

Crowhurst

PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on

Monday 20th July 2026 at 7.05pm

Crowhurst Village Hall, Forewood Lane, Crowhurst.

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Geoff Thomas (Chair), Sonia Plato (Vice-Chair), Lynda Roller, John Goddard, Sue Laimbeer & Paula Rivett

District/County Councillors present: County Cllr Kathryn Field

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

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions were raised by members of the public.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from District Cllr McLaren.

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Declarations were received as follows:

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

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on **15th June 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's update on matters arising (App 1) was noted.

Councillors discussed the ongoing dumping of soil at Lower Wilting. A reply had been received from the MP's assistant but provided no new information. Members

considered options including raising the matter with the press; however, it was agreed to revisit the issue in September unless activity escalates.

6. REPRESENTATIONS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

A report was received from County Cllr Field. Councillors noted the following updates.

Key points included:

- County Council administration is considering ending the highways contract (due to run until 2030), with potential penalties yet to be assessed.
- Concerns regarding the tip booking system and increased fly-tipping.
- Free bus passes for veterans.
- A motion passed relating to government reorganisation.
- Explanation of forthcoming shadow authority arrangements and possible judicial review.

RESOLVED: Councillors noted the report.

7. TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

RR/2026/0712/FULL – Barn and Land adjoining Hill House Farm Councillors considered the application for a new vehicular access and track. Members expressed concern that the proposal represented a significant change from the previously approved usage, with potential landscape impact and implications for larger vehicle movements. Comments were also raised regarding hedgerow removal and possible future development.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council will object to the application. The Chair will draft the response which will be submitted by the clerk.

8. FINANCIAL MATTERS

i. The financial report to 30th June 2026 and a summary of receipts and payments was noted.

ii. The payments report for July 2026 was approved.

iii. The bank reconciliation to 30th June 2026, including the balance shown on the bank statement, was agreed.

iv. The payment of 13.5 hours of overtime to the Clerk was approved and noted.

RESOLVED: All items were agreed or approved as recorded.

9. RECREATION GROUND

- i. Councillors received the monthly playground/defibrillator inspection update and noted the weekly reports.
- ii. Recent vandalism was discussed, including reports of large groups gathering late at night.
- iii. Councillors considered the Football Club's request for a storage container. It was agreed that further enquiries should be made regarding existing container usage, including discussions with the Cricket Club and Fayre Committee.
- iv. A successful site meeting had taken place regarding the Tree Survey. Recommendations were noted as autumn tasks. Ownership of trees near the Youth Club requires clarification. A management plan will be developed by Cllrs Plato, Goddard, Thomas and the Clerk.
- v. Concerns regarding the unlocked 5-a-side net and MUGA management were discussed.

Additional actions agreed:

- Proceed with quotes to remove every second lamp and refurbish the remainder. The clerk will forward the two quotes previously obtained to Cllr Goddard.
- Handyman to inspect picnic bench legs.
- JG to speak with Dave Watters regarding container usage.

RESOLVED: All items were noted and actions agreed as recorded.

10. PAVILION REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

Councillors received an update following the structural survey carried out by Mr Hawkins. The survey has taken place, and Mr Hawkins provided initial verbal observations; however, the formal written report has not yet been received. Councillors noted that potential asbestos in the tower may require specialist assessment. The Council will consider next steps once the full survey report is available.

11. PLAYGROUND REVIEW

A report was received following the meeting on 2nd July. A plan will be drawn up and quotes sought from Playdale and one other supplier, within the original budget.

12. UK POWER NETWORKS – FORM OF CONSENT

Councillors received an update following the site meeting. Concerns were raised regarding overhead routing through an oak tree. The Parish Council recommended

removing a dead tree and routing the cable through an existing hedge gap. The Clerk will confirm regulatory compliance regarding trenching beneath trees and hedgerows.

Once this clarification has been received, councillors confirmed they are happy for the Clerk to sign the Form of Consent on behalf of the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: Subject to confirmation of regulatory compliance, the Clerk is authorised to sign the Form of Consent on behalf of the Parish Council.

13. QUARRY WOOD – FALLEN TREES AND FUTURE ACTIONS

Zurich confirmed that the Parish Council is covered for undertaking safety works on land it does not own, provided contractors are used for chainsaw work. Volunteers may use hand saws.

Councillors discussed the current situation regarding Quarry Wood. It was noted that Sarah Blackford is presently unable to provide a full update, but further information is expected to be available for councillors in September.

14. ROTHER ENFORCEMENT PLAN

Councillors noted the email from RALC regarding a coordinated response to the draft Local Enforcement Plan. The Chair will collate comments and submit on behalf of the Parish Council.

15. LEAD AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Councillors requested circulation of the document compiled by the Chair. The Clerk will circulate it and prepare a draft during the August break.

16. SUNDAY SOCIAL

Cllr Roller provided an update on proposals for the next season. The programme will run from January to February, with talks from Samaritans, a paramedic, financial speakers, Dark Skies, and others. Additional initiatives include tool recycling and spectacle collection. A notice will be placed in Crowhurst News.

17. ESTABLISHMENT OF GREEN CORRIDORS

Councillors discussed opportunities relating to Weald to Waves funding and potential land acquisition to allow for the establishment of green corridors through Crowhurst. Further exploration of partnership opportunities and alignment with the Neighbourhood Plan will be required. The Parish Council confirmed that it is open to further discussion as more information becomes available.

18. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE YOUTH CLUB HUT

Councillors received an update from the Youth Club Committee following two meetings with the pre-school. Discussions included multi-use potential, disabled access, and coordination with Pavilion refurbishment plans.

19. CLIMATE EMERGENCY FILM SCREENING PROPOSAL

Councillors agreed to support the showing of *The People's Emergency Briefing* film in September, in line with the Parish Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Resolution.

20. COUNCILLOR UPDATES ON EXTERNAL BODIES

RALC update noted. The local plan presentation will be circulated by the Chair. Further improvements to the planning portal will be sought.

21. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's report and correspondence were received and noted, including updates on Recreation Ground usage, ash dieback, Utility Aid LOA, sewage plant servicing, water usage concerns, Pavilion roof damage, AGAR receipt, Rec bookings, Skills Bootcamps, working hours, planning applications, and the Annual Parish Conference.

22. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A local resident raised concerns regarding fire risk during the heatwave. The resilience document will be added to the website and a meeting of wardens arranged.

23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on **Monday 21st September 2026 at 7.05pm** in the Village Hall.

Signed:

Dated: