

**BODIAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**Clerk:** Lynsey Willard  
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34 Levetts Lane,  
 Bodiam,  
 E. Sussex, TN32 5UL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on  
 Monday 14 April 2025 at 6.30p.m. in Bodiam Parish Room**

**Please note these are draft minutes until formally approved at the next Parish Council Meeting.**

**Present: For Bodiam Parish Council:** Councillors: - (Chair) Linda Stevens (Vice chair) Tim Porter, Graham Peters, Darren Page.

**In attendance:** ESCC Cllr Paul Redstone & RDC Cllrs Tony Ganly & Tony Biggs  
 Clerk: Lynsey Willard, 1 member of the public (MoP).

**79/2025 Apologies/Non-Attendance**  
 Cllr Nick Gilbert (Personal)

**80/2025 Disclosure of Interests**  
 Cllr Peters declared a personal interest as a Trustee of the Parker & Ashcombe Trust & Newhouse farm.

**81/2025 Minutes of the Parish council Meeting 17 March 2025**  
 The minutes which had previously been distributed were approved and signed by the Vice Chair as a true record.

**82/2025 Matters arising**  
 Action points from the previous meeting cleared or, on this agenda.  
 Reports made to Southeast Water and East Sussex Highways regarding drainage issues and water leak near Ashes Yard. East Sussex has been out and checked and have booked the work in for the drainage along the road.

**83/2025 Public Questions –** A member of the public raised by email, the closure of Bodiam Road for emergency repairs of a pothole. Cllr Redstone confirmed they can close the road in this case if they display a sign to say it is only for 15 minutes while work is completed.

**84/2025 Councillors' meetings with outside bodies:** Cllr Stevens attended an informal meeting with Karen Stafford of National Trust. Improvements are being made to the shop which will incorporate the ticket office for going the need for the temporary ticket office. The Environmental Agency has confirmed that the riverbank is 10cm too short but will not be taking any action to rectify this as not a danger to life.

**85/2025 Planning**  
**Awaiting a decision:**  
**RR/2025/368/P 1 Levetts Lane, Bodiam**  
 Proposed entrance porch and chimney removal  
**No comments – application supported**

**Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....**

**Awaiting a decision:****RR/2024/1573/P New House Farm, New House Lane, Bodiam**

Change of use from agriculture to vineyard tasting room, wine production, storage and ancillary cafe with associated works and mixed use of three mobile homes for agricultural workers and holiday lets.

**Delayed until 25 April 2025, Highways have opposed it and Environmental Dept have raised questions. Comments submitted previously; planning application not supported.**

**86/2025 East Sussex County Council report**

Councillors have received the previously circulated report from ESCC, and the full report can be read on the Bodiam Website.

**87/2025 Rother District Council Report**

The Community grant scheme, with £130,000 a year available, opens for applications in May.

**88/2025 Newenden Bridge & Hawkhurst Cross road closures**

No date has been set for the bridge closure as still awaiting approval from the Environmental Agency. It is unlikely to happen anytime soon. Hawkhurst crossroads began their closures on 31 March 2025, no major problems have been reported.

**ESCC Cllr Paul Redstone left the meeting.**

**89/2025 Parish Assembly Planning**

Apologies from Cllr Peters as he will not be available. Agenda agreed. Cllr Porter will put up the banner and Cllr Stevens will arrange refreshments.

**90/2025 Asset Devolution**

Notice has been received of assets currently owned by Rother that are in scope of the recently approved Service and Asset Devolution Framework. Concerns were raised that as a Parish we could not afford to take on these assets. We will wait for more information to come available in the future. If we do not take them on, they will be passed to the Unity.

**91/2025 Recreation ground & Pavilion – Hot Air Balloons**

The hot air balloons are taking off from the recreation ground again.

**Action 1:** Clerk to email Hot Air Balloon company and ask if they could donate to Bodiam Pre School, which is registered as a charity, for using the field.

**92/2025 Fire and legionnaires Risk Assessments**

Cllr Page signed the reviewed and amended fire risk assessment for 2025/26. The legionnaires assessment needs amending and will share by email for checking.

**Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....**

**93/2025 Hawkhurst United Junior football Club**

HUJFC have returned to using the pavilion and are getting the pitches ready. They currently have a rent-free period until the 24 April 2025 in respect of some work they carried out on the entrance to the recreation ground last year. They have been sent a four-week rental invoice for the period 25.4.25 – 22.5.25.

**94/2025 New Ground Maintenance Contractor – Orchard Landscapes**

The new contractor took over from 1 April 2025. They have explained that they cut with the main mowers and follow up with the strimming a day or two later. They are going to cut the recreation ground weekly in the main growing season to get the field in a good state.

**95/2025 Adoption of amended NALC Standing Orders April 2025**

The councillors agreed the amendments to the Standing Orders should be accepted as they are.

**96/2025 Adoption of NALC Model Financial Regulations March 2025**

The councillors agreed that the amendments to the Model Financial Regulations should be accepted as they are.

**97/2025 Adoption of Bodiam Parish Council IT Policy**

The councillors agreed to the new I.T Policy amendments, the draft will be finalised and signed at the next meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> May.

**98/2025 Org.Uk Clerk email address**

The Practitioners guide for financial year 2025/26 has been amended to include: Email management - every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain, for example [clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov.uk) or [clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk). Discussion had about options which clerk has looked in to and councillors agreed that as we own the domain **bodiamparishcouncil.org.uk** for our website that we should take up the deal with our current domain holder to pay for Microsoft 365 Business Professional suite which enables us to use our domain name for the clerk email address: [Clerk@bodiamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:Clerk@bodiamparishcouncil.org.uk). Councillors agreed a year subscription can be purchased for £95.88, a saving of £96.00 if paid for monthly. If we need to change to Gov.uk in the future this can be accounted for in a future budget but for the current financial year this ensures we are compliant.

**Action 2:** Clerk to set up new email address and arrange for old Hotmail email account to be diverted.

**99/2025 Environment & village Maintenance**

A member of the public expressed concern about the old black smiths. They applied for a change of use to Air B&B but have found this not to be viable and have returned to renting it out as a business unit. Neighbours are concerned that this could increase the cars parking there. This is being raised purely for awareness as it is not known what business would rent it out yet.

**100/2025      Damaged Road Sign**

A road sign between Blacksmiths and Old Mutton House has been reported as damaged. Looks like it may have been clipped by a lorry.

**Action 3:** Clerk to report damaged road sign to Highways.

**101/2025      Trees and Footpaths**

Nothing reported.

**102/2025      Crime and Disorder**

Nothing reported

**103/2025      Finance - Online banking**

The changeover to Unity bank has begun. An application has been submitted with all supporting documents and a £500 deposit cheque. Due to the problems the council have had with Nat West it was agreed that we would be best to set up the Unity Bank account and then transfer the Nat West balance by cheque over the next couple of months.

**Action 4:** Clerk to continue with set up of online banking once application confirmed.

**104/2025      AGAR – Certificate of Exemption 2024/2025**

The exemption report has been signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chair as the parish expenditure and income does not exceed £25,000.

**Action 5:** Clerk to add minute reference and send off Certificate of Exemption no later than 30 June 2025

**105/2025      Approval of Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)**

Clerk and Chair signed section 1 of the AGAR – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

**106/2025      Approval of Annual Accounting Statement**

Chair and Clerk approved and signed Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return confirming end of year balance £18,941. An internal audit is booked for the 16 May 2025.

**107/2025      Commercial Service Trading Ltd**

Confirmation has been received that the invoice received for £1055.95 was raised in error. Their finance department confirmed a credit note for this invoice and then raised a replacement invoice for 3 cuts of the green and war memorial in June/July/August. Unfortunately, the wrong amount has been invoiced again so we are waiting for the correct invoice. As this amount was budgeted for in finance year 2024/25 the correct amount has been earmarked in reserves for when the correct invoice is received.

**108/2025      Receipts & Payments****a) Receipts**

31.3.25	Reserve Account	Nat West Interest	£3.15
1.4.25	Current account	1st half of precept	£7835.00

**Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....**

**b) Payment of Cheques**

<b>Dated</b>	<b>Chq No.</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
7.4.25	2159	Bodiam Parish Council	Opening deposit for Unity bank account	£500.00
14.4.25	2160	Lynsey Willard	Clerk/RFO April Salary	£484.15
14.4.25	2161	Rother District council	Emptying of dog waste bin – pavilion utilities	£189.80
14.4.25	2162	Lynsey Willard	Clerk expenses – Postage of bank application & Parish assembly banner	£47.57
18.4.25	DD	Castle Water	Pavilion Utilities	£10.81
n/a	DD	Information Commissioner	DD mandate signed by 2 councillors for data protection fee. Due 1/5/25, if new account details not received clerk will pay by card and claim reimbursement	£52.00

**109/2025 Monthly Finance Reports & Bank reconciliation for Year End**

The Clerk/RFO presented the bank statements with the monthly financial reports and budget reports for end of year and April 2025, which were signed by Cllrs Porter & Peters. All financial documents and invoices are circulated to Councilors for inspection before the meeting.

**110/2025 Date of next meeting - Monday 19 May 2025, The Parish Room at 6.30pm**

**Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....**