

# Crowhurst

---

## PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the **Ordinary Meeting** of the Parish Council held on  
**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 7.05pm**  
in Crowhurst Village Hall, Forewood Lane, Crowhurst.

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Geoff Thomas (Chair), Sonia Plato, Lynda Roller, John Goddard

District/County Councillors present: District Councillor Nicola McLaren

In attendance: Maureen Collins, Parish Clerk and 2 members of the public.

### **1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Two members of the public were in attendance. A question was raised regarding the dumped soil at Lower Wilting and the additional soil being deposited in the neighbouring field. The Chair advised that the matter had been referred to the MP who is awaiting a response from ESCC and we await further contact.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Sue Laimbeer and Paula Rivett, and County Councillor Kathryn Field.

### **3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Declarations were received as follows:

- Cllr Thomas – Village Hall Committee
- Cllr Roller – Environment Group
- Cllr Plato – Environment Group, Youth Club, Community Solar Farm Group

### **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18th May 2026 were approved as a true and correct record. The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes.

### **5. MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED IN THIS AGENDA**

The Clerk reported that the village meeting to discuss the proposed tree works on Station Road took place on Saturday 13th June and was very well attended, with constructive discussion between representatives of Network Rail and residents.

Regarding the SLR meeting, councillors noted that the ESCC representative was unable to attend the previously agreed date of 23rd June. A new date will be arranged, and the meeting will now take place via Microsoft Teams.

All other items were noted as per Appendix 1.

### **6. REPRESENTATIONS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

A report made by District Councillor McLaren. Councillors noted the following updates:

- The by-election for the Rye and Winchelsea Ward on 7th May resulted in the election of Cllr Daniel Bradley.
- Cabinet received an update on the Community Grants Scheme, which awarded £98,913 to support 15 projects from 52 applications.
- Cabinet also supported changes to the Temporary Accommodation Capital Programme following receipt of an additional £566,000 in Homes England funding.

- At the Annual Meeting on 18th May, Cllr Mark Legg was elected Chair and Cllr Jimmy Stanger Vice-Chair. Philip Baker was designated as Monitoring Officer from 19th May.
- A motion moved by Cllr Field regarding proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework was debated, with concerns raised about biodiversity net gain and local energy standards.
- Responses to the Local Plan consultation are being analysed, with the final plan expected to go to Cabinet in September.
- The consultation on Local Government Reorganisation for East Sussex closes at 23:59 on 15th June.
- The Planning Committee meeting on 28th May deferred the Peasmarsh development application pending further work on design, density and sewage issues.

**RESOLVED:** Councillors noted the report.

A written report was received from County Councillor Kathryn Field. Councillors noted the following updates:

- East Sussex County Council is now operating as a minority Reform administration.
- Cllr Field has submitted a Notice of Motion requesting the removal of the pre-booking system for entry to household waste recycling centres, citing evidence that the system is contributing to increased fly-tipping.
- Cllr Field has also submitted three written questions requiring formal written responses:
  1. When the contract for EV charging points will be signed and implemented.
  2. Whether an urgent meeting will be held with Balfour Beatty to improve the quality of pothole repairs within the current contract.
  3. How the relationship between Highways and parish clerks can be improved.

**RESOLVED:** Councillors noted the report.

## **7. TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING**

### **7.1 RR/2026/0651/PIP – Land adjacent to the Telephone Exchange, Chapel Hill**

Permission in principle for the erection of a dwellinghouse with access and parking.

*Cllr Plato declared an interest in this item.*

Councillors considered the application in detail. The Neighbourhood Plan Group had been asked to provide advice to support the Council's response. Councillors also agreed that District Cllr McLaren would be asked to contact Matthew Jenner to request an extension to the consultation deadline for members of the public, in line with that extended to the Parish Council.

Following discussion, councillors agreed that the Parish Council would **not support** the application.

**RESOLVED:** The Parish Council's objection and associated comments will be submitted to Rother District Council.

## **8. RFO REPORT**

### **8.1 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)**

i. The Internal Auditor's Report (App 2) was reviewed and noted, including the recommendations. The Internal Auditors' fees of £146.25 were noted and approved.

ii. Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement and Section 2 – Accounting Statement were reviewed, approved and signed.

iv. The dates for the Notice of Electors' Rights were noted.

### **8.2 Financial Report**

The financial report to 31st May 2026 and summary of receipts and payments (Apps 3(i) & 3(ii)) were noted.

### **8.3 Payments Report**

The payments report for June 2026 (App 4) was approved.

### **8.4 Bank Reconciliation**

The bank reconciliation to 31st May 2026 (App 5), including the balance shown on the bank statement, was approved.

## 9. RECREATION GROUND

i. Councillors received the monthly playground and defibrillator inspection update. Cllr Sonia Plato carried out this month's inspection. She reported fraying ropes on the monkey bars and noted that the depth of woodchip remains good, thanks to the recent work by Cllrs Goddard, Roller and Rivett. The latch on the gate from the picnic area to the Recreation Ground requires replacement, and a new post is needed for the gate from the car park to the picnic area. The Clerk will contact the handyman to carry out these repairs.

The Pavilion was found to be clean and tidy. The youth football goals had been left un-padlocked on the Recreation Ground. The light cover inside the telephone box housing the defibrillator needs to be screwed back into place; the Clerk will ask the handyman to attend to this.

It was also noted that the rocker bike in the infant playground requires new handles. The cost of replacement handles is £61.00 plus VAT. Councillors approved the expenditure, and the Clerk will place the order.

Nicola Stell reported during her weekly inspection that part of the junior playground equipment appeared slightly unstable. The Clerk advised that this issue had been identified as a moderate concern during the most recent annual playground inspection. Cllr Goddard suggested that the prolonged dry weather may be contributing to the movement. Councillors agreed to monitor the equipment closely. Nicola Stell will continue to check it each Monday, with the councillor responsible for the monthly inspection reviewing it on Fridays.

ii. The continued vandalism of the bollard lighting was noted. Councillors discussed the response from Burwash Common and agreed to invite Mr. David Everslie to visit us to discuss the lighting they had designed and installed.

iii. The date of the next Rec User Group meeting was discussed and noted. The next meeting will take place on July 15<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Village Hall.

iv. Councillors considered the Croquet Club's request to move their pitch to a position in front of the Pavilion. The proposal was discussed and noted to be a straightforward request. The Clerk confirmed that Dave Watters from the Cricket Club had no objections. The Parish Council agreed to recommend that the Croquet Club proceed with the relocation, noting that the proposed area lies on the far edge of the cricket pitch and runs alongside it.

v. The Recreation Ground Tree Survey had been received. Councillors will meet with Mr Curley at his suggestion to talk through the findings of the report. The clerk will arrange a date.

vi. Councillors retrospectively approved the purchase of two replacement trees for the community orchard at a cost of £44.00.

vii. Councillors discussed the preschool's request to build a small extension to the Youth Club building to house a sensory room. The PreSchool will work with the Youth Club Committee on the design of the project. The Youth Club has asked for a plan that also incorporates their own requirements for more storage, a disabled toilet and takes into consideration the needs of Short Mat Bowls, the other regular user of the building. The Youth Club Committee's view was that the current plan may well need building regulations/control. Councillors agreed that they had no objection in principle to the proposal. However, the Parish Council requested a fully costed plan and clear design details before any formal approval can be given. Councillors emphasised that the project must be carried out properly and not rushed and is likely to be required to meet building regulations. It was noted that Preschool funds for the extension are available.

**RESOLVED:** The Parish Council supports the proposal in principle and awaits a fully costed plan before considering formal approval.

viii. The cost of weed-spraying around the MUGA of £350 plus VAT was noted and approved. This will allow for a follow up visit 4-6 weeks after the first application. Councillors agreed to proceed with the works.

ix. An update was received regarding the unlocked goal posts. The Chair of the Football Club reported that the locks securing the youth goalposts had recently been cut through, and the goals moved by visitors to the Recreation Ground wishing to play football. As a result, he is having to make repeated visits to the site to replace the locks.

## 10. PAVILION REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

Councillors confirmed the appointment of the surveyor Hawkins and Hawkins to undertake the Pavilion survey at a fee of £950.00 plus VAT. The survey will take place on July 14<sup>th</sup>.

**RESOLVED:** Appointment confirmed and cost approved.

#### **11. UK POWER NETWORKS – FORM OF CONSENT**

Councillors discussed Form of Consent 8110234208 relating to an electrical connection from the Recreation Ground to Blacksmiths Cottage. Following recent communications from UK Power Networks, councillors agreed that they would like to meet the appointed surveyor on site to discuss the works proposed. Councillors also suggested that the homeowner be present so that all parties have a shared understanding of the proposals and any implications for the Recreation Ground.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk will request a site meeting with the UK Power Networks surveyor and the homeowner.

#### **12. QUARRY WOOD – FALLEN TREES AND FUTURE ACTIONS**

Councillors noted that further trees have recently fallen within Quarry Wood. The Parish Council reiterated that it does not own or manage this land but has previously undertaken limited safety clearance where necessary. Councillors discussed appropriate actions moving forward and agreed that the Clerk will contact the Parish Council's insurers to confirm the position should any safety work be carried out on land not owned by the Council.

**RESOLVED:** Actions as noted above were agreed.

#### **13. COUNCILLOR UPDATES ON EXTERNAL BODIES**

Cllr Plato reported that Kanna Ingleson of the Southeast Communities Rail Partnership had contacted her to advise that the Trust would like to bring forward the installation of the proposed mural at Crowhurst Station. Emily John, who created the artwork for the Crowhurst Community Map displayed at the station, has been approached, and arrangements will hopefully be made for a meeting at the railway station to discuss the project. All associated costs will be met by Southeastern Rail.

#### **14. CLERK'S REPORT**

Councillors received the Clerk's report for June 2026.

The ESALC AGM and Conference will take place on 4th November 2026 at the AMEX Stadium, Brighton. Two representatives may attend from each parish council, to be appointed at the next meeting. Geoff confirmed that he is willing to attend if no other councillor wishes to take up a place.

The ESCC SLR meeting has been rearranged and will be confirmed soon..

Councillors noted the WSALC Summer Newsletter, including items on business planning, the "pothole posse" initiative, and the updated HMRC travel allowance. The Clerk advised that ESALC's facilitator and note-taker service now carries a charge of £100. Councillors agreed that the Clerk will contact Trevor Lego to arrange the second stage of the Parish Council's business planning meeting.

The new HMRC mileage rate of **55p per mile** was noted.

A complaint had been received regarding water running down the twittern by The Plough. The clerk will contact Southeast Water.

An update was received from Counter Terrorism Policing regarding the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, including a summer safety message and a toolkit for organisers of events with capacity for more than 200 visitors.

Councillors noted the invitation to the focused consultation on the Rother District Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework Study, the JS Fire annual inspection, and the Rights of Rivers workshop on 21st July in Lewes.

**RESOLVED:** Councillors noted the report.

#### **15. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No items were put forward for inclusion on the next agenda.

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Monday 20th July 2026 at 7.05pm** in the Village Hall.

Signed .....

Dated .....