

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025 AT 7.00PM AT THE ALTON ASSEMBLY ROOMS**

Present:	Councillor	Annette Eyre (Town Mayor)
		Matthew Bayliss
		Mark Boyce-Churn
		Chris Botten
		Don Hammond
		Graham Hill
		Matthew Kellermann
		Richard Moore
		Roger Lamb
		Nick O'Brien
		John Quincey
		Barbara Tansey
		Janice Treacher

In attendance:

Tom Horwood	-	Town Clerk
Hayley Carter	-	Deputy Clerk

47 Members of the public and press

79 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

80 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

1. The Mayor welcomed councillors and the public and thanked everyone for attending.
2. She wished everyone a merry Christmas and encouraged people to come along to the Reindeer Run on Sunday 14th December, registration for which is from 9am in Market Square.
3. She thanked the Lions for their annual Santa's Sleigh which is going around the town in December, and which she joined for their first one. She asked people to get out and support them and give them a cheer.

81 **Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 8 October 2025 for Approval**

Councillor Hill proposed that the minutes be approved. This was seconded by Councillor Kellermann, and it was

RESOLVED

to APPROVE the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 8 October 2025

Councillor Kellermann requested recorded votes for all items throughout the meeting.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Botten, Hammond, Hill, Kellermann, Lamb, O'Brien, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher

Abstained: Councillors Bayliss, Boyce-Churn and Moore

82 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

Councillor Bayliss declared an interest in item 10 as he has an allotment.

Councillor Lamb declared an interest in item 16, the lease for Alton Tennis Club, as he is Chair of the club and left for that item.

Councillor Hill asked for a blanket dispensation for all councillors to take part in item 10 when it came to setting the precept as all are council tax payers. This was granted by the Town Clerk.

83 Correspondence Received and Questions to the Council

83.1 The following correspondence was received on 28 November 2025 from Nicky MacDonald, Managing Director, Mid and North Division, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust:

Dear partner,

We are writing to update you on plans to improve how rehabilitation care is delivered at Alton Community Hospital.

We are committed to making sure our inpatient rehabilitation services continue to meet the needs of our local communities while also making the best use of our NHS staff, spaces, and resources. After a detailed review of patient data and activity, we've found that the current number of beds is higher than what's actually needed.

Most people recover better in the comfort of their own homes, and national guidance strongly supports this "home-first" approach. It's backed by clinical evidence and, most importantly, by what patients themselves have told us.

We are making some positive changes to how we deliver inpatient rehabilitation, and we want to reassure you that anyone who clinically needs a rehabilitation bed will still have access to one.

This new approach gives us a great opportunity to strengthen medical and therapy support across all seven days of the week, helping us provide safer, more consistent, and higher-quality care for everyone. As part of these improvements, we have brought all inpatient rehabilitation beds together on a single ward.

This will help us make the most of our skilled staff and resources, while continuing to offer the same high standard of person-centred care. By bringing the team together in one place, we can boost collaboration, ensure more consistent care, and create a more supportive environment for recovery making it easier for patients to get back on their feet.

Local people will still have access to inpatient rehabilitation at Alton Community Hospital when it is clinically appropriate. Alton will remain a vital part of our local NHS, and this plan supports its long-term future. By using beds more effectively and enhancing our medical and therapy staffing, we can respond more flexibly to pressures across the system, making sure care is available when and where it's needed most.

We are also making some exciting updates across the hospital to support a wider range of community health services. Our Community Clinic and Podiatry teams will move into newly refurbished, modern clinical spaces on Level 1 designed to be more comfortable and fit for purpose for both patients and staff. District Nurses will also return to the site after relocating during the pandemic, helping to strengthen local care and coordination.

Importantly, we have created space for future innovation. These changes mean we are well-positioned to introduce new services and care options in the coming year making Alton Community Hospital a true health and wellbeing hub for the whole community.

This is all part of our wider ambition to provide better care, closer to home aligned with the Trust's five-year strategy and the national NHS 10-year Health Plan.

We are planning local drop-in events where residents can learn more about the proposals, ask questions and share their views. Details can be found by visiting: <https://hiowhealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/improving-our-services/increasing-home-based-rehabilitation>

We are proud to continue providing high-quality, person-centred care for people in the Alton area. Your support and involvement are incredibly important to us, and we truly value your input as we work together to shape the future of our services.

- 83.2 At its 8 October meeting, Alton Town Council agreed unanimously “to trial grazing in Will Hall Meadow from Spring 2026, subject to all necessary arrangements being in place.” Work is ongoing to investigate the appropriate arrangements before a final decision to commence is made and residents have been told that they will be consulted as part of this process. Messages were received from 21 local residents objecting to the proposal. While most have not given consent for their message and name to be published, the following

from Graham Mead was received on 13 November, who has given consent. Other correspondents made similar points.

I am writing with regard to the proposed plan to graze cattle on Will Hall Meadow. I have copied Tom Horwood as I have previously had a number of interactions with him on this matter.

I apologise that this email is so long, but I see it as a complex issue, and potentially one with high risks.

I raised concerns on the grazing proposal with Tom Horwood as a result of the minutes of the council meeting on 8th October. I was advised: ‘...The decision was to see if a trial would be possible...’ The Minutes read as follows:

68 Will Hall Management Plan

*Councillor Hammond proposed the motion that grazing be trialled in Will Hall Meadow from Spring 2027, **subject to all necessary arrangements being in place.***

This was seconded by Councillor Botten.

Gareth Hurd spoke about the discussions had with the Deputy Clerk and Head Groundsman and his suggestions for managing the site and grazing the land and answered questions from councillors.

Councillor Kellermann proposed an amendment, that: “The trial be from 2026” This was seconded by Councillor Botten and with all councillors voting in favour the amendment was carried. Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Hammond, seconded by Councillor Botten, it was carried.

All in favour.

The wording I have highlighted, and the information from Tom Horwood, suggest there is work to do before a trial can be confirmed. Unfortunately, there do not seem to be any published council documents that detail precisely what scheme is proposed, how it might operate, what safeguards would be in place (for livestock or people), what the costs or net gain/loss might be, etc. Nor does there seem to be any commitment to consult with the public, even though there are many residents who would be directly impacted by any such trial.

As you will know, this land is used by residents of the Hop Fields development. However, it is also used by residents from other developments and people who live further west along the Basingstoke road. The prime functions are to use it as a path to/from town and to walk/exercise dogs, although in the summer it is often used for children to run/play. Users include people of all ages including parents with young children, pushchair users and wheelchair users. The path is used at all times of day, including in the dark.

My understanding is that the plan is to use electronic tagging only to control a herd of cattle (presumably heifers?) in order to graze the area, in order to save money on the grass cutting cost. If my understanding is correct, the grass is only cut once or twice each year, therefore the saving cannot be particularly significant.

I have a number of specific concerns regarding any such trail. Please find them detailed below:

Environmental Impact

I had the understanding that many councils, including our own, have adopted a 'wilding policy'. This entails cutting grass only once (perhaps twice) each year, to allow land to re-wild and support birds, butterflies, insects more generally to thrive in environments that would otherwise not be available. This obviously requires letting the grass grow. I am fully supportive of these. Item 2 of the council's 'New Climate Change Strategies' seems to reinforce this point:

2. Manage green spaces owned by Alton Town Council to improve climate resilience, biodiversity, carbon capture ...'

Introducing grazing cattle would surely remove a significant element of this benefit and remove the conditions that some of the wildlife requires to nest and feed. It would also result in the release of methane, which would not otherwise be present in this environment. So, I fail to see any net environmental benefit of the proposed approach, in fact the opposite! It would also appear to contradict the goals of ACAN, which clearly include trying to reduce emissions from livestock.

If the goal for the council is really to save more money, and it believes it can control cattle using only electronic tagging in a safe way, and not impact an environment that is already semi-wild, I could argue this would be more appropriate on, for example, Flood Meadows, where much of the area is grass rather than wilder land and the mowing takes place significantly more frequently.

National Guidelines

DEFRA published an independent report: 'Opinion on the welfare implications of using virtual fencing systems to contain, move and monitor livestock' in October 2022.

A link to the report can be found at the foot of this email. There are some very interesting observations and recommendation included. I have drawn out a few of them below under the associated headings in the report.

Virtual fencing as a means of containment and movement

Continual access to drinking water points within virtually fenced areas requires careful planning.

Virtual fencing as a means of containment and movement

GPS accuracy and resolution are potential problems. Virtual fencing users report that a fenceline may drift by a couple of metres or more, such that a contained stationary animal receives one or more audio cues and potentially an electric shock. This could cause confusion and potentially distress. In addition, if a fenceline is placed close to water sources or shade, GPS drift could potentially prevent access to these, or allow access to areas of risk (for example, poisonous plants such as acorn or yew, hazardous land features or structures, or highways).

Training livestock to use the system

All virtually fenced livestock (including newly purchased or replacement animals joining an existing virtually fenced group) require a period of intentional training by the stockperson to

- become familiar with the weight and feel of the collar (especially immediately after fitting)*
- experience the audio cue(s) and any vibration cue*
- experience (if necessary) the electric shock that will result if they continue to move through the boundary*
- learn that the aversive effect of the electric shock can be avoided by responding to the audio cue*
- learn that the behaviour of herdmates can indicate the boundary location and, if it is moving, to where*
- potentially learn that a stationary fenceline may be remembered in association with the physical landscape*
- learn that a moving fenceline may shift at one time or dynamically*
- (depending on the system) learn that their movement speed and direction effect how quickly following the audio cue that an electric shock is delivered*

Training requires a controlled and predictable environment in which reliable virtual fencelines allow livestock to explore the effect of the audio cues and to discover how to respond in order to avoid receiving an electric shock. For virtually fenced cattle the training period is likely to last at least 5–7 days.

Recommendations

The virtual fencing and remote monitoring of livestock should not replace regular human inspection.

Land managers and stock keepers should not rely on virtual fencing in preference to physical fencing in situations that are high-risk to livestock or humans (for example, to keep stock off a main road or railway line or away from a steep incline; to safeguard against biosecurity hazards).

The extracts above raise a number of serious concerns about the welfare of the animals, the extent to which boundaries can be accurately set, a training period during which (with no physical barriers) there is a risk livestock are not really controlled, and most importantly the recommendation that states clearly tagging alone is not a safe solution near main roads. Evidently, New Odiham Road and Basingstoke Road are both busy for most of the day.

Given the lack of background data included in the council documentation I have been able to source, I have no idea whether councillors have been made aware of such guidance, whether they have effectively voted without such important knowledge, and/or whether they have chosen to ignore national guidance. It is also not clear whether they have discussed the implications when the tagging technology fails or the internet is unavailable (happening increasingly) i.e. cattle potentially on the road, trying to cross the footbridge or wandering into the river.

Impact on Will Hall Meadow Users

My understanding is that the boundaries for any grazing cattle would be set south of the footpath. I see a number of potential issues with this:

- 1. The extent to which this can be done accurately is debatable (refer to the DEFRA report above).*
- 2. If there is even a few metres of variance, it will result in cow dung on the footpath. This is evidently an issue particularly for pushchair and wheelchair users. It will also be an issue for all users during the hours of darkness.*
- 3. The established custom and practice for dog walkers to exercise their dogs, including off their leads, will be taken away. The proximity of cattle and dogs being exercised on the path may also cause stress for both.*

General Concern

On a general level, as far as I am aware, there has not been any attempt at all to engage with nearby residents or users of Will Hall Meadow during any of the discussions. Nor have I seen any reported plan to consult prior to confirming the detail of any trial. Given this is clearly a change of use of land, this is surely unacceptable.

Feedback

Given the above, I would appreciate your feedback on the following:

- 1. What is the real goal for any trial?*
- 2. Have councillors been made fully aware of all the relevant information/guidance for tag-only virtual fencing prior to voting to proceed with the trial?*
- 3. Have councillors discussed the potential clash with its own environmental policies?*
- 4. When will the precise details of any trial be communicated to relevant members of the public and what consultation will take place?*
- 5. What risk assessments and welfare assessments have been, or will be, undertaken (both for the public and the livestock)?*
- 6. What planning is taking place to ensure all of the relevant factors (including national recommendations) are taken into account?*

I look forward to receiving your reply.

- 83.3 The following correspondence was received on 3 December 2026. It was sent to many parish councils in Hampshire and Surrey.

Dear councils and councillors,

Some of you will have received correspondence from Rushmoor Borough Council about Farnborough Airport's planning application. Only about 1/3 of impacted councils were sent the letter. Only three of the 110 council areas impacted by the proposal are included in the data provided by the airport in the planning application.

Farnborough Noise group has challenged Rushmoor Borough Council on the way that it is conducting the process (see attached email) but we need your help as you have authority to challenge them under the Localism Act 2011. The attached letter sets out the situation and there the points of challenge are. [Attachments are in supplementary papers.]

The application contains a huge amount of information but the decision is simple. Do the benefits outweigh the harm caused by the proposal? We do not

have to address every point in the planning application; we just need to show that the balance is in favour to refuse. Farnborough Noise Group has been working through the documentation and identifying the key points of challenge. We have included these in a spreadsheet and will be adding to it over the next few weeks. Updated versions will be on the Farnborough Noise Group website (www.farnboroughnoise.org). We will be arranging two public zoom sessions in the absence of Rushmoor Borough Council conducting proper consultation. We ask that you communicate these events to your constituents. Details and joining instructions will be on the website and Facebook. If you have any questions or points to add, please email farnboroughnoise@gmail.com.

83.4 The following correspondence was received from John Grace on 8 December 2025.

On reading the Agenda for this full Alton Town council meeting I see that Kings Pond is a major item. Unfortunately I am unable to attend the meeting in person. If it is permitted I would like to ask you to read out at the meeting my observations, thinking and recommendations.

The Agenda on Kings Pond states:-

The five options in the summary are:

A. Just dredge

B. Dredging plus improve pond margins and paths (previous 2a)

C. Pond and river: dredge and improve pond margins and paths, create stream (previous 3c)

D. Light touch: nature recovery with limited dredging to improve margins and paths

E. Do nothing

Councillors may decide:

- To proceed with Stage One for any of the options A-E,*
- To stop the project (option E: do nothing), or*
- To defer a decision for a specific reason or for some specific further information.*

Given the amount of time and effort already spent on this Project I would urge councillors to Proceed with Stage One for any of the options A-E. To do nothing or defer a decision are unacceptable.

Of the options A to E, Option E, Do nothing, is tantamount to dereliction of duty and is not acceptable. Because of the ownership of land, option B (previously 2a) is probably unworkable. That leaves options A, C and D which should be now fully costed and together with the benefits and disadvantages of each, put before the people of Alton who are on the electoral register for them to decide.

I would guess that the cost of A, C or D would be substantial so it is imperative that the final decision should be by the people of Alton who are on the electoral register and whose council taxes would pay for the work.

I would also point out that at no stage have my ward councillors approached me or my immediate neighbours in Wooteys Ward to ask us in person what we would like to see happen. That is very disappointing.

Conversely the project manager for ATC, councillor Don Hammond, has presented his findings in person at meetings to which the people of Alton have been encouraged to attend and via the ATC website, in a right and democratic manner.

The result of the proposed December 15th Parish meeting called by just 6 people, could be that a referendum would need to be held which would cost £10,000. That money would be better spent on whichever of the 3 options I have identified A, C and D , the residents of Alton decide on.

I hope that at the Full Alton Town Council meeting the Kings Pond Agenda point is held in a civilised fashion and is not de-railed by thoughtless , over emotional attendees.

Councillor Hill proposed that the correspondence be noted.

This was seconded by Councillor Kellermann, who then proposed an amendment that:

“officers provide a detailed update on the progress and costs of grazing on Will Hall Meadow so that Council can determine whether they still wish to proceed with the project.”

This was seconded by Councillor Hill. Councillor Hammond suggested that all the issues raised in Mr Mead’s letter should be addressed and Councillor Kellermann therefore amended his amendment to read:

“officers provide a detailed update on the progress, costs and feasibility of grazing on Will Hall Meadow so that Council can determine whether they still wish to proceed with the project.”

This was again seconded by Councillor Hill and with voting as follows the amendment was **carried**:

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Hill, Kellermann, Lamb, Moore, O’Brien, Quincey and Treacher
Against: Councillor Tansey

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Kellermann, it was

RESOLVED

to note the correspondence received and for officers provide a detailed update on the progress, costs and feasibility of grazing on Will Hall Meadow so that Council can determine whether they still wish to proceed with the project.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Hill, Kellermann, Lamb, Moore, O'Brien, Quincey and Treacher

Against: Councillor Tansey

The Mayor then invited members of the public present to speak.

83.5 Jenny Griffiths wished to speak on behalf of Alton Climate Action Network (ACAN) about the Farnborough Airport planning application. She wanted to ask councillors to object to the planned expansion. This is a commercial airport for private jets and this application seeks to increase weekend and bank holiday traffic. It will have an impact on people living up to fifteen miles away.

It will increase air and noise pollution. Health impacts from low-flying aircraft are well-documented. It will also increase greenhouse gas emissions.

The jets typically have only two or three passengers on each flight and often return with no passengers at all. She asked that councillors take her comments into consideration.

She then spoke about King's Pond on behalf of Alton & Villages Local Action for Nature (AVLAN), saying that in 2022 they had made a statement that they want local people to be able to enjoy King's Pond as both an amenity and a habitat. Given the huge amount of work that has been done, AVLAN's view is that the Council should not foreclose on any one option at this point, but continue to explore options B, C and D. A lot of work has been done and they hope the Council's good work will continue so they can be provided with all the information needed to make a proper informed decision.

83.6 Marcus Van Hagen, Chair of the Alton Allotment Association, then spoke, saying the association has been established for many years. They see in the budget there is a proposal to increase allotment fees by 23.3%. While the association does accept there are increases in costs, they want people to be encouraged to use the allotments. He pointed out the importance of the social aspect of allotments, as well as being able to grow things, and said that if rents are high that can be a barrier. He went on to suggest that there should be a reasonable increase of around 3.8%. While they realise that rents have not increased for four years, he said that is not the fault of allotmenters.

83.7 Tony Day was there to represent Lakeside (Alton) Management Company (LAMC) which he made clear represents the leaseholders, not the freeholder of Waterside Court.

He said that he had met with Tim Pinchen of the King's Pond Task & Finish Group and they had enjoyed a good exchange of ideas. They are not yet able to

determine the entire route of the Lasham Drain, but the main issue for them is the dam.

The dam forms the pond and is the boundary of their development. It has been reformed twice in recent times. There are no drawings they have yet found of the structure of it and they also have no knowledge of how the foundations of the building are made up. It is rumoured to be piled, but they have no evidence of that. He went on to say there are discrepancies in the boundary which also need to be resolved. Investigations need to be done to determine all these things.

The next issue is that there may be a leak in the Lasham Drain or in the dam, and he proposed that before proceeding with too much work on the site these investigations should be done.

83.8 Nathan Cuff from the King's Pond Preservation Society (KPPS) speaking on behalf of himself, said that now the pond and river option has been ditched due to the ownership of the weir he is surprised a formal proposal has been brought back. Regarding the options in the agenda report, Option A would be missing a great opportunity, Option E would be unacceptable. Option B should be the option taken forward – dredge with improvements – and there are many suggestions from members of the public about ways to improve it. He added that he was surprised about the language used in the report when it referred to the 'failed attempt' to dredge twenty five years ago. "Do we say that roads have 'failed' when we build them just because they have to be resurfaced some years later?"

83.9 Dr June Chatfield said she would outline what is wrong with the pond. Silting is an occupational hazard of any online pond, as the silt is deposited when the water slows. She said that if we do go down the dredging route then we also need to see what can be done to alleviate the silt. Work needs to be done with Hampshire County Council (HCC) to deal with the road drains, and of course there is the silt that washes directly into the pond from King's View when there is heavy rain, rather than going into the drains and Ashdell Road near the railway bridge. Swales or balancing ponds could be used to collect this silt before it goes into the pond. The problem with this being limited available land on which to place them. A balancing pond is in use in Will Hall Meadow which in time will hopefully go some way to containing the silt which runs down from Brick Kiln Lane, but it takes time for us to see the benefits of this if they materialise. An example of swales and balancing ponds can also be seen in connection with Letcombe Brook, Letcombe Regis, Oxon. She also said that the silt washing in from the islands is a problem, partly caused by the fluctuations in water level and partly from the unsustainable levels of Canada geese that erode the banks. Management and education of the public around feeding of the birds is desperately needed to reduce the number of these birds on the site as is done on many nature reserves and amenity sites. She said from her research over the years there has been a huge drop in the number of animals present and so the levels of pollution really need to be tackled.

She finished by saying that the problems with the ownership of the downstream pipework has meant that the reinstatement of the river could not be as successful as originally thought as the fish pass would not be possible under the new off-line plan.

83.10 Chris Morley thanked the Council and the Task & Finish Group for all their hard work and asked that they now consider dropping all the other options and just dredge the pond. Please do not bring back options that were previously deemed unacceptable.

83.11 Bob Benham spoke about allotments, saying that something is not right as normally the office is chasing allotment holders for rent payments by now but nothing has been sent out. He also said he wanted to point out that through the CALA site there are lots of pipes taking the water out but he has no idea where it goes.

83.12 Melba Kellermann said that Cllr Hammond has spent, with the approval of most councillors, £37,000. She said the meandering river option is dead. We need to move to the dredging option. To keep putting new options up is just muddying the waters. Honour what you have said. Stage One has been resolved and option 1 is dead. Consult the people on whether they want option 2 now. Conclude Stage One and consult the people on the dredge and improve option.

83.13 Steve Gough from KPPS said that lots of discussion has gone on at previous council meetings. He said the KPPS has looked into many things and they know that if a silt trap was put further upstream it could trap 80% of the incoming silt and so even if it only operated at only 50% we are looking at maybe 100 years before the pond has to be dredged again. He said he is convinced this would be less than half a million pounds and added that things like the bank erosion that Dr June spoke about could be built into the management plan. He said there has been a distinct lack of management of the site and he is convinced we could get volunteer groups together so this would cost next to nothing. He finished by saying that he has been an angler for many years and a chalk stream is a very rare environment which he thinks should be disregarded. There is no way you can create one for a few hundred yards in the middle of Alton.

83.14 Merula Frankel of the Alton Town Twinning Association (ATTA) said she was delighted to be able to speak about the group, which has been in existence since 1998. In 2026, it will be 20 years that the town has been twinned with Pertuis in France and it is important that they can raise funds to give their visitors from Pertuis the best experience of the town possible. They are keen to kickstart the schools exchange programme again which is of huge benefit to the young people of the town, and which had stopped due to Covid and Brexit. Twinning really is important and a great asset to the town. She hopes they can consider their event grant favourably which is on the agenda later on.

- 83.15 Len Meek said he thinks the Town Council should consider what a wonderful amenity King's Pond is, and it already exists. He said you could put on a pair of sandals and go for a walk down the stream right now without getting your feet wet as there is no water. There is no water to feed the proposals. It is an important amenity that we already have and the Town Council should appreciate it and look after it.
- 83.16 Anthony Furnival said he commended the gentleman who spoke about allotments. He added that he thinks there are other savings that can be made to stop these people having to pay so much. He then went on to speak about the tree works, saying it would be illegal to do the work in winter due to the many bats roosting on the site. He added that he is very concerned about the agenda and the new options that have appeared, and is worried ATC is going back to being a clerk-led council. He is concerned ATC is moving the goal posts and creating new options. He then said one of the characteristics of a chalk stream is water moving fast enough to move the silt. The weir would not be removed so the fish still would not be able to move up and down the river. It is possible to create a chalk stream but you would have to spend tens of millions to divert the drains and so on. You need to be listening to the people of Alton. They are angry and frustrated for a reason and if you want to represent your own agendas and push through your own ideologies that is not democracy.
- 83.17 Paul Ebbutt said he is a resident of Alton and a member of the Task & Finish Group. The Council resolved to look at the options and a river option is still there. What the Council resolved to do is to look at all these options with professionals. There is a cost associated with that, but we need to explore the options properly and thoroughly to do the best we can not just for our children but for our grandchildren and future generations.
- 83.18 John Calton said that in the 1960s he had helped fight against developers who wanted to fill in King's Pond and build on it. He believes the only way forward is silt traps that can be maintained every year so the pond will not silt up, as he said in his letter to the Town Clerk. There should be two silt traps with an area in between which could be a kind of 'bog', and this could be maintained by volunteers. It would be a good area for invertebrates and would also act as another silt trap. Unless we spend multi-millions of pounds we can't do this chalk stream. Who is going to pay for all this redirecting of the drainage from the town? And who is going to pay compensation to the shopkeepers as those roadworks would take a long time? He finished by asking councillors to consider all of Anthony Furnival's comments as he felt they are so relevant.
- 83.19 Will Seabury said he is also from KPPS and wanted to raise another point – at the last Community and Stakeholder Group meeting it was revealed that the Environment Agency (EA) recognises that the decision is Alton Town Council's and the EA would not stand in the way of whatever decision ATC make. He said it is important to remember that the two options were being considered because of pressure from the EA, but that is no longer there. The pond is not

owned by individual councillors. Listen to the people you represent. He finished by saying that most of Alton really care about this and he hopes councillors will listen and vote on this.

83.20 Madi Allen said that she has been coming to these meetings for years and she sits and listens to the same points being made over and over and she is tired. She said the Council started off with two options and had replaced one with another option. She asked why the council does not agree with what the majority of the people of Alton want. She then spoke about experiences she had as a child by the pond, how sad she is that future generations will not have the chance to do those things.

The Mayor agreed to a request for a short break.

84 **King's Pond Project, Stage One**

The Town Clerk introduced the item by running through the decisions that had been taken in Full Council since January 2023, then highlighting why he had included the options he had. He added a 'do nothing' option as that should always be considered as a benchmark. Option 3c was the fall-back option if 4a was not going to be possible, as had been highlighted in the November 2024 public engagement, which is the reason it is coming back before Full Council to allow councillors to discuss it. He had consulted with members of the Task & Finish Group in order to produce the report.

Councillor Hammond proposed that the council take forward Stage One of the King's Pond project on the basis of Options B and C and to authorise the Town Clerk to make the necessary changes to the Invitation to Tender and recommence the tendering process, including the panel assessment agreed by the 6 August Council meeting. This was seconded by Councillor O'Brien.

During lengthy, robust discussion in which the Mayor ensured all councillors had the opportunity to speak, the time reached 9.25pm and so Councillor Eyre, the Mayor, proposed that Standing Order 3x be suspended in order to allow the meeting to continue. This was seconded by Councillor Hill and with all councillors voting in favour it was

RESOLVED

to suspend Standing Order 3x to allow the meeting to progress beyond two and a half hours.

Councillor Bayliss added that he felt it should only continue for a further half an hour and there was general agreement.

Following a little further discussion Councillor Bayliss proposed an amendment as follows:

“That instead of investigating options B and C the resolution should just say Option B and the Council should also investigate how they can put in silt traps.”

Councillor Kellermann indicated that his amendment was going to be very similar and so following discussion with Councillor Bayliss they agreed the amendment should read:

“That the Council should pursue only Option B and add substantial marginal planting to improve biodiversity, full reinstatement of the islands and banks to improve the pond for both wildlife and public, and investigate silt traps.”

This was proposed by Councillor Kellermann and seconded by Councillor Bayliss.

The amendment was **not carried** due to voting as follows:

In favour: Councillors Bayliss, Eyre, Hill, Kellermann, Moore and Quincey

Against: Councillors Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Lamb, O’Brien, Tansey and Treacher

Councillor Hill then proposed an amendment as follows:

“That the Council should build up an appropriate sinking fund at an appropriate level that is ringfenced to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the pond.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Quincey and was **carried** with voting as follows:

In favour: Councillors Botten, Boyce-Churn, Eyre, Hammond, Hill, Kellermann, Moore, Lamb, O’Brien, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher

Against: Councillor Bayliss

Councillor Hammond as the original proposer spoke, clarifying a few points:

- Option 3c still includes the removal of the weir. The weir is in the ownership of the council. It is the next chamber downstream that is in the ownership of Waterside Court.
- The investigations about whether there is enough water are incomplete so at this point saying there is not is conjecture.

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Hammond, seconded by Councillor O’Brien, it was

RESOLVED to:

- 1. take forward Stage One of the King’s Pond project on the basis of Options B and C and to authorise the Town Clerk to make the necessary changes to the Invitation to Tender and recommence the tendering process, including the panel assessment agreed by the 6 August Council meeting**
- 2. build up a sinking fund at an appropriate level that is ring-fenced to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the pond**

In favour: Councillors Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Lamb, O'Brien, Tansey and Treacher
Against: Councillors Eyre, Hill, Kellermann, Moore and Quincey
Abstained: Councillor Bayliss

With only ten minutes to go to the end of the half-hour extension and people in the audience wishing to hear about their grant, the Mayor, with agreement from Councillors, moved item 12 up the agenda.

The majority of the public had by now left the meeting.

85 **Events Grants**

85.1 Alton Town Twinning Association

Councillor Tansey declared an interest.

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

RESOLVED

To approve a grant of £1,000 to Alton Town Twinning Association.

In favour: Councillors Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Eyre, Hammond, Hill, Lamb, Moore, O'Brien, Quincey and Treacher
Against: Councillor Kellermann, who wished it to be recorded that his vote was not a reflection on the organisation
Abstained: Councillor Tansey

85.2 Alton Victorian Cricket Tournament

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

RESOLVED

To approve a grant of £500 to Alton Victorian Cricket Tournament.

All councillors voted in favour.

Councillor Kellermann proposed a further extension. This was seconded by Councillor Lamb and it was

RESOLVED

To extend the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 3x.

All councillors voted in favour.

86 Invitation to Tender: King's Pond Tree Works

Councillor Eyre proposed that the Council appoint contractor C to undertake the work. This was seconded by Councillor Boyce-Churn.

After being asked a question, the Deputy Clerk read out a response as follows relating to bats:

“On the original Invitation to Tender two trees had been highlighted as potential bat roosts. However, the 2025 surveys found that, while there is high bat activity, there do not appear to be any bat roosts on the site.

Nevertheless, no mature trees are to be felled, and special attention will be paid to the presence of bats. The contractor will be provided with a copy of the full bat survey well in advance, and we will pass onto them any other information that concerned residents pass to us.

In addition to this, the contractor that officers are recommending is a company who recognises that King's Pond is a unique project which requires a holistic view of both ecosystem management and aesthetic appeal whilst taking into account the mixed feelings of the general public and local residents. It is believed that this contractor is the right one to deliver at a competitive price and to achieve a balanced delivery of site clearance work and ecological habitat heterogeneity.

The contractor recognises the challenges of doing the work in the winter but is appreciative of needing to complete the work before the nesting season starts. The project lead brings over 30 years of arboricultural and ecological expertise, supported by a B.Sc in Wildlife Management, an M.Sc in Conservation and Biodiversity and a PhD in Biological Sciences. His background ensures the project will be delivered with an appropriate balance of public amenity, habitat protection and long-term ecosystem management, and complies with relevant laws and regulations.”

Councillor Kellermann proposed an amendment, that:

“No felling work is to take place until the bat surveys have been redone”

This was seconded by Councillor Moore but the amendment was **not carried** due to voting as follows:

In favour: Councillors Hill, Kellermann, Moore and Quincey

Against: Councillors Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Eyre, Hammond, Lamb, O'Brien, Tansey and Treacher

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Boyce-Churn, it was

RESOLVED

To appoint Contractor C (H W Tree Surgeons) to undertake the work at a cost of £32,015.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Hill, Lamb, O'Brien, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher
Against: Councillors Kellermann and Moore

87 Planning Application: Farnborough Airport, 25/00615/REV

Councillor Tansey proposed that Alton Town Council object to the application on the grounds that it:

- increases noise pollution on weekends and bank holidays
- increases air pollution, and the impacts on health from low flying aircraft is well-documented
- increases greenhouse gas emissions.

We understand that the majority of these private jets have only two or three passengers and often return with no passengers whatsoever, so the amount of emissions per person is much higher than with scheduled commercial flights.

This was seconded by Councillor O'Brien and thus it was

RESOLVED

To OBJECT to application 25/00615/REV on the grounds that it:

- increases noise pollution on weekends and bank holidays**
- increases air pollution, and the impacts on health from low flying aircraft is well-documented**
- increases greenhouse gas emissions.**

We understand that the majority of these private jets have only two or three passengers and often return with no passengers whatsoever, so the amount of emissions per person is much higher than with scheduled commercial flights.

In favour: Councillors Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Hill, Lamb, O'Brien, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher
Against: Councillors Bayliss, Kellermann and Moore
Abstained: Councillor Eyre

88 Statements of Accounts from 1 October to 30 November 2025

On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Boyce-Churn, it was

RESOLVED

To confirm approval of:

- 1. The balance sheet dated 30 November 2025;**
- 2. The Income and Expenditure account to 30 November 2025;**
- 3. The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit & Property Fund Accounts;**
- 4. The Payments over £500 covering 1 October – 30 November 2025;**
- 5. The updated Direct Debit list.**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Hill, Lamb, Moore, O'Brien, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher
Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

89 Budget and Precept 2026/27

- 89.1 Councillor Eyre proposed that the change in allotment fees to £37 per year and initial one-off administration fee to £37, and to change the annual billing period to commence in April 2026, with no charge levied for the period January to March 2026 inclusive be approved.

This was seconded by Councillor Boyce-Churn.

Councillor Kellermann proposed an amendment as follows:
"That the allotment rent be increase by one penny every year"

There being no seconder the amendment was **not carried**.

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Boyce-Churn, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the change in allotment fees to £37 per year and initial one-off administration fee to £37, and to change the annual billing period to commence in April 2026, with no charge levied for the period January to March 2026 inclusive.

In favour: Councillors Botten, Boyce-Churn, Eyre, Hammond, Hill, Lamb, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher
Against: Councillors Kellermann and O'Brien
Abstained: Councillors Bayliss and Moore

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

RESOLVED

To approve an inflationary increase in pitch fees.

All councillors voted in favour.

89.3 Councillor Botten proposed that the budget and precept request for 2026/27 be approved as tabled. This was seconded by Councillor Hammond.

Councillor Kellermann proposed an amendment as follows:

“That there be no increase in the precept”

This was seconded by Councillor Moore but was **not carried** due to voting as follows:

In favour: Councillors Moore and Kellermann

Against: Councillors Bayliss, Botten, Eyre, Hammond, Hill, Lamb, O’Brien, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher

Abstained: Councillor Boyce-Churn

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the budget and precept request for 2026/27, with a precept for Alton parish of £946,920.00.

In favour: Councillors Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Eyre, Hammond, Hill, Lamb, O’Brien, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher

Against: Councillors Kellermann and Moore

89.4 On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Botten, it was

RESOLVED

To streamline the reserves as per the Appendix.

All councillors voted in favour.

90 **Interim Internal Audit Q2 report for noting**

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

RESOLVED

To note the Internal Auditor Report for Quarter 2 of the 2025/26 year.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Hill, Lamb, O’Brien, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher

Against: Councillor Kellermann
Abstained: Councillor Moore

91 **Local Government Reorganisation – Government Consultation**

Councillor Hill proposed that the Town Clerk respond to the Government’s consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Hampshire along similar lines to his response to the Hampshire consultation in August 2025. This was seconded by Councillor Hill.

Councillor Kellermann proposed an amendment that it be noted the response was not from him. This was seconded by Councillor Moore and the amendment was **carried** with voting as follows:

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Botten, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Hill, Kellermann, Lamb, Moore, Quincey, Tansey and Treacher
Against: Councillor O’Brien

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk respond to the Government’s consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Hampshire along similar lines to his response to the Hampshire consultation in August 2025 with a comment making clear that the response excluded Councillor Kellermann.

All councillors voted in favour.

92 On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED to:

exclude the press and members of the public in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1, subsection 2, and to be clear, 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.

All councillors voted in favour.

Councillor Moore excused himself and left the meeting along with the remaining members of the public and press.

The meeting closed at 10.38pm