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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July 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 Sallows, G Hussey.

There was 1 member of public for part of the meeting.

**Apologies:** Cllrs G Fleming, D Halsey.

**Clerk:** L Wilcock

*Meeting commenced 1900hrs*

062-26/27 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr G Fleming, Cllr D Halsay.

Resolved: To accept the apologies as received.

063-26/27 Declarations of Interest

Councillors declared the following Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and/or other interests:

Fenella Maitland-Smith in her capacity as the Chair of Save West of Ifield agenda item 9. Cllr George Sallows as he a member of the Rusper Sports Club.

064-26/27 Climate Crisis

The Council resolved to accept the environmental implications relevant to Council business and received updates where applicable.

065-26/27 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 30 June 2026 were considered.

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

066-26/27 Open Forum

Members of the public addressed the Council in accordance with Standing Orders. No comments were received. The meeting was then closed to the public.

067-26/27 Reports from Other Authorities

a) County Councillor's Report – no report was given.

b) District Councillor's Report. The decision on Horsham District Council's (HDC) request to postpone devolution has been deferred. Chichester was included in the proposed grouping with Horsham, despite previous discussions regarding its financial viability. HDC district council elections remain scheduled for May 2027 while the future local government arrangements continue to be considered.

The Community Governance Review (CGR) recommendation for Kilnwood Vale is expected to proceed, transferring one area of parish land. The proposal relating to Mowbray remains under consideration and would result in the loss of precept income if implemented. Consultation responses received so far indicate that many residents favour a change from the current arrangements. With a population of around 800, Mowbray may in future be large enough to support its own parish council if it reaches the required threshold.

The CGR also includes proposals affecting North Horsham Parish Council and Horsham Town Council. One option under consultation is the transfer of North Horsham into Horsham Town Council, which

would create the largest town council in West Sussex. Mowbray is included within these proposals, although one option is for its current arrangements to remain unchanged. The second consultation is primarily focused on the proposals relating to North Horsham. If the changes proceed, consideration may be given to the future number of councillors on Horsham Town Council.

**Swan Walk:** The latest update indicates that repairs are the preferred option rather than the installation of a safety net

Resolved: That the report be noted.

068-26/27 Financial Matters

**a) Financial Reports – June 2026**

Members considered the Bank Reconciliation, Budget Report and Unity Trust Bank statements.

**Resolved:** That the financial reports for June 2026 be approved.

**b) Schedule of Payments**

Members considered the Schedule of Payments.

**Resolved:** That the Schedule of Payments be approved.

**c) Budget Review**

Members reviewed the current budget position, including expenditure on unexpected projects carried forward from the previous meeting.

**Resolved:** To defer further consideration until the next meeting.

**d) Grant Application – Citizens Advice Bureau**

Members considered a grant application from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

**Resolved:** That the application be carried forward for consideration as part of the budget-setting process.

**e) Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

Members received an update on Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, including the allocation of £16,000 for improvements to the Recreation Ground. It was agreed that this item would be considered further under the Open Spaces agenda item.

**Resolved:** That the update be noted.

**f) Appointment of Interim Auditor**

Members considered the appointment of Mulberry Local Authority Services (LAS) to undertake the interim audit.

**Resolved:** That Mulberry Local Authority Services (LAS) be appointed to undertake the interim audit.

069-26/27 Community Governance Review – Stage 2 Consultation

The Council received an update on the Stage 2 Community Governance Review consultation.

Members noted that the consultation would run from **24 July to 7 September 2026** and considered whether to submit a formal Parish Council response. It was proposed that the Council reiterate its previous request for the parish boundary to extend to the A264, including the relevant section of Mowbray, so that the A264 would form the parish boundary. The previous response would also be updated to include Faygate.

**Resolved:** That the Clerk submit the Parish Council's revised response to the Stage 2 Community Governance Review consultation by **7 September 2026**.

070-26/27 Horsham District Local Plan – Main Modifications Consultation

Councillors noted the consultation on the proposed Main Modifications to the Horsham District Local Plan, which runs from **13 July to 24 August 2026**.

Following discussion, Members considered whether to submit comments to Horsham District Council.

**Resolved:** That the Parish Council submit comments on the proposed Main Modifications to the Horsham District Local Plan, and that authority be delegated to the Chair of the Planning Committee, in consultation with councillors, to prepare and submit the response. Councillors' comments should be provided by **13 August 2026** to enable the response to be finalised before the consultation deadline.

#### 071-26/27 Speedwatch – Training and Volunteer Recruitment

The Council considered arrangements to recommence the Community Speed Watch Scheme.

Members noted that an introductory Zoom meeting with PC Steve O'Connell had been arranged for **Friday at 10.00 am** to relaunch the scheme. This would be followed by on-site training for volunteers. Members also discussed promoting the scheme and encouraging additional members of the public to take part.

**Resolved:** That the Council support the recommencement of the Community Speed Watch Scheme and promote volunteer participation.

#### 072-26/27 Gatwick Matters

##### **a) Gatwick Representative's Report**

Members received a verbal report from the Council's Gatwick representative.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

##### **b) Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC)**

Members considered the Parish Council's representation on the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC). It was noted that Cllr Malcolm Fillmore is a member of the GACC Board, which could give rise to a potential conflict of interest in relation to representing the Parish Council on GACC matters. Members discussed the Council's future representation, including the nomination of Cllr Simon White.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted and that Cllr Simon White attend GACC meetings where a formal vote is to be taken, in order to represent the Parish Council.

#### 073-26/27 Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee

##### **It was resolved:**

**a) To approve** the recommendations arising from the playground inspection report, including improvements to the hopscotch area, with a budget of **£750**.

**b) To note** the positive meeting held on **27 July 2026** with representatives of the Sports Club and Football Club regarding the relationship between the Parish Council and the Sports Club. The updated Relationship Agreement was signed and passed to the Clerk. It was agreed that the Sports Club would provide quarterly financial reports, with the April–June accounts expected within the following two weeks, together with regular updates on club activities.

**c) To approve** the proposed repairs and security measures at Rusper Recreation Ground, including the installation of a new access gate, chain and combination padlock to help prevent unauthorised vehicle access.

**d) To approve** the installation of the proposed tennis court access barrier and associated works, including fencing and a bollard at the edge of the car park, subject to the necessary agreement. Additional planters will be considered at a later date if required.

**e) To note** the ongoing maintenance requirements for the pavilion, sports ground and other Council-managed facilities.

**f) To note** the continued monitoring of building safety compliance, including electrical and water testing requirements. Members approved essential maintenance works to the Sports Pavilion, including ceiling repairs and redecoration, with expenditure of up to **£500**. Members also considered a quotation from HIE Estates for improvements to the pavilion's ventilation system, including the replacement of extract fans and associated ducting, and agreed to proceed with the proposed works.

**g) To approve** the preferred design for two recycled plastic picnic benches for the playground, at a cost of **£795 plus VAT including delivery**, with installation costs to be met from the appropriate earmarked reserve. The proposal will be discussed further with the May Day Committee.

**h) To note** that Grastex had been instructed to clip the hedges at the locations identified on the location map (Areas 3, 5 and 8). It was also noted that the Parish Council would monitor the Sports Club's grass-cutting arrangements from the 2027 season onwards.

**i) To note** that the proposed road name, **The Broadwood**, for the Devine Homes development on land north of East Street would remain unchanged.

**j) To note** the installation of the new toddler swing at the Millfields development.

**k)** To **support** the principle of introducing a Parish Community Award, to be presented annually on Parish Day. It was **agreed** to **recommend** the proposal to the **May Day Committee** for further consideration, with Cllr Marion Fenton taking the proposal forward.

#### 074-26/27 Playground

The playground safety inspection report was received and noted. Members were advised that the report had been saved to the Council's shared drive for reference.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted and any required actions arising from the inspection be undertaken.

#### 075-26/27 Reports from Representatives

Councillors provided updates from the external organisations, committees and working groups they represented.

**Cllr Geoff Hussey** reported that an update had been received from Horsham District Council regarding an enforcement matter. An enforcement notice had been served and a site visit was awaited. Information on the enforcement process was also made available.

**Cllr Fenella Maitland-Smith** reported on a recent South West of Ifield (SWOI) meeting, attended by over 60 people. The meeting highlighted the ongoing consultation processes for the Horsham District Local Plan and the related planning application. It was noted that information presented at the meeting is available on the SWOI website and public Facebook page.

#### 076-26/27 Matters Arising

None noted.

#### 077-26/27 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of Rusper Parish Council was confirmed.

**Resolved:** That the next meeting be held on 29th September 2026.

#### 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 items owing to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

#### Confidential Minutes

##### 078-26/27 Land Acquisition

###### **a) Valuation Update**

Members received a verbal update regarding the valuation of the proposed land acquisition.

**Resolved:** That the update be noted.

###### **b) Financial Implications and Next Steps**

Members considered the associated financial implications and discussed the next steps.

**Resolved:** That the valuation be received and considered at the September Council meeting. It was further resolved to establish a small working group to liaise with the landowners. The Clerk reported that an enquiry had been submitted to WSALC regarding the process for applying for a Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) loan. The Finance Working Party will consider the financial implications of a potential PWLB loan and report back at the next meeting.

Signed ..... Dated .....