# **Arun District Association of Local Councils (ADALC)**

**Co- Chairs:** Cllr Michael Tu (Arundel TC) and Cllr Amanda Worne (Yapton PC)

**Secretary:** Mandy Jameson (temporary)

**Email:** dalc@wsalc.co.uk

**Minutes of the meeting of Arun District Association of Local Councils held on Tuesday 28 January 2025 by Zoom.**

**Present:**

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| Cllr Guy Purser | Aldwick PC |
| Cllr Nikki Hamilton-StreetDawn HuddCllr Michael Tu (Co-Chair)Cllr Jonathan SpencerCllr Steve GoodheartJoanne Davis, deputy clerkGlenna Frost, clerkCllr Tim HibbertCllr Steve ToneyNicola Meaney, clerk Cllr Ruth ArnoldCllr Dawn SmithCllr David MarrCllr Roger WetherellCllr Sean LeeLaura Chrysostomou, clerk | Angmering PC Arun DCArundel TCBersted PCBognor Regis TCBognor Regis TCBognor Regis TCClymping PCEast Preston PCFelpham PCFerring PCFord PCKingston PCKingston PCLittlehampton TCLittlehampton TC |
| Cllr David HuntleyCllr Jamie BennettCllr Alison CooperShona Turner, clerkCllr Louise HighamBarry Hodson, clerkCllr Amanda Worne (Co-Chair) | Pagham PCRustington PCRustington PCWalberton PCWalberton PCWarningcamp PCYapton PC |
| Trevor Leggo Mandy Jameson  | WSALC Secretary (temporary) |
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| MEETING COMMENCED AT 19.00 |  |
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1. **Welcome & Apologies**

 The Chair welcomed those present online.

 Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Douglas Denham St Pinnock (WSALC) and

 from Cllr Jan Rufey (Aldwick PC).

1. **Election of Co-Chair**

Cllr Amanda Worne was proposed as Co-Chair. The proposal was seconded and Cllr Worne was unanimously elected as Co-Chair.

1. **WSALC update**

Trevor Leggo said he would leave the update on devolution to Dawn Hudd who would speak next. He mentioned that the Online Safety Act may have an impact on town and parish councils, so a discussion will be held with Breakthrough Communications to seek guidance. More information will be provided to ADALC councils in due course.

1. **Update on Devolution – Dawn Hudd, CEO of Arun DC**

Dawn gave a summary of the current situation as follows:

* On 16 December 2024 the government announced that bids were invited for the setting up of new strategic authorities. The deadline for bids to be received was 10 January. West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove have submitted a joint bid to become unitary authorities with one overriding combined authority overseen by a directly elected mayor. The proposed areas fall very much within the government’s initial remit (ie. combined population of over 1.5m, and substantially rural).
* A decision should be announced very shortly to say if Sussex has been chosen for the priority programme and, if so, the County Council elections for May 2025 will be deferred. There would then be a period of 12 months for councils to prepare for a new strategic authority.
* Dawn has been discussing the issue with the Arun DC group leaders and will be holding a full council briefing. She pointed out that the Government has not reached out to town and parish councils about plans for devolution so she is happy to be at tonight’s meeting to get the chance to brief councillors about the way ahead.
* A briefing for Arun towns and parishes has been produced by Arun DC and will be forwarded separately to all clerks at the same time as these minutes.
* Cllr Hamilton-Street asked about the timing and impact of devolution on parish councils and Dawn explained that business as usual is continuing for now. The soonest the new unitary authority could be set up is May 2027 and more information will emerge as the process evolves.
* Cllr Worne asked how local plans are affected by these proposals. Dawn said in her view the best approach is to continue with existing work on local plans, although Arun may choose to pause commissioning work until more is known about the future of devolution in Sussex.
* Cllr Bennett asked if parishes would be obliged to assume more responsibilities after devolution and Dawn explained there are no statutory requirements so all towns and parishes can decide how they want to proceed in terms of taking on more work. Cllr Tu said that councils working together in clusters may be the best way forward. Cllr Huntley said he sits on the Electoral Review Panel and agreed that parishes working together would be an effective approach.

**Before Dawn Hudd left the meeting, Cllr Tu thanked her for attending and stressed how helpful her contribution had been. Dawn confirmed she would be very happy to attend future meetings of ADALC to keep lines of communication open with towns and parishes.**

1. **Impact of developments**
* Cllr Tu pointed out that now the A27 bypass scheme is cancelled it will be important for Arun councils to work together to mitigate the impacts of future development, to work on infrastructure improvements in Arun and aim to identify solutions.
* Cllr Goodheart said local roads are no longer fit for purpose and there is no preparation for the effect of future expansion and more traffic. Cllr Hamilton-Street said Angmering has had 2,151 new houses since 2018 and the current challenge revolves around builders removing affordable housing from developments.
* Cllr Higham mentioned the flooding problem in Walberton and agreed a communal approach to problem solving is needed. Cllr Worne confirmed that Arun is running a flood forum which Yapton will be attending and other councils may wish to attend.
* Cllr Cooper pointed out that parishes are ‘at the sharp end’ and know what is needed within their communities, so the best idea is to compile a wish-list.
* Cllr Goodheart said better links between the A259 and A27 are urgently needed. Laura Chrysostomou offered her letter from Littlehampton TC to the Secretary of State for Transport for circulation to all councils (see Appendix A).
1. **Planning update**

Trevor Leggo confirmed that planning consultant Steve Tilbury has put together a paper about changes to the National Planning Policy framework and this has been circulated to all West Sussex councils. At this point it appears that the role of Neighbourhood Plans is unaffected. However, there will be reforms to come. In the meantime Steve Tilbury is the most reliable source of information for local councils and it is probably worth inviting him to attend a future meeting of ADALC.

Cllr Cooper said Steve Tilbury has been to speak to Rustington PC. His advice will be invaluable in this current state of flux and during the devolution process.

Cllr Worne said Neighbourhood Plans have a real value at the moment, especially with no concrete Arun local plan. Yapton PC have won three appeals recently because of the strength of their own Neighbourhood Plan.

To conclude, Cllr Tu thanked all for their attendance and suggested the formation of an ADALC steering group to work on joint initiatives. Please let him know if you would like to be part of this.

All four local MPs will be invited to the next ADALC meeting which will be held face to face, ideally on a Friday afternoon to try and fit in with MPs’ schedules. **The date will be advised in due course.**

*The meeting finished at 20.23 hrs.*

Signed (Co-Chairs)

Date

Appendix A

**Littlehampton Town Council**

Manor House **•** Church Street **•** Littlehampton **•** West Sussex BN17 5EW
Telephone: **01903 732063 •**Facsimile: **01903 731690****Itc@littlehampton-tc.gov.uk****•**[**www.littlehampton-tc.gov.uk**](http://www.littlehampton-tc.gov.uk/) Town Clerk – Laura Chrysostomou

**To: The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP**, **Secretary of State for Transport**

Via email: heidi.alexander.mp@parliament.uk

Dear Secretary of State

**Withdrawal of the A27 Arundel Bypass Improvement Scheme**

We are writing to express our grave concern regarding the withdrawal of this scheme. We strongly believe that this recent decision is detrimental for residents, visitors, and the growth of the local economy.

Whilst we acknowledge that the funding required for the bypass is no longer available, significant public money has already been invested in feasibility work over the years, which is invaluable.

This section of the A27 network provides vital strategic links to many key services in the area and it is our view that it is the complex nature of the road junctions at this point that cause congestion. With this in mind, we therefore urge you to consider using the information already gleaned from the numerous previously completed feasibility studies and investigations to develop smaller scale, more affordable improvements and alleviate some of the pressure and congestion on this section of the local highways network.

We believe that working in this way would also enable those responsible for delivering highways improvements to utilise infrastructure funding derived from other local development in the immediate vicinity to the maximum advantage.

Improving the highways infrastructure at this point is in the Town Council’s view essential to attracting investment in our area and is vital to the regeneration of the Town. We also believe that improvements delivered in this way would unlock more land for development and help deliver the Government’s housing targets.

We therefore urge you to ensure that the opportunity to deliver the much-needed improvements to the highways infrastructure in the area is not lost and extend an invitation to you to visit the area and see first-hand the pressure on the network.

Yours sincerely,

**Laura Chrysostomou**

Town Clerk, Littlehampton Town Council