

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 27th January 2026 at 7.00pm. This meeting was held at Rusper Village Hall.

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

County Councillor Sam Raby

District Councillor Tony Hogben

There were 4 members of public.

Apologies: Cllrs M Fillmore, G Hussey.

Meeting commenced 1900hrs

147-25/26 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs M Fillmore, G Hussey.

Resolved: Apologies were accepted.

148-25/26 Declarations of Interest

Councillors were invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other interests in respect of items on the agenda. Declarations were made as follows:

Cllr G Sallops declared an interest in **Planning Application DC/25/2098** as the **applicant**.

Cllr F Maitland-Smith declared an interest in matters relating to **planning West of Ifield** in their capacity as **Chair of Save West of Ifield**.

149-25/26 Climate Crisis

The Council reaffirmed its acknowledgement that there is a climate crisis and confirmed that environmental impact would continue to be considered when making decisions.

150-25/26 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 December 2026 were considered.

Resolved: That the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record the Chair signed the minutes.

151-25/26 Open Forum

Members of the public addressed the Council in accordance with Standing Orders. Matters raised included:

Litter Pick – A request was received to carry out a litter pick on Saturday. The Council confirmed that litter picks were scheduled on Sundays due to traffic conditions.

Meeting closed to the public.

152-25/26 Reports from Other Authorities

District Councillor's Report – Cllr Tony Hogben

Cllr Hogben reported that the District Council budget includes a 2.94% increase, with significant capital expenditure planned, totaling more than £30 million. The Capitol Theatre is currently closed and scheduled for refurbishment at an estimated cost of £22 million. It was noted that local authorities are moving towards unitary status.

Income from property, parking, and council tax remains relatively low, with Government Grant funding contributing to overall finances. The Finance Officer reported that grant funding for the current year is approximately 5% lower than the previous year. Food waste collection is not fully

subsidised, although an additional £1.6 million funding has been received compared to initial projections.

The New Homes Bonus has been placed into reserves. A query was raised as to whether this funding could have been used for council housing within Horsham District Council; this is not currently permitted but may be possible under a future unitary authority structure.

A question was also raised regarding the mandatory nature of food waste bins and whether residents have the option to opt out.

Action: Cllr Tony Hogben and Cllr Sam Raby to seek clarification on whether residents can decline food waste bins.

A264 – Flooding and Road Closure

It was reported that the A264 is currently closed due to flooding. A request has been made for one lane to be reopened as soon as possible. The flooding issue appears to originate at Holmbush and relates to drainage grates and a ditch running along the road, which is understood to be Highways land and has not been adequately cleared. The current diversion route is via Rusper. It was also noted that at Faygate, drainage systems are in place but water is currently being diverted and sprayed into an adjacent field.

Road Safety and Pedestrian Concerns

Members raised concerns regarding members of the public walking through the village, particularly in areas adjacent to new housing developments where construction activity is ongoing. It was noted that further construction deliveries are expected and that local roads are not suitable to accommodate the volume and size of vehicles. An incident was described where a tractor encountered oncoming traffic, resulting in approximately 15 vehicles coming to a stop. Footpaths in these areas are narrow, and there are serious concerns for the safety of pedestrians, including children and animals, with a risk of potential accidents as vehicles mount the pavements to pass stationary traffic.

Highways and Development-Related Issues

Concerns were raised regarding Highways-related issues associated with the Millfields and Devine Homes developments. Discussion focused on the need for appropriate mitigation measures relating to increased car travel, diversion routes, construction traffic management, installation of a speed hump, a pinch point, and the extension of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) along East Street. The Clerk will consider how best to communicate the cumulative impact of multiple developments and the associated mitigation measures to residents, with the aim of ensuring public safety within Rusper.

Action:

Sam Raby to arrange a meeting with WSCC Highways to raise and discuss the issues outlined above.

153-25/26 Financial Reports

a) Financial Reports – December

The Reconciliation, Budget Report, and Unity Trust Bank Statements for December were considered. **Resolved:** That the Reconciliation, Budget Report, and Unity Trust Bank Statements for December be approved.

b) Schedule of Payments

The Schedule of Payments was considered.

Resolved: That the Schedule of Payments be approved.

c) Ear Marked Reserves (EMR)

The updated Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) report was considered.

Resolved: That the EMR report be approved.

d) Defibrillators

The Council considered the purchase and replacement of the defibrillator located outside Rusper Stores and the cabinet defibrillator at the Recreation Ground, including installation by a qualified electrician, as recommended by the Open Spaces Committee.

Resolved: That the purchase and replacement of the defibrillators, including installation by a qualified electrician, be approved.

f) Grants – CAGNE

The Council considered the payment of the CAGNE grant prior to the end of the financial year.

Resolved: That the grant payment be deferred due to insufficient funds and scheduled in accordance with the previously agreed timetable.

Cllr George Sallows left the meeting.

154-25/26 Planning Applications

DC/25/2098 – 2 Normans Cottages, High Street, Ruper, RH12 4PX

Replacement of all windows in the existing extension with wooden flush windows (Listed Building Consent).

Resolved: No objection.

Cllr George Sallows rejoined the meeting.

155-25/26 Ruper Sports Club

a) The Underlease was considered for approval by the landowners.

Resolved: That the Underlease be approved by the Council.

b) Responsibility for obtaining the Sports Club's signature on the lease was discussed.

Resolved: The Clerk to send the lease to the Secretary for signature and return it to the Clerk for sign off.

c) The request to obtain signage permission from the landowner was reviewed.

Action: Carry forward to the next meeting.

d) Next steps for monitoring the Sports Club's compliance with the lease terms, management agreement, and financial reporting obligations, in line with transparency requirements, were discussed.

Action: Carry forward to the next meeting.

156-25/26 Support for Clean Air Night

The Council discussed potential involvement in the "Clean Air at Night" campaign. It was **noted** that public opinion on the campaign was mixed and that the campaign has since concluded.

157-25/26 Annual Parish Meeting

Arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 28 May 2026 were discussed. Potential speakers include representatives from HDC Recycling, the South East Rivers Trust, Leonardslee Wines, and the Village Hall.

158-25/26 SID Licence – Horsham Road

The Council noted that the SID has now been installed.

Resolved: Item closed.

159-25/26 Gatwick

The Gatwick report was received.

Resolved: Report noted.

160-25/26 Meeting Dates – Litter Picking

The Council considered dates for a Litter Picking event in 2026.

Resolved: 12th April 2026 is the agreed date FMS will contact HDC to arrange pickers and waste removal.

161-25/26 Reports from Representatives

Potholes at the car park have been measured, and materials identified. The cost of £450 will be arranged through the Clerk under Financial Regulations 5.18.

Members of the public have raised concerns regarding speeding.

162-25/26 Matters Arising

Planning Committee Meeting followed by Roads Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee 17th February 2026.

Parish Council Meeting 24th February 2026

Meeting closed: 2058 hrs

Signed Dated