9.83	£ 10.32	£ 10.63	£ 11.16
Changing Room charge (inc VAT)	£ 11.80			
<u>Adult Training session</u>				
Changing Room charge (exc VAT)	£ 39.34	£ 41.31	£ 42.55	£ 44.67
Changing Room charge (exc VAT)	£ 19.67	£ 20.65	£ 21.27	£ 22.34
Changing Room charge (inc VAT)	£ 23.60			
<u>Junior Training session</u>				
Changing Room charge (exc VAT)	£ 19.67	£ 20.65	£ 21.27	£ 22.34
Changing Room charge (exc VAT)	£ 9.83	£ 10.32	£ 10.63	£ 11.16
Changing Room charge (inc VAT)	£ 11.80			
<u>FOOTBALL</u>				
Junior match	£ 34.43	£ 36.15	£ 37.24	£ 39.10
<u>MUGA</u>				
Adult court - per hour (exc VAT)	£ 20.50	£ 21.53	£ 22.17	£ 23.28
Adult court - per hour (inc VAT)	£ 28.80			
Junior court - per hour (exc VAT)	£ 15.50	£ 16.28	£ 16.76	£ 17.60
Junior court - per hour (inc VAT)	£ 21.60			
<u>BALLOON LAUNCHES</u>				
Fee per launch	£ 38.25	£ 40.16	£ 41.37	£ 43.44
Minimum annual fee	£ 377.10	£ 395.96	£ 407.83	£ 428.23
Maximum annual fee	£ 1,257.00	£ 1,319.85	£ 1,359.45	£ 1,427.42
<u>JUBILEE PLAYING FIELDS</u>				
<u>FOOTBALL</u>				
Adult Match (exc VAT) (regular hirers)	£ 72.10	£ 75.71	£ 77.98	£ 81.87
Adult Match (inc VAT)	£ 86.52			
Adult Match (exc VAT) (ad hoc)			£ 85.78	£ 90.07
Junior Match	£ 34.43	£ 36.15	£ 37.24	£ 39.10

CRICKET**Adult**

1st Team (including changing facilities)	£	109.30	£	114.77	£	118.21	£	124.12
2nd Team (including changing facilities)	£	109.30	£	114.77	£	118.21	£	124.12
3rd Team (including changing facilities)	£	85.73	£	90.02	£	92.72	£	97.35
4th Team (including changing facilities)	£	85.73	£	90.02	£	92.72	£	97.35
1st Team (without changing facilities)	£	48.09	£	50.49	£	52.01	£	54.61
2nd Team (without changing facilities)	£	48.09	£	50.49	£	52.01	£	54.61
3rd Team (without changing facilities)	£	48.09	£	50.49	£	52.01	£	54.61
4th Team (without changing facilities)	£	48.09	£	50.49	£	52.01	£	54.61

Junior

Junior Team (including changing facilities)	£	44.60	£	46.83	£	48.23	£	50.65
Junior Team (without changing facilities)	£	24.52	£	25.75	£	26.52	£	27.84

Practice Nets

Adult	£	22.77	£	23.91	£	24.63	£	25.86
Junior	£	11.38	£	11.95	£	12.31	£	12.92

Tea Room/Kitchen

Per session	£	18.60	£	19.90	£	20.50	£	21.52
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*** HMRC advised no VAT is chargeable with effect from 1st April 2023 on sports facilities**