



Rusper Parish Council
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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 16th December 2025 at 7.00pm. This meeting was held at Rusper Village Hall.

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

Apologies: Cllrs G Sallows was absent from the first 10 minutes of the meeting as he had attended the HDC Planning Committee meeting.

Meeting commenced 1911hrs

127-25/26 Apologies

Apologies were received from absent Councillors. These were accepted.

128-25/26 Declarations of Interest

Councillors were invited to declare any interests in respect of items on the agenda. Declarations were noted as follows: Councillor Fenella Maitland-Smith declared an interest in Item 8. Councillor Malcolm Fillmore declared an interest as a member of GACC.

129-25/26 Climate Crisis

The Council acknowledged that there is currently a climate crisis and confirmed that climate considerations would be taken into account in decision-making.

130-25/26 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 November 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

131-25/26 Co-option of New Parish Councillor

The Council considered the applications received. RESOLVED: To approve the co-option of a new Parish Councillor Dan Halsey.

132-25/26 Open Forum

Members of the public addressed the Council in accordance with Standing Orders. Matters raised were noted. Any questions not answered during the meeting would be responded to in writing or placed on a future agenda. No public were in present.

133-25/26 Reports from Other Authorities

Verbal reports were received from District and County Councillors.

District Councillor Tony Hogben

Local Plan: To be re-examined in February with an exploratory meeting to assess feasibility. Earliest adoption expected December next year. The plan currently covers only half of the housing need, and officers are being instructed to plan for additional homes.

West of Ifield Briefing: Most consultations have returned. Several statutory consultees, including Crawley, Gatwick, and Sport England, have raised concerns that will require mitigation. The scheme is not expected to be delayed. Notice has been served on Ifield Golf Course.

Water Neutrality: Issue has been resolved, allowing house building to progress.

Council Tax & Services: Council tax is increasing by 2.99%. 100% council tax rate relief remains.

Food waste collection to be introduced by March 2026, with residents receiving new bins.

Mayor Elections: Delayed for two years due to the parliamentary process.

134-25/26 Financial Reports

The Council considered the following:

a) Reconciliation, Budget Report and Unity Trust Bank Statements November 2025

RESOLVED: To approve the reconciliation, budget report and Unity Trust Bank statements.

b) Schedule of Payments December 2025: RESOLVED: To approve the schedule of payments.

c) Earmarked Reserves (EMR) Report RESOLVED: To approve the updated EMR report.

d) Budget FY 2026/27 and Precept

The proposed budget for FY 2026/27 was considered. RESOLVED: To approve the Budget for FY 2026/27 and to set the Precept at £70,920, representing an increase in the Precept of circa 10.8%.

e) New Defibrillator and Cabinet AGREED: To defer the matter to the next meeting, as Councillor Geoff Hussey had received a new quotation from WelMedical, which will be circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. It was noted that a new cabinet may not be required. Members also queried whether external funding might be available for the purchase of a new defibrillator. It was further noted that provision has been made in the budget for the next financial year, and that the potential need for an additional defibrillator elsewhere in the Parish should be considered.

f) Grants A grant application from GACC was considered.

RESOLVED: To approve the grant application in the sum of £2,000 (one abstention).

g) Policy Adoption The Policy on Evaluating Legal Challenge to Planning Decisions was considered.

RESOLVED: To adopt the policy.

134-25/26 Planning Matters

The following planning applications were considered:

a) DC/25/0523 – Land North of East Street, Rusper. Erection of 18 dwellings including affordable housing, access, parking, landscaping, open space and drainage.

The application considered by Horsham District Council (HDC) Planning and permission was granted.

b) DC/25/1913 – Parkholme, Rusper Road, Ifield. Fell 1 x Oak.

RESOLVED: Comments were agreed and submitted.

Oak trees are of significant amenity and environmental value. The Parish Council requests that:

- The tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order or lies within a conservation area.
- Clear arboricultural justification is provided for the proposed felling, including evidence of disease, structural instability, or safety concerns.
- Consideration is given to alternatives to felling, such as management or reduction works, where appropriate.
- If felling is approved, a suitable replacement tree of native species is required to be planted within the site.

c) DC/25/1901 – Hillybarn Farmhouse, The Mount, Ifield. Creation of a two-pitch settled gypsy accommodation site. RESOLVED: Comments were agreed and submitted.

The Parish Council requests that Horsham District Council carefully considers:

The Parish Council asks that appropriate conditions be applied should the application be approved. The Council objects to the proposed development on the grounds that the site is unsuitable in terms of sustainability, access to services, and its impact on the rural character of the area. Concerns are raised regarding highway access, visibility, and potential traffic implications along The Mount. The

proposal may adversely affect neighbouring properties through impacts on visual amenity, noise, and privacy. Issues relating to drainage, utilities provision, and waste management have not been adequately addressed. Additionally, the development appears inconsistent with local and national planning policies relating to gypsy and traveller accommodation.

d) DC/25/1846 – 19 Gardeners Green, Rusper. Front porch, two-storey side and single-storey rear extension. RESOLVED: No objection response submitted 19th November 2025.

135-25/26 Planning Appeals

The following appeal was noted: APP/Z3825/W/25/3375662 (DC/25/1256), Ashfolds, Horsham Road, Rusper.

136-25/26 Planning Matters Since Publication of the Agenda

Any additional planning matters were noted.

a) DC/25/1963 – 1 Hilltop Cottages, The Mount

Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of 1 detached two-storey dwelling.

RESOLVED: The Council objects on the grounds that the development requires its own drainage and sewage provision, and the proposed two-storey design is not in keeping with the character of the area. The Council requests that careful consideration be given to the principle, scale, design, and impact on the local environment. Attention should also be paid to highway safety, neighbouring amenity, and drainage arrangements. If permission is granted, appropriate conditions should ensure separate drainage provision and address these concerns.

b) DC/25/1952 – Howells Gill, Friday Street

Siting of a mobile home (Lawful Development Certificate – Proposed).

RESOLVED: The Council raises no objection in principle, provided the mobile home is ancillary to the main dwelling, does not cause overdevelopment, and access, drainage, and environmental matters are addressed. The Council defers to the Planning Authority's assessment.

137-25/26 Enforcement Report

The enforcement report (to follow) was noted.

138-25/26 Planning Decisions

The following decisions were noted:

- a) DC/25/1442 – The Cabin, The Vineries Nurseries, Lambs Green – *Permitted*.
- b) DC/25/0455 – Horse Ghylls Wood Farm, Capel Road – *Permitted*.
- c) DC/25/1514 – 7 Cooks Mead, Rusper – *Permitted*.

139-25/26 New .gov.uk Website and Email Transition

It was noted that the IONOS account has been terminated and that the Parish Council retains ownership of the website until its expiry in April 2026.

140-25/26 Rusper Sports Club

a) Sports Club Underlease. A verbal update on the Sports Club underlease was received from the Clerk.

b) Lease Compliance and Financial Reporting. The Council discussed transparency and compliance with lease terms and financial reporting obligations. It was agreed that the balance sheet and books should be sent to the Clerk.

c) Security Update An update was received regarding security following two instances of unauthorised vehicle access to the pitch. It was noted that bollards are expected to be installed shortly.

141-25/26 Gatwick

The Gatwick report, published on the Parish Council website, was noted.

142-25/26 Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee

Updates on previous recommendations were received.

a) Liz Kitchen Memorial Bench. NOTED: To carry this item forward until the playground equipment installation is complete.

b) Fingerposts. It was noted that one fingerpost remains incomplete, specifically at the junction of Horsham Road and Green Lane. *Post-meeting, the Clerk noted that this fingerpost has already been reported by the contractor and is expected to be completed within the next eight weeks.*

143-25/26 SID Licence – Horsham Road

It was noted that instructions have been issued to Kenward to install the SID on Horsham Road and to relocate the SID at Gardeners Green.

144-25/26 Reports from Representatives

Councillors provided updates on representation and working party activities since the last meeting. It was noted that the playground has been completed and inspected. The inspection approved the equipment as low risk, and the assessment will be published on the Council website. A small area of rust was observed on one of the slides and a finger entrapment gap was identified. Cllr Hussey will inform the Clerk when payment to Wicksteed is to be made.

145-25/26 Matters Arising

The following items were noted for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting:

- Open Spaces - litter picking date
- Open Spaces - dog bins
- Open Spaces - Pot holes outside the car park

146-25/26 Next Meetings

Planning Committee: 20 January 2026 – Cllr Geoff Hussey unavailable

Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee: 20 January 2026 (following Planning Committee)

Council Meeting: 27 January 2026 – Cllr Malcolm Fillmore unavailable

Meeting dates to May 2027 were noted.

Date of Next Meeting:

Combined Planning Committee followed by Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee 20th January 2026.

Meeting closed 2043hrs

Signed Dated