



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 28th April 2026 at 7.00pm. This meeting was held at Rusper Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs M Cooke (Chair), F Maitland-Smith, G Fleming M Fenton, S White, G Sallows, M Fillmore, D Halsey, R Beckmann.

District Councillor Tony Hogben

There were two members of public

Apologies: L Wilcock (Clerk), Cllr G Hussey, D Matthews

Meeting commenced 1900hrs

001-26/27 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs G Hussey and D Matthews. Due to the Clerk's illness, it was agreed that Cllr Maitland-Smith would record the minutes in her absence.

002-26/27 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Fenella Maitland-Smith declared an interested in West of Ifield as the Chair of Save West of Ifield.

003-26/27 Climate Crisis Statement

The Council reaffirmed its acknowledgement of the climate crisis and confirmed that environmental considerations will continue to be incorporated into all decision-making processes.

004-26/27 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24th March 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

005-26/27 Open Forum

Members of the public addressed the Council in accordance with Standing Orders.

A representative of the Plymouth Brethren community – donors of the Liz Kitchen memorial bench – reported that Cllr Hussey is now organising for the bench to be installed in the Playground. Also, that the community is holding a litter pick in the Parish on the morning of Saturday 2nd May.

The meeting was closed to the public following this item.

006-26/27 Rusper Sports Club Discussion

a) The Clerk's reports regarding the Recreation Ground were **noted**.

b) One quote has been received for the emergency plumbing work and electricity testing necessary at the Pavilion prior to further testing in accordance with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) requirements. The Council discussed the quotation taking into account as a priority the work needed ahead of HSE testing, as well as further work considered necessary or desirable. It was **resolved** to approve the quotation for works required prior to HSE testing, of up to £3,100 plus a contingency of up to £300 for light fittings.

c) Cllr Beckmann provided an update following his site visit to the Pavilion and immediate surroundings. It was **resolved** to seek a quotation for further works to make good the ceiling of the changing room, and to investigate the drains and repair as necessary.

- d) **Resolved:** To commission a further HSE test and training at a cost of up to £500.
- e) It was **agreed** to carry to the next Council meeting discussion of expenditure for the Recreation Ground and exploration of appropriate funding sources.
- f) Cllr Filmore reported that he has written to the Sports Club Committee chairman to request a meeting to discuss ongoing dialogue and transparency, and is awaiting a response.
- g) The Council **noted** that the pump trough at the Star is empty and outside the scope of HSE testing. Cllr Beckmann offered to drill holes for drainage.
- h) It was **agreed** that Cllr Sallows and Cllr White will communicate to the Sports Club Committee that the Recreation Ground shed (next to the Pavilion) must be cleared of waste by end of May.

007-26/27 Reports from Other Authorities

- a) County Councillor not present.
- b) District Councillor Hogben updated on the latest developments regarding the Local Government Review. All District councillors are currently being consulted on the latest proposals for West Sussex. Horsham's food waste recycling scheme appears to be working, despite some people not needing the service.

008-26/27 Financial Matters

- a) The **March financial reports**, including reconciliation, budget report, Unity Trust Bank statement, and Nationwide annual statement were considered and Council **resolved** that they be approved.
- b) It was **noted** that the grant application for Rusper Store's CCTV has been actioned.
- c) The **Schedule of Payments** was considered and it was **resolved** that it be approved.
- d) It was **noted** that the internal audit is scheduled for 11th May 2026.
- e) It was **resolved** that a new savings account be opened with Hinckley and Rugby Building Society, and that the corresponding existing Nationwide account to be closed.
- f) The CIL and S106 reports as published on the Parish Council website were **noted**.
- g) It was **noted** that CIL income of £11,324.13 is due this quarter.
- h) Council considered several options for new planters in the village, and **resolved** that a budget of £300 be approved for installation of the selected planters, compost and plants.
- i) It was **noted** that Cllr Ritchie Gatt has been removed as a signatory from Unity Bank Trust.

009-26/27 Community Governance Review

The Council **noted** the forthcoming review by Horsham District Council and discussed potential implication for the Parish, in particular its boundary with North Horsham Parish which currently cut across the Mowbray site. The review will start after the elections on 9 May 2026 and the Council is expected to make representations as part of the consultation process. It was **resolved** that a working group of Cllr Filmore, Cllr Sallows, Cllr Beckmann and Cllr White will prepare for the consultation, which may involve liaison with neighbouring parish councils. The working group will prepare a consultation response for resolution at Council's May meeting.

010-26/27 Memorial Bench – Playground

It was **noted** that the Liz Kitchen memorial bench has been ordered and that the family has agreed wording for the plaque. The Council **agreed** that a brass plaque would be preferable to stainless steel.

011-26/27 Annual Parish Meeting

It was **agreed** that a brief Annual Parish Meeting will be held on the same evening as the Annual General Meeting, on 26 May 2026. An agenda to be published by 18 May 2026. If a Parish meeting is needed for specific issues later in the year, then this will be arranged.

012-26/27 Gatwick Report

The report was received and **noted**.

Cllr Fillmore reported that the judicial review of the decision on Gatwick's northern runway has been further deferred, until after the local elections on 7th May.

013-26/27 Reports from Representatives

Cllr Fleming reported that the phone box in Lambs Green needs repair work. Carry to next meeting of Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee.

a) Restoration of the **fingerpost** at the junction of Horsham Road and Green Lane is delayed while the contractor is not available. It was **agreed** that Cllr Cooke will contact the contractor to establish the status of the work and likely timing of his availability, and that next steps to be carried to the May meeting of the Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee.

b) **Cllr White and Cllr Sallows** reported that various trees have fallen into the Recreation Ground from neighbouring properties, and it was **agreed** that they will approach the owners to confirm ownership.

c) Update on **tree surgery works** – to be carried to the May meeting of the Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee.

d) **Defibrillator** cabinet – it was **noted** that installation will follow works commissioned under Item 6b.

014-26/27 Planning Inspector and Local Plan

The Council received a debrief on the Horsham District Local Plan examination from Cllr Sallows and Cllr Maitland-Smith who had participated in the recent examination hearings.

015-26/27 Matters Arising

016-26/27 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 26th May 2026 in conjunction with the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual General Meeting.

017-26/27 Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded due to the confidential nature of the business.

Confidential Session

019-26/27 Land Acquisition

a) The quotation obtained to carry out a valuation of the land in question was **noted**. It was **agreed** that Cllr Beckmann will obtain a quotation from a second surveyor to undertake a land valuation.

b) The Clerk’s draft report and policy on land acquisition and disposal were **noted** and it was **resolved** that a working party comprising Cllr Filmore, Cllr Beckmann, Cllr Sallows and Cllr Maitland-Smith will take forward the work necessary for the Council’s decision-making on the potential land acquisition.

c) It was **resolved** that the terms of reference for the working party include:

- Providing valuation recommendations
- Negotiating with landowners
- Proposing a purchase price
- Exploring loan arrangements
- Conducting community engagement
- Presenting repayment plans
- Preparing a comprehensive financial and risk assessment

Meeting closed: 2051 hrs

Signed Dated