

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on
Monday 18th September 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Geoff Thomas (Chairman) (GT), Sonia Plato (SP), Lynda Roller (LR), Jill Mitcheson (JM), Sue Laimbeer (SL) and John Goddard (JG).

In attendance: Gilly Lowe, Parish Clerk and 1 member of the public

1.	<p>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</p> <p>Nick Stell asked about parking at and around the Recreation Ground especially when the weather turns and the verges become muddy and if bollards are installed on Sandrock Hill, there will be even less available space. There was a brief discussion about car park marshals for those using the Rec. and the possibility of using a plot of land highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan for additional parking. SP said that she had received several complaints not just about parking but the associated danger to road users and pedestrians.</p>
2.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from District Cllr Chas Pearce.</p>
3.	<p>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:</p> <p>Received from:</p> <p>Cllr Thomas – Village Hall Committee</p> <p>Cllr Roller – Member of the Crowhurst Environment Group</p> <p>Cllr Plato – Youth Club & Crowhurst Environment Group</p>
4.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:</p> <p>The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 17th July 2023 and the additional meeting of Crowhurst Parish Council held on 7th August 2023.</p>
5.	<p>MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED IN THIS AGENDA:</p> <p>5.1 Emergency & Resilience Plan – The plan has been updated & details of how to use it publicised on the website as a News item. It will also feature in the CN October issue.</p> <p>5.2 Highways – The clerk still needs to circulate the notes from the SLR meeting in August. Topics discussed included erroneous road closed signs, blocked drains, bollards on Sandrock Hill and vegetation growing over road signs.</p> <p>5.3 Community Map – The chestnut for the frame has been purchased & it is in the process of being made. SP has been in contact with Andy Pope at Network Rail about the final location and installation. Sales of the A2 version of the map have proved popular. Funds raised will be put towards a second map installed in the lower part of the village.</p> <p>5.4 Bollards on Sandrock Hill – The clerk has now submitted the licence application to Highways after several technical glitches.</p>

	<p>5.5 Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Review – The clerk submitted the grant application to Locality and, this has been approved and paid. See item 8.vi for next steps.</p> <p>5.6 Youth Club lease – This was updated with the agreed amendments and signed by the clerk & Tracy Hoad for the Youth Club’s grant application.</p> <p>5.7 Scheme of Delegation – Final version for signing and adopting at the September meeting. The Clerk will then publish it on the website.</p> <p>5.8 Tree Safety Survey - Foxhills Tree Services Ltd quote was accepted, and they will carry out the survey as soon as possible. No report to date.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>REPRESENTATIONS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS:</p> <p>In the absence of Cllr Pearce, the clerk read from an email he had sent: <i>“The result of the Normanhurst Estate planning application at last Thursday’s Planning Committee was unanimously refused, an excellent outcome for Catsfield. Unfortunately, I was informed by the Monitoring Officer that I would not be able to attend as I was in a predetermined situation because of my campaign leaflet, which was strongly against the application. Very disappointing as I had been told previously by Democratic Services that I could attend and speak then leave the room - consequently not able to vote or debate! Anyway, the outcome was the first victory in what is going to be a long war, please can you inform Council of my position last week”.</i></p> <p>There was no report from Cllr Field.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING:</p> <p>To consider the following new Planning Applications and provide comments to Rother District Council:</p> <p>i. RR/2023/1586/P – Park Farm, Breadsell Lane, Crowhurst TN38 8EB <i>Proposal: Change of use of land and construction of tennis court to improve facilities for guests in relation to the existing holiday cottage business.</i> The parish council did not comment on this application.</p> <p>ii. RR/2023/1702/P – 6, Woodland Way, Crowhurst TN33 9AP <i>Proposal: Removal of Condition 10 imposed on RR/2023/577/P.</i> After a brief discussion, members decided not to comment on this application. During the discussion, JG raised the question about a potential house being built on the plot, but the parish council is unable to comment at this stage.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>FINANCIAL MATTERS:</p> <p>i. The financial report to 31st August 2023 is attached (App 2), together with a summary report of receipts & payments that had been previously circulated and was approved.</p> <p>ii. The payments report for July & August 2023 was considered and approved for payment.</p> <p>iii. The bank reconciliation to 31st July & 31st August 2023 (App 4 and App 4a) together with a copy of the supporting bank statements had been previously circulated and was approved and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>iv. SP spoke on behalf of Crowhurst Environment Group who had submitted a grant application. All members approved the grant, and the clerk was asked to make a BACS payment for the total amount of £713.31.</p> <p>v. The clerk confirmed receipt & publication of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit for 2022/’23 audit by the external auditors PKF Littlejohn & Section 3 of the AGAR on the noticeboard and the website.</p> <p>vi. The NP Review Group had made a request to start spending the agreed grant funds and this was approved.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>RECREATION GROUND:</p> <p>i. SP carried out this month’s check, together with SL to show her the procedure. There had been a large amount of rubbish on the Rec, particularly after football matches and the August Bank holiday. There is a</p>

	<p>significant amount of concrete now showing in the picnic area which probably should be removed - JG offered to inspect. The rocker bike recently painted by the handyman is white when it used to be green & yellow and blended better into the surroundings. The toddler slide also needs painting and the climbing wall footholds need tightening. The clerk will convey these matters to the handyman. The pre-school manager also mentioned a tall sapling that is leaning back - JG offered to have a look at that too. Finally, there is evidence of gas cannisters and reports of noise at night with bikes etc. Councillors agreed to ask the police again to patrol late at night.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. The clerk provided an update on the handyman's work to date which includes a new gate on the toddler section and the refurbishment & new location of the noticeboard. Councillors approved a payment request for materials, and for him to continue with the remaining tasks. iii. GT deferred the discussion on the possible location of the new pre-fab building offered by the Football Club to the next agenda item. iv. The clerk had researched CCTV options following the incidents of recent vandalism and councillors agreed to purchase an infra-red one for filming at night. The clerk will purchase a camera and arrange for installation, signage and a policy on the website. v. The annual playground inspection hasn't taken place yet but will be carried out by the end of September. vi. The Croquet Club's request for a banner at the Recreation Ground had been submitted previously. Councillors agreed that there was no reason not to approve it but suggested that ideally there should be some coherence with other banners displayed. This will be raised at the Rec User Group meeting the following night.
10.	<p>TENNIS COURT REFURB/MUGA FACILITY</p> <p>GT had previously said that there ought to be a consultation, but it is a known fact that people want the tennis court, the playground & the car park improved. There has already been an offer from a member of the Tennis Club with fundraising experience to work with SP to fundraise for the tennis court re-surfacing and MUGA proposal. GT suggested that councillors share the task and get on with plans and finding funds. JM & LR offered to investigate the playground, JG the car park and SP the tennis court/MUGA. She has already spoken to Martin Gurr and has approximate quotes. However, there are a range of Rother grants, and it may be worthwhile applying through the Crowhurst Recreation Ground Trust Charity. The clerk needs to check the contact details with the Charity Commission. She also asked the clerk to get hold of a paper copy of the grant application form as you can't see the whole application when doing it online. If a consultation is required, and the MUGA will be used by children, it would be quick & easy to consult both the youth club & school.</p>
11.	<p>EV CHARGING POINTS</p> <p>GT said that there has been a proposal as part of Rother's Energy Project for the VH to have an EVCP in the car park. JM & LR will investigate it as part of the car park refurb project. The clerk will forward an email with further details.</p>
12.	<p>PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER</p> <p>Members agreed to suggest a £100 payment per delivery to the Crowhurst News deliverers to distribute a bi-annual parish council newsletter to the residents of Crowhurst. The clerk will liaise with the editor/delivery team.</p>
13.	<p>WARM SPACES</p> <p>LR provided an update on funding plans & other preparation for the 'Warm Spaces' initiative: Donations received to date include £350 from villagers, £500 from the Muffin Club, and appeals have gone to Broadstock, Jempsons & the police, but no news yet. Tesco's and Sainsbury's have also donated £50 each of goods and JM has donated a crock-pot for soup making. The venues are booked for every Sunday afternoon, starting from the end of October apart from 17th, 24th & 31st December. Include us in sell-by date food. People in the village have shown willing and local interest groups may give talks, Martin Oaks surgery and Sussex Police are interested to improve community relations and will attend. There is a meeting on Wednesday evening for a sharing of ideas and an advert in Crowhurst News October & November issues asking for volunteers as well as to publicise the programme.</p>

	GT expressed the council's thanks to LR for all her hard work so far.
14.	WARMER CROWHURST SL and SP are attending the scheduled site meeting on Friday 29 th September at 3pm with residents of Swainham Lane & Energise Sussex Coast on behalf of the parish council participation. LR has had to send apologies.
15.	COUNCILLOR UPDATES ON EXTERNAL BODIES (IF ANY): i. Village Hall Management Committee (Cllr. Thomas) The next meeting is on 28 th October. They have heard nothing definitive from the Rother Energy Project. ii. Policing meeting (Cllr. Mrs. Roller) LR has signed up to Sussex Alerts. She stated again that the loss of the regular Teams meeting has left a feeling of dis-connect. The clerk reported that she has expressed an interest in attending the focus groups being held in the second half of November. GT suggested writing to Katy Bourne to express disappointment with the loss of regular communication. iii. Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC (Cllr. Thomas) GT said that there are now two Crowhurst representatives as Cllr Pearce also attends. SP said that the sub-group meeting was poorly attended. There is little strategic planning or coordination across a number of CVCP groups, so it was agreed that the next sub-group meeting will identify priorities.
16.	CLERK'S REPORT & INFORMATION FOR COUNCILLORS: i. The ESALC Chairman's Forum (remotely held) is on Thursday 28 th September at 7pm. ii. The next RALC meeting is on Wednesday 11 th October at 2pm at Staplehurst Village Hall. iii. The areas of Lead Responsibilities to include the new councillor will be discussed informally and approved at the next meeting. iv. The clerk was asked to purchase a wreath for the Remembrance Sunday service on 12 th November.
17.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING: To note that the next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 16th October 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed.....

Date.....