Rusper Parish Council
c/o Rusper Village Stores
East Street
Rusper, RH12 4PX
Tel: 07380 468256
clerk@rusper-pc.gov.uk
www.rusper-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 29th September 2026 7.00pm. This meeting was held at Rusper Village Hall.
Present: Cllrs M Cooke (Chair), F Maitland-Smith, M Fenton, S White, D Matthews, M Fillmore, R Beckmann, G Hussey,
There was 3 members of public for part of the meeting.
Apologies: Cllr G Sallows, D Halsey, G Fleming, County Councillor Sam Raby.
Clerk: L Wilcock

Meeting commenced 1900hrs

079-26/27 – Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs D Halsey, G Fleming and G Sallows.

080-26/27 – Declarations of Interest
Councillors were invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other interests in respect of items on the agenda. Declared an interest in her capacity of Chair of Save West of Ifield and Cllr M Fillmore in his capacity of board member of GACC.

081-26/27 – Climate Crisis
The Council considered the environmental implications relevant to Council business and received updates as appropriate. Resolved not to include this in the minutes of meetings going forward.

082-26/27 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting
The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on **28 July 2026** were considered.
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record.

083-26/27 – Open Forum
Members of the public were given the opportunity to address the Council in accordance with Standing Orders. MOP starting to litter pick the main roads around the area. Advised that HDC allow adopt a street in Horsham. The meeting was closed to members of the public following this item.

084-26/27 – Reports from Other Authorities
a) County Councillor's Report
The County Councillor sent his apologies.
b) District Councillor's Report
The District Councillor was not present.

085-26/27 – Financial Matters
a) Financial Reports – July and August 2026
The Bank Reconciliation, Budget Report and Unity Trust Bank Statements for July and August 2026 were considered.
RESOLVED: That the financial reports for July and August 2026 be approved.
b) Schedule of Payments
The Schedule of Payments was considered.
RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments be approved.

c) Budget Review
The Council reviewed the budget position going forward and considered expenditure on unexpected projects, as carried forward from the previous meeting.
d) Earmarked Reserves (EMRs)
The Council considered the level of General Fund reserves and the proposed Earmarked Reserves.
RESOLVED: That the proposed Earmarked Reserves be agreed.
e) Interim Audit Report
The Interim Audit Report was received and considered. The Council reviewed the recommendations/actions arising from the report.
RESOLVED: That the Interim Audit Report be accepted and the identified actions be undertaken.
f) Poppy Wreath
The Council considered the purchase of a Poppy Wreath. Cllr M Fenton has approached other businesses however the ceremony may not be held at Rusper, Chair to confirm.
RESOLVED: That a Poppy Wreath be purchased for the Remembrance commemorations at a cost of £50.
g) Insurance
The Council considered the inclusion of Cyber Insurance and Business Interruption Insurance, as well as the insurance arrangements relating to Millfields playground and open space. It was agreed that a quotation for Cyber Insurance and Business Interruption Insurance should be obtained, and the Clerk was asked to arrange this.
The possibility of combining the two insurance policies with those of the Sports Club was also discussed.
h) Financial, Physical Asset and Staffing Risks
The Council reviewed the identified financial, physical asset and staffing risks. The Clerk was asked to rewrite the policy and circulate it to the Chair and Cllr M Fillmore.
i) Hinckley and Rugby Building Society Account
The Council considered the new account documentation for Hinckley and Rugby Building Society. Signed and will get it open. **RESOLVED:** That the new account form was signed by the authorised Councillors.
j) Grass Cutting Tender Documents
The Council considered the appointment of two Councillors to review and revise the Grass Cutting Tender Documents. **RESOLVED:** That Cllr S White and Cllr R Beckmann be appointed to review and revise the Grass Cutting Tender Documents.

086-26/27 – Horsham District Local Plan
The Council received an update regarding the Horsham District Local Plan hearings.
Noted that the Clerk has received notification from the Programme Manager that Rusper Parish Council may speak in sessions - matters 6a, 6b and 6h (Thursday 15 October) in addition to 5b (Wednesday 14 October).

087-26/27 – Land West of Ifield
The Council received an update regarding the planning consultation for Land West of Ifield.
National Highways, as a statutory consultee on the planning application, has requested further information from HE and has therefore advised that the application cannot be determined before 11 December 2026. An update will follow. The October planning meetings have not yet been scheduled by HDC, so November may be the first opportunity for any planning application to be considered, should HE provide the requested information.

088-26/27 – Capel Neighbourhood Development Plan – Regulation 14 Consultation
The Council received notification from Capel Parish Council that the Capel Neighbourhood Development Plan had been reviewed and was subject to Regulation 14 public consultation, running until **30 October 2026**. The Council considered whether it wished to submit comments or representations on the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. Carry to the next meeting.

089-26/27 – Speedwatch – Training and Volunteer Recruitment

The Council received an update on the Speedwatch group arrangements, including volunteer recruitment and training. Three volunteers expressed an interest at the Village Hall Hub Open Day on Saturday, with a further five or six potential volunteers from the wider community. Volunteers will need to complete an online introductory course, followed by a secondary course and a practical session before being formally enrolled.

A meeting with the Police Co-ordinator is scheduled for Friday, when a plan will be provided identifying suitable locations for volunteers to undertake Speedwatch sessions. Particular concern was raised regarding vehicles exceeding the 20mph speed limit outside the school, which is frequently disregarded. It was noted that Speedwatch sessions could help encourage drivers to slow down when the 20mph limit is in force.

Further volunteers are required, with the aim of recruiting between 12 and 16 volunteers so that teams of three or four can undertake sessions on a rota basis. The next online training session is scheduled for 10 October and will be held via Teams.

Speedwatch sessions will be logged online so that the Police are aware when volunteers are operating, and Police support will be available should any issues arise. The Police will also send letters to drivers identified as speeding, with the details being issued via the Clerk.

090-26/27 – Gatwick Matters

a) Gatwick Representative's Report

The Gatwick Representative's report was received and noted. It was reported that Heathrow's proposed third runway has been delayed, making the proposed second runway at Gatwick more likely to proceed. The next consultation will focus on night flights, which the Parish Council will pay particular attention to. It was noted that delayed flights are continuing to arrive throughout the night, and there is an expectation that the demand for night flights may therefore increase.
The high costs associated with the Judicial Review (JR) were also noted.

b) CAGNE Correspondence – Independent Ombudsman

The Council considered correspondence from CAGNE (Campaign Against Gatwick Noise and Emissions) regarding its campaign for the introduction of an independent Ombudsman to oversee the Civil Aviation Authority's decision-making process on airspace change proposals.
The Council considered whether to support the campaign by adding its name to the joint letter to the Prime Minister and/or writing to the local Member of Parliament to request support for appropriate provisions within the Civil Aviation (Consumer Protection and Regulatory Reform) Bill. It was noted that the consultation should proceed, as the relevant arrangements have not been reviewed for approximately 30 years and therefore require consideration.
Resolved: That the Parish Council write to the local Member of Parliament in support of an independent aviation Ombudsman and request their support for appropriate provisions within the Civil Aviation (Consumer Protection and Regulatory Reform) Bill. The Clerk was asked to action this.

091-26/27 – Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee

The recommendations arising from the Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on **15 September 2026** were considered.

a) OS41 – Playground – Cllr Geoff Hussey Training

The Council considered the recommendation that Cllr Geoff Hussey undertake the relevant training required for his role as Tree Representative.
RESOLVED: That Cllr Geoff Hussey undertake the relevant training required for his role as Playground Representative.

b) OS43(a) – Sports Ground – Storage Container

The Parish Council's thanks to the Plymouth Brethren (PL) for their kind donation of the storage container were noted. The Council expressed its appreciation to the Plymouth Brethren for the donation and for their assistance with transporting the container to the site. Thanks were also expressed to Browns for their assistance with the delivery.

c) OS43(d) – Pavilion Ceiling and Maintenance

The Council considered the works undertaken to repair the pavilion ceiling following water leaks. It was noted that the repairs had been authorised and undertaken as emergency works in accordance with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations.

Further maintenance requirements at the pavilion and wider recreation ground were also considered. The Sports Club had agreed to make a donation of £2,000 to the Parish Council in lieu of undertaking the works.

Following the installation of the fans, the pavilion ceiling now requires treatment with stain blocker and repainting in white. Other maintenance issues identified included the poor condition of the flooring, which is no longer waterproof, and the condition of the windows. These matters will be discussed further at the next meeting with the Sports Club.

The Council also discussed changes to the tennis court locks and frames. It was noted that when the tennis floodlights are in use, access to the pavilion is currently required in order to operate the floodlights.

MG (Tennis Courts) Ltd had inspected the pavilion and noted some cracks requiring attention. Arrangements were made for these to be addressed.

092-26/27 – Street Lighting – HID Lamps

The Council received an update regarding the forthcoming obsolescence of 70W and above HID lamps due to Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) regulations from February 2027.

It was noted that four lamps within the Parish Council's inventory had been identified as affected. The Council considered the replacement of these lamps and associated expenditure, taking into account current lead times and the recommended order deadline of **1 December 2026**.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council approve expenditure of **£1,400** for the replacement of the four affected lamps, with the works to be undertaken by Streetlights Ltd.

093-26/27 – Playground

The Council received and considered the playground safety inspection report. It was noted that a gate post had been damaged and was replaced as an emergency repair. The tarmac around the hopscotch area was noted to be cracked and deteriorating. Previous repairs have not provided a lasting solution, and the cost of relaying the area was estimated at approximately £4,500. A site meeting will be arranged to discuss alternative options, including relaying the hopscotch area and repainting the markings. The benches have now been installed and are very heavy. The grass fittings are to be installed. **Resolved:** That £250 be paid for the benches to be securely fixed in position.

094-26/27 – Reports from Representatives

Updates were received from Councillors representing the Parish Council on external bodies, committees and working groups.

Cllr G Hussey – An update was provided regarding the ongoing matter at Browns, including concerns about concrete waste, a large bund in the field and dust affecting the neighbouring farm. The Team Leader had been contacted and had apologised for the delay. Notices had subsequently been served.

Cllr D Matthews – An update was provided regarding the Hope Keith Billingshurst Community Bus. Some publicity material is required and assistance with distribution would be appreciated. A larger group may be needed to encourage additional drivers to volunteer. The Men's Shed and the Sports Club were suggested as possible venues for community engagement, including activities relating to mental health. County Lines activity in the Faygate area was also noted. The Sports Club basketball area was discussed. It was noted that Faygate Village Hall currently has no volunteers.

Cllr R Beckmann – The proposed use of a vintage horse box at the Sports Club to provide refreshments was discussed. Discussions had taken place with the Village Shop and the Pub. The Clerk was asked to look into the proposal.

095-26/27 – Matters Arising

The Council reviewed outstanding issues, actions and discussions from previous meetings. Councillors were invited to propose matters for consideration at the next meeting.

096-26/27 – Date of Next Meeting
It was confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting would be held 20th Open Spaces and Planning Committee.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
RESOLVED: That, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following confidential matters, on the grounds that their presence would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential and/or commercially sensitive nature of the business to be discussed.

097-26/27 – Land Acquisition
a) Valuation
The Council received an update on the valuation of the proposed acquisition.
RESOLVED: That the valuation be accepted.
b) Legal Representation
The Council considered the appointment of legal representation in connection with the proposed acquisition.
RESOLVED: That Bray Estates be appointed to act on behalf of the Parish Council at a cost of £2,950 plus VAT.
c) Valuer
The Council considered the appointment of a valuer to negotiate the purchase price on behalf of the Parish Council.
RESOLVED: That Bray Estates be appointed to negotiate the purchase price on behalf of the Parish Council at a cost of £2,950 plus VAT.
d) Next Steps
The Council considered the next steps in progressing the proposed acquisition, including the application to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and the required public consultation.
The Council discussed the PWLB costs and the information required as part of the application. It was agreed that the consultation should include a clear explanation of the proposal, a QR code to provide access to further information, and a public meeting at which the proposed acquisition and associated costs could be explained.
RESOLVED: That Fenella progress the PWLB application and associated costs, and that arrangements be made for the public consultation, including the provision of relevant information, a QR code and a public meeting.

098-26/27 – Clerk's Salary Review
The Council noted the NALC-recommended statutory pay increase and considered the Clerk's achievement of the **FILCA qualification**.
RESOLVED: That the Clerk's salary be increased by one point to SCP 33, with effect from 1 August 2026.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2048hrs

Signed ……. Dated …….