

# Crowhurst

## PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the **ANNUAL MEETING** of the Parish Council held on  
**Monday 18th May 2026 at 7.05pm**  
in Crowhurst Village Hall, Forewood Lane, Crowhurst.

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Geoff Thomas (Chair), Sonia Plato, Lynda Roller, John Goddard & Paula Rivett

District/County Councillors present: None

In attendance: Maureen Collins, Parish Clerk

<b>1.</b>	<b>ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN</b> Cllr Geoff Thomas was elected to continue as Chairman of the parish council.
<b>2.</b>	<b>ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN</b> Cllr Sonia Plato was elected to continue as Vice-Chair of the parish council.
<b>3.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE &amp; REGISTERS OF MEMBERS INTERESTS</b> The Chair signed his acceptance of office form, and the Vice-Chair signed her acceptance of office form. The clerk reminded members of the need to update their register of interest within 28 days if there had been any changes.
<b>4.</b>	<b>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</b> There were no questions from members of the public.
<b>5.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Sue Laimbeer and Nicola McLaren, RDC.
<b>6.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> Received from: Cllr Thomas – Village Hall Committee Cllr Roller – Environment Group Cllr Plato – Environment Group, Youth Club and Community Solar Farm Group
<b>7.</b>	<b>ADOPTION OF MINUTES</b> The Chairman was authorised to approve and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Crowhurst Parish Council held on 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026 as a true and correct record.
<b>8.</b>	<b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b> The proposed dates for future meetings of the parish council had previously been circulated and were approved. They are confirmed as: 2026 – 15 <sup>th</sup> June, 20 <sup>th</sup> July, 21 <sup>st</sup> September, 19 <sup>th</sup> October, 16 <sup>th</sup> November & 14 <sup>th</sup> December. 2027 – 18 <sup>th</sup> January, 15 <sup>th</sup> February, 15 <sup>th</sup> March, 19 <sup>th</sup> April & 17 <sup>th</sup> May.
<b>9.</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED IN THIS AGENDA:</b> 9.1 Councillor Vacancy – The vacancy continues to be advertised on the website, on the notice board and in the Crowhurst News. 9.2 Network Rail Tree Works – Consideration of this matter was deferred to the Clerk's Correspondence later in the meeting. 9.3 SLR Meeting – The date was confirmed as 23 <sup>rd</sup> June at 10.00am. 9.4 Paediatric First Aid Pads- the new pads were found to have a short expiry date. They have been returned to the supplier for replacement.

<b>10.</b>	<p><b>REPRESENTATIONS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS</b></p> <p>Neither the District Councillor nor the County Councillor were in attendance, as both were required at a Rother District Council Full Council meeting.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING:</b></p> <p>11.1 To consider the following new Planning Applications and provide comments to Rother District Council:</p> <p>11.1.1 <b>RR/2026/0371/FULL – Hye House Farm, Royal Oak Lane, Crowhurst, TN33 9BY</b>  <i>Proposal: Partial demolition of barns and erection of a dwelling.</i></p> <p>The following comments were submitted. ‘Councillors considered the application and felt able to support it in principle. However, some concerns were expressed regarding potential issues with wastewater and sewage. Grey water has in the past flowed down from a neighbouring property into the twittern running down past The Plough causing complaints from neighbours. The Environment Agency and SE Water have said that this is a private matter and that they cannot do anything about it. None of the properties in Royal Oak Lane are connected to a sewer and each has its own septic tank. It is, however, anticipated that any issues arising from this will be resolved during the planning process. As more properties in the area are extended or new ones built, this has the potential to cause serious issues. The Parish Council also considered whether the amount of development breached the threshold of, "if more than six new dwellings are built" contained in our Neighbourhood Plan and it is hoped that this point will be considered during the planning process. The PC also referred the matter to the NP Planning Group for consideration and comment. In supporting the application it is expected that RDC will give due consideration to Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan, Design Guide and Dark Skies Policy.’</p> <p>11.1.2 <b>RR/2026/0412/HOU – Willow Pond, Swainham Lae, Crowhurst, TN38 8ED</b>  <i>Proposal: Single storey extension to replace conservatory and window alterations.</i></p> <p>Councillors considered the application and agreed to submit the following comments:- Crowhurst ‘Parish Council is happy to support the application. The owners are really keen to support the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan and Design Guide, and our Dark Skies Policy. We would appreciate it if you could refer to these in your report.’</p> <p>11.1.3 <b>RR/2026/0123/LBC - Bynes Farm, Royal Oak Lane, Crowhurst, TN33 9BY9B</b>  <i>Proposal: Single storey oak framed kitchen extension.</i></p> <p>The following comments were submitted. ‘Crowhurst Parish Council are happy to support this application. We request that our Neighbourhood Plan and Design Guide is considered and referenced when making your report, particularly in regard to building style, and dark skies conditions (downlighters only).’</p>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>RFO REPORT</b></p> <p>13.1 The end of year financial report to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 had previously been circulated together with a summary of variances against budget. These were approved.</p> <p>13.2 The end of year Bank Reconciliation to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 together with supporting bank statements had been circulated and was approved.</p> <p>13.3 The payments report for May 2026 was approved for payment.</p> <p>13.4 The list of regular payments had been circulated and was approved. The Chairman signed a copy of the list.</p> <p>13.5 The financial report to 30<sup>th</sup> April '26, together with the bank reconciliation had been circulated and was approved.</p> <p>13.6 The clerk had previously circulated a summary report of planned spending and reserves. This was noted.</p> <p>13.7 It was agreed that Cllr Paula Rivett will be added as an authorised signatory to approve payments from the Bank Account.</p> <p>13.8 The purchase of one pallet of Heart of Eden Play area Hardwood Chips at £288.75 plus VAT was approved.</p>
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>RECREATION GROUND</b></p> <p>Cllr Roller carried out the monthly inspection, accompanied by Cllr Rivett. The playground was found to be in a similar condition to that described in Nicola Stell’s weekly reports. It was noted that Cllr</p>

	<p>Goddard had attended to the latch gate.</p> <p>Cllr Roller reported that the rocker bike remains in poor condition due to the missing handle. Cllr Goddard confirmed that this is in hand and will forward the quote to the Clerk. Additional woodchip is required, and councillors agreed that the Clerk may proceed with the purchase.</p> <p>The youth goal posts on the Recreation Ground are currently unsecured. The Clerk will contact Steve Greenfield of the Football Club to inform him.</p> <p>Councillors discussed the continuing vandalism of the path lighting. Cllr Thomas asked for an update, noting that the Parish Council had previously obtained quotes for replacing the first set of lights. Cllr Goddard advised that this is now being considered as part of the wider Pavilion refurbishment. Cllr Plato commented that she had recently visited Burwash Pavilion and had been impressed by the robustness of their path lighting. The Clerk was asked to contact the Clerk at Burwash to request details of their installer.</p> <p>Cllr Roller reported that the door to the telephone box housing the defibrillator is very stiff and that the interior requires a thorough clean. Cllr Thomas suggested seeking volunteers to form a small group to tidy the box. The Clerk will include a notice in the next edition of <i>Crowhurst News</i>.</p> <p>Cllr Plato noted that there had been a significant amount of litter around the MUGA during her recent visit to the Recreation Ground. Councillors discussed possible solutions, and the Clerk was asked to speak with Nicola Stell to seek her views.</p> <p>Cllr Plato also reported that the walnut tree appears to have suffered damage from a vehicle. The Clerk will contact the grounds maintenance contractor to ask whether they are aware of any of their vehicles coming into contact with the tree. At the same time, the Clerk will request a quote for weed-spraying around the MUGA, as carried out at this time last year.</p>
<b>15.</b>	<p><b>STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS &amp; OTHER POLICIES</b></p> <p>15.1 The new model Financial Regulations 2025/'26 were readopted. There have been no changes since they were first adopted in May 2025</p> <p>15.2 The new model Standing Orders 2025/'26 were readopted. There have been no changes since they were first adopted in May 2025.</p> <p>15.3 Councillors reviewed the Code of Conduct, Risk Register and Fixed Asset Register. PAT testing of electrical equipment is now required. The Clerk will liaise with the Village Hall Clerk and the Youth Club to determine whether the testing can be coordinated across all users.</p>
<b>16.</b>	<p><b>PAVILION/RECREATION GROUND REFURBISHMENT</b></p> <p>Two quotations for a new structural survey of the Pavilion had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Councillors agreed that they would like to accept the cheaper of the two quotes, which was also from a local company they were minded to support. The Clerk will write to Hawkin &amp; Hawkin to accept the quotation, subject to confirmation from Mr Tillmann Lenz that he has no strong objections.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that Rother District Council had advised that the Parish Council may use a portion of its CIL monies to settle the invoice for the survey.</p> <p>Councillors had also received an updated letter and revised quotation from Mr Lenz. Councillors expressed their thanks to Mr Lenz for all he has done, and continues to do, in relation to the Pavilion refurbishment project, and unanimously agreed to accept the updated quotation.</p> <p>The Clerk drew councillors' attention to the current Strategic CIL funding round, which has a deadline of 22 June. It was considered too early in the project to submit an application this year. The Clerk will, however, make enquiries to determine whether an expression of interest can be submitted to establish potential eligibility for funding in the next round.</p>
<b>17.</b>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR UPDATES ON EXTERNAL BODIES (IF ANY)</b></p> <p>The Parish Council agreed to give its approval for the Best Kept Village plaques to be affixed to the brickwork on the new garden beds at the station car park, noting that this is an appropriate and visible location for their display. Cllr Plato will continue to liaise with the 1066 Railways Trust.</p>
<b>18.</b>	<p><b>CLERK'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE</b></p> <p>18.1 <b>Tree Works on Station Road</b> - Councillor Thomas and the Clerk met with Chris Page of Network Rail to discuss the necessity of closing Station Road to allow for the removal of approx. 70 dead or dying ash trees. Chris Page would like to carry this work out in the October 2026 half term. The road</p>

	<p>closure will take place in phases over 4 to 5 days. The PC has arranged to hold a meeting for residents from Station Road and Craig Close on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 10.00am, to also include those residents who use the Crowhurst Railway Station and families and friends of residents of Edendale Lodge. The Village Hall has been booked, and Chris Page has agreed to attend to answer questions. The clerk will ask Network Rail to send an official communication informing residents of the meeting.</p> <p><b>18.2 Replacement Paediatric Defib Pads</b> – The paediatric pads supplied had a very short expiry date. The clerk will return them for replacement.</p> <p><b>18.3 UK Power Networks</b> -The Parish Council received a Form of Consent from UK Power Networks requesting permission to undertake works on the Recreation Ground. After discussing the matter, councillors agreed that they were unable to give approval based on the information provided, particularly due to concerns around <b>user safety during the works</b> and the potential <b>disturbance to trees and hedging in the vicinity</b>.</p> <p>Councillors asked the Clerk to write to UK Power Networks to set out these concerns and to advise that the Council cannot grant consent at this stage. The Clerk was also asked to offer a meeting with a UK Power Networks representative should they wish to discuss <b>alternative options</b>.</p> <p><b>18.4 Mulberry Internal Audit</b> - The internal audit took place on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> May. It went very well. There are likely to be two recommendations. A written report will be sent and discussed at the June PC meeting, noting that -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A data audit will need to be carried out on an annual basis from March 2027.</li> <li>2. Our website will need to be upgraded to WAG 2.2 by the end of the financial year.</li> </ol> <p><b>18.5 Abandoned vehicles</b> -Tracy Morgan from RDC has advised us that there are several untaxed and uninsured vehicles in the Rec Car park. One of the three vehicles reported to her anonymously by a member of the public has been moved to Station Road.</p> <p><b>18.6 Legal requirement to keep holiday records</b> – From April 2026 employers are under a legal duty to keep detailed records of annual leave and holiday pay. The clerk undertook to keep a written record of her annual leave dates.</p> <p><b>18.7 Annual Review</b> -Councillors Thomas and Plato agreed to meet with the clerk to conduct her Annual Review.</p> <p><b>18.8 Correspondence</b> - At the request of the Clerk, Cllr Plato will contact a resident regarding a query regarding volunteering opportunities in the parish.</p> <p><b>18.9 Printer</b> - Councillors agreed to pay for the printer cartridges for the clerk’s new LED printer as and when necessary, as it is mostly used for council business.</p> <p><b>18.10 Local Government Reorganisation</b> - Government consultation to move parts of Lewes District of East Sussex into an expanded Brighton and Hove under its process for local government reorganisation. The consultation runs until the 15<sup>th</sup> June. Councillors agreed that the decision should be made by the councils affected by the proposal.</p> <p><b>18.11 Recreation Ground Tree Survey</b> - Steve Curley will conduct the tree survey on 26<sup>th</sup> May.</p> <p><b>18.12 Rother Annual Report 2025</b> – had been circulated to councillors for information.</p>
<b>19.</b>	<p><b>INFORMATION FOR COUNCILLORS</b> No items were put forward by councillors for inclusion on the next agenda.</p>
<b>20.</b>	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> The next ordinary meeting will be held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 7.05pm in the Village Hall.</p>

Signed .....

Dated .....