



Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on
Monday 20th October 2025 at 7.05pm
in Crowhurst Village Hall, Forewood Lane, Crowhurst.

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Geoff Thomas (Chair), Sonia Plato, John Goddard and Lynda Roller
County/District Councillors: Cllr Nicola McLaren RDC

In attendance: Joey Daeva, Locum Clerk and 1 member of the public

1.	PUBLIC QUESTIONS: A member of the public commented that the Clerk had requested a receipt for the remaining balance of the grant awarded to the Crowhurst Environment Group and confirmed that this has not been forgotten.
2	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: It was RESOLVED to receive and approve apologies for absence with reasons from Cllr Laimbeer.
3.	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: Cllr Thomas declared an interest as a member of the Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr Roller declared an interest as a member of the Crowhurst Environment Group. Cllr Plato declared an interest as a member of the Crowhurst Environment Group, Youth Club, and a personal interest in Moonlight Shadow Stables. Cllr Goddard declared a personal interest in Moonlight Shadow Stables.
4.	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The Chairman was authorised to approve and sign the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Crowhurst Parish Council held on 15 th September 2025 as a true and correct record.
5.	MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED IN THIS AGENDA: It was noted that there is a current councillor vacancy.
6.	REPRESENTATIONS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS: Cllr McLaren gave a verbal report from Rother District Council. She advised that since the last meeting, Rother had submitted a proposal to Government for a single unitary authority for East Sussex, to be known as <i>One East Sussex</i> . The proposal recommends a single council to deliver all services currently provided by the district and borough councils of Rother, Wealden, Lewes, Hastings, and Eastbourne. The submission was made to Government on 26th September and, if approved, the new authority would be established in 2028. Other authorities did not submit the same or joint proposals. The option put forward by Rother was identified by officers as the most financially beneficial. A Government decision is expected in January, prior to the election of the new Mayor. Cllr McLaren also reported that, as a member of Rother's Planning Committee, she attended the meeting on 9th October where planning permission was granted for the De La Warr Pavilion project. The Pavilion has secured £19.2 million in Levelling Up funding, with further applications submitted for £7.6 million to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and £9.6 million to Arts Council England. Committee members were given a tour of the Pavilion to view the proposed works, which aim to ensure the building serves the community for the next 100 years. Rother Voluntary Action has been awarded National Lottery funding to develop rural community hubs across the district, aimed at strengthening community connections.

	Rother District Council has achieved Silver Carbon Literate Organisation status in recognition of its work to address climate change. Rother schools have been invited to take part in a competition to name the new food waste collection vehicles. Councillors have been encouraged to engage with local schools, and Cllr McLaren plans to approach Crowhurst School about taking part.
7.	TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING 1)To consider the following planning applications and provide comments to Rother District Council: RR/2025/1687/PN3 Hye House Farm, Royal Oak Lane, Crowhurst <i>Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for the change of use of an agricultural building to form a 3-bed dwelling house (and associated operational development).</i> It was RESOLVED to make no comment on the planning application due to a lack of information but agreed to reconsider the matter if further details are provided. Members noted that, should Rother District Council approve the application, they would expect the development to be in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan, Design Guide and Dark Skies Policy. RR/2025/1558/P Moonlight Shadow Stables, Stonebridge Farm, - Land adjacent to Breadsell Lane, Crowhurst <i>Proposal: Erection of rural worker's mobile home on a land holding used as an animal sanctuary.</i> It was RESOLVED to make no comment on the application for the siting of a mobile home due to a lack of information. Members noted that, should Rother District Council be minded to approve the application, it should ensure the proposal complies with its own policies regarding mobile homes on such sites. Councillors also expect the development to be in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan, Design Guide and Dark Skies Policy.
8.	FINANCIAL MATTERS: 8.1 The financial report to 31st September 2025 had been circulated and was approved by members. 8.2 The payments report for October 2025 was considered and approved. 8.3 The bank reconciliations for October 2025 had been circulated. It was approved by members and signed by the Chair (GT). 8.4 The External Auditors report was noted. 8.5 It was noted that a decision had been made regarding the Council's electricity contract. The Clerk was authorised to proceed with the cheapest supplier, subject to an appropriate rating check, and to issue a termination notice to SSE. 8.6 Data Protection training for the Clerk and the Chair, Cllr Geoff Thomas, was approved by members. 8.7 Procurement and Budgeting training for the Clerk was approved by members.
9.	RECREATION GROUND: 9.1 The most recent monthly playground report and defibrillator inspection was noted. 9.2 Councillors reported that repair work to the rocker bike in the Recreation Ground is in hand. It was RESOLVED to investigate the light on the telephone box and to allocate up to £250 for its replacement if required. The leaning tree was noted and will be left for the time being. 9.3 It was RESOLVED to obtain a quote for the bases before proceeding, and the matter was deferred pending receipt of that information. 9.4 It was RESOLVED to approve payment of £159.40 to Mr Matt Bumpass for recent repair work undertaken at the Pavilion. The Clerk will also request a quote from him for the installation of a splashback behind the basin in the ladies' toilets if this work has not yet been completed.
10.	PARISH COUNCIL REVIEW TO SET PRIORITIES It was RESOLVED for the clerk to liaise with Cllrs Plato and Thomas to organise a review. This will take place over half a day with lunch at the end and will be facilitated by Trevor Leggo.
11.	RIGHTS OF ROTHER TREES AND ROTHER RIVERS An update was given by Cllr Nicola McLaren regarding the motion passed by Rother District Council supporting the 1066 Yew Tree and its proposed personhood status. It was RESOLVED to move

	forward with this initiative and to encourage residents to take pride in the tree and contribute to its care where possible.
12.	CROWHURST ATTENUATION POND It was RESOLVED that a public consultation be carried out and undertaken by the Parish Council. Prior to this, baseline permissions shall be obtained from East Sussex County Council and the Environment Agency.
13.	REVIEW OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES It was noted that this will take place during the project priority review.
14.	PAVILION AND PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS It was noted that minutes from the previous meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members reported that it had been a useful discussion, with three sets of plans brought along for review. An explanation of the proposals was given, including plans to renew the front of the Pavilion and make better use of the ceiling and upper space. A written report will be prepared and circulated in due course. Members also discussed potential improvements to the kitchen, including the installation of a serving hatch, additional storage to the rear, and the provision of an accessible toilet with external access. A further suggestion was made that, should an extension be added to the rear of the building, the main entrance to the Youth Club could be relocated to the opposite end. No further decisions have yet been made, and ideas for the front area will continue to be developed.
15.	SUNDAY SOCIAL Cllr Roller provided an update on preparations for the Sunday Social. A meeting will be held on Friday 24th to finalise plans. Flyers have been distributed and posters printed, with displays arranged in key locations around the village including the church, chapel, recreation ground, and noticeboards. An article has also been included in Crowhurst News to promote the opening session. Three dates currently remain without speakers – 18th January, 1st February, and 8th February. The event has received donations from local well-wishers, including a generous contribution from Tesco, facilitated by community champion Lisa Noon, which included non-perishable goods and items for a Christmas raffle. Further supplies have been collected from Sainsbury's, also courtesy of their community champion. Thanks were expressed to all those who have contributed time and money. It is hoped that sufficient funds will be available to offer small donations to guest speakers in recognition of their participation, and efforts continue to find speakers for the remaining sessions.
16.	ANNUAL FAYRE REPORT A report was received from the Annual Fayre Committee following this year's successful Annual Fayre.
17.	REVIEW OF RECREATION GROUND CHARGES This item was deferred.
18.	MILLENIUM GARDEN REPAIR It was RESOLVED to approve the costs for the chestnut posts (£250.00).
19.	CROWHURST MUGA A report was received.
20.	COUNCILLOR UPDATES ON EXTERNAL BODIES (IF ANY) Cllr Thomas, The Village Hall Chair, reported that a new secretary has been appointed and arrangements for additional storage are being considered. Combe Valley CIC's next meeting is to be held at Crowhurst Youth Club on 29 th October 2025. Cllr Plato reported that the date for the Crowhurst Small Festival has been postponed. A Dark Skies Walk is planned for Sunday 30th November, with a family stargazing event to follow in December as part of the Dark Skies Festival. The festival launch, held on Sunday at the Crystal Healing Centre, was well attended. The Eco Church Movement has formed a partnership with the Christian Healing Centre to improve environmental and wildlife-friendly practices on site. The 1066 Railways Trust has provided free planters and compost for the north side of the station platform, and a water butt and tap will be installed. A mural comprising 30 panels is being discussed to commemorate the history of Crowhurst and notable aspects of the community, and members

	expressed their support for the proposal.
21.	CLERK'S REPORT AND INFORMATION FOR COUNCILLOR The Clerk's report was circulated in her absence. 1. RDC are currently updating their Planning Service. There is an online training session on Thursday, 23 rd October at 5pm. 2. ESALC will be holding their AGM on Tuesday, 4 th November. Attendance must be confirmed by the 24 th October. 3. Rother District Council are holding a Housing Development event on Friday, 28 th November at Robertsbridge Village Hall. 4. East Sussex Highways are holding a Stakeholder event on Thursday, 23 rd October between 1pm to 4pm.
22.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS It was noted to consider discussions with Crowhurst News on a directory of contacts for new residents.
23.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING The next ordinary meeting will be held on Monday 17th November 2025 at 7.05pm in the Village Hall.

Signed

Dated