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14th October 2025

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held in St Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Buxted on Tuesday 14th October 2025 at 7.15p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Blandford (Chairman), Duck, Furber, Humphrey, Marshall, Muddle and Rose.
Also present: ESCC Cllr. Galley, WDC Cllr Shaw and Clerks Beccy Macklen and Claudine Feltham.

Public : 2
A member of the public asked if any works are scheduled where the cones/barriers are at Limes Lane/Framfield Road. Cllr Furber commented that the permit for works has now expired, however Highways have advised design works for the culvert are taking place with repairs expected in the next financial year.

Another member of the public asked ESCC Cllr Galley why road closed signs are left for days (up to 10 days in Framfield Road recently) once the works have been completed. It leads to drivers assuming the road is open and taking risks by driving down the 'closed road.'

The chairman and Cllr Galley advised this will be picked up at the forth coming SLR meeting with Highways officers as it happens with too much regularity.

Cllr Galley also commented the tarmac blocked drains in Gordon Road are being investigated by Highways as to whose responsibility this issue is.

01/10/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Mallet & Smith

02/10/25 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

All councillors declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Ionides Trust by virtue of the parish council being managing agents of the site.

Cllr Duck declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the High Hurstwood Village Hall Committee by virtue of being a member of the committee.

Cllr Humphrey declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Five Ash Down Village Hall Committee by virtue of being the parish council representative on the committee.

03/10/25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
The minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2025 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

Any further update on Local Government Reorganisation

Cllr Galley reported back on an interesting meeting at the County Council when the proposal was made for a One East Sussex Unitary Authority. It was unanimously passed by councillors, with some abstaining but no one voting against the proposal. As we know, the proposals have been referred to Government for a decision expected in the first half of 2026.

Cllr Shaw commented he had provided an update in his monthly newsletter in which he tried to explain Wealden's decision not to support any of the LGR proposals. WDC did invest in the One East Sussex proposal but subsequently decided to opt out of this option when other options were added to the table, preferring to ask Government to consider further options that would include smaller unitary authorities.

Cllr Galley commented on Highway issues confirming the issues of Totease House hedge and the sink hole outside Buxted Primary School are on the SLR agenda for the following week.

Cllr Furber – a possible new sink hole may be appearing towards end of the High Street past Littlewood Lane on the right. Cllr Galley would have a look at the site.

Cllr Blandford – the bridge on Shepherds Hill has had some engineering works that include new fences either side, one of which is larger than the other and appears to be over-engineering. It was questioned why it was designed in this way and is it a case of over urbanising a very rural area. Cllr Galley acknowledged this is an ongoing issue.

Cllr Humphrey – asked Cllr Shaw to chase the broken street sign in Court Lane as it was reported in August. Clerk to send details to Cllr Shaw.

05/10/25 **GOVERNANCE AND POLICY – THREE SECTIONS**

06/10/25 **SECTION 1 – ASSERTION 10 AUDIT REQUIREMENTS**

Adoption of the following Policies: updated Data Protection Policy; updated Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Request Policy; updated Information Technology Policy; Subject Access Request Policy and Procedure.
Resolved to adopt policies as listed.

Requirement of all councillors and clerk to undertaken GDPR training – It was expressed to all councillors that it is necessary for everyone to attend the GDPR training.

07/10/25 **SECTION 2 – UPDATING AND ADOPTION OF POLICIES:**

Resolved - the following policies were **updated or adopted**: updated Councillors Code of Conduct; updated Complaints Procedure; adoption of Volunteer Policy

08/10/25 **SECTION 3 – REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, FIXED ASSET REGISTER, RISK ASSESSMENTS, POLICIES AND Procedures (see full list in Appendix)**

All reviewed without any suggested changes.

09/10/25 **REQUEST FOR PARISH COUNCIL TO FUND DEFIBRILLATOR IN HIGH**

HURSTWOOD TRINITY CHURCH – UPDATE - the clerks carried out a site visit and identified two sites that would be suitable to position the defibrillator. After checking ownership, Cllr Duck suggested it is positioned next to the existing Holy Trinity Church sign, as this is church owned land.

Claudine has been researching the most appropriate defibrillator for the site and has been advised the costs for a defibrillator, insulated bag (as we do not have electricity at the installation site), the cabinet, signage, rescue kit, pole and training session would total £2,745 to be paid from CIL monies.

Resolved to purchase the defibrillator using CIL funds. Lengthsman be asked to install equipment.

- 10/10/25 **FIVE ASH DOWN BUS SHELTER – approval for deposit required for materials prior to construction**
As resolved at the previous meeting, the clerks were given delegated authority to agree to costs for a new bus shelter if under £12,000. A quote was received totalling £9,850 + VAT and was accepted. The contractor asked for 50% of costs to purchase materials at a total of £4,925. **Resolved to agree payment of deposit.**

11/10/25 **OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

PUBLIC FOOTPATHS: Nothing to report

TREES:

Land/Trees Littlewood Lane – trees/vegetation at end of road on land not belonging to the parish council – update – following the previous meeting, the owner of the property adjoining this piece of land has provided some further background from when the estate was built, advising it was the parish council at the time who asked for the foliage to be planted. Given this information it is proposed the parish council reluctantly take responsibility for the cutting back and management of the planting and monitor its growth annually. Ace Landscapes should be asked to provide a quote for the work. It was made clear the parish council does not own this area, and is not necessarily responsible for its upkeep, but it is considered a hazard and needs to be managed.

Nevill Road – emergency work to fallen tree – the clerk was contacted by a resident adjoining parish council land to advise that in a recent storm, a tree had snapped and fallen into her garden. As this was considered emergency tree works, a contractor was sent to carry out works. The works totalled £576.

WDC new and easier way to request a TPO – Notification has been received from WDC that it is now easier to request a Tree Preservation Order. A suggestion for a TPO can now be made online at: www.wealden.gov.uk/suggest-a-tree-preservation-order. We encourage residents to notify the Parish Council Tree Warden (via the clerks) to report any trees they think might be worthy of placing a TPO order on, on any land within the parish. Clerk to put notification on social media.

ROAD SAFETY:

Speeding in Buxted – it was confirmed Cllr Blandford will be asking at the forthcoming SLR meeting where a VAR could be situated in the north end of Buxted. Cllr Furber recalled an incident three weeks ago when an articulated lorry slammed on his breaks when he reached the 30mph sign and was aggressive towards him when he made a simple gesture to slow down. He would like some recognition that vehicles regularly (often) light up the 30mph sign. He believes there should be data collected even though the Police and ESCC may not make any changes to the road.

Cllr Galley reinforces the best way to gather data is to have Speedwatch. Danehill and Maresfield Speedwatch groups are working well, so the clerk would find contacts for those groups for Cllr Furber to discuss how the groups work.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow a member of the public to ask if sleeping police cannot be installed in Framfield Road because there are no street lights? No one knew the answer to this, but it would be highly unlikely ESCC would allow such engineering works, or pay for it and some disagreed that it is possible to speed along Framfield Road due to the parked cars.

Speeding to be added to November agenda for feedback from SLR and Cllr Furber.

Cllrs Shaw and Galley left meeting at 8.14pm.

Wealden Local Development Framework: Noting to report.

PROPERTY ISSUES:

Parish Council owned Land – locations to register as Assets of Community Value – following the previous meeting, the clerk contacted the council's solicitor to ask the best way to protect the Allotment land who suggested registering it as an Asset of Community Value.

A discussion took place as to why the parish council would register its own assets and if it is necessary. It was suggested the clerk carry out more research on ACVs on our own land, and if this would put an unnecessary burden on any future parish council.

It was also suggested the parish council look at registering other buildings in the parish such as village halls, land, public houses etc.

Buxted Recreation Ground – drainage improvements – update – there is some good news as far as a third quote has now been received. However, we are currently unable to move the grant application forward as the required FA Pitchpower inspection needs completing with the assistance of representatives from Buxted Football Club. The clerk has asked for a meeting date, but no response has been received despite chasing.

COMMUNICATIONS MATTERS: Nothing to report.

12/10/25 CORRESPONDENCE

P1 ESALC – invitation to Parish Conference Tuesday 4th July Amex Stadium – Cllr Blandford and clerks to attend

13/10/25 COMMITTEE MEETINGS None

14/10/25 FINANCE

- i) **Payments:** On the proposal of Cllr. Humphrey seconded by Cllr. Rose, payments totalling £14,559.42 covered by BACS payments were approved.
- ii) **Bank reconciliations:** The clerk had circulated completed reconciliations for September which were signed
- iii) **Noted:** RBS reports: Ear marked reserves, Trial Balance, Receipts and Payments, Cash, and Investment Reconciliation
- iv) **request for purchase of new laptop for clerk, Claudine** – approved

15/10/25 OTHER MEETINGS – Cllr Humphrey attended the FAD Village Hall Committee

meeting and wished to pass on thanks to the PC for paying for the annual insurance. Discussions also took place on works required to the village hall and potential funding.

16/10/25 **MEMBERS QUESTIONS** – Cllr Humphrey - BT Phone box repainting – the clerks are waiting for a quote for works (back on agenda for November)

17/10/25 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Congratulations to Buxted Bonfire and High Hurstwood Bonfire Societies on successful events

Next Meeting – Tuesday 11th November 2025 in Five Ash Down Village Hall

The meeting closed at 8.40p.m.

Ongoing Highways Cases:

DATE RAISED	CASE NO	DESCRIPTION	OPEN/CLOSED RESOLUTION
November 2024	EA007FRAMFIELD	Culvert, Framfield Road, Buxted	ONGOING Collapsed drainage leading to culvert. Reported some time ago. Highway advised works need planning and extensive repair. 19/3 – Highways contacted PC to advise Structural Team will contact PC to arrange a site meeting likely to be in April. May – Cllr Furber attended meeting with ESCC/Balfour Beatty. Agreed work from culver to KSV would be carried out. Design for culvert currently being designed. Work to be carried out in next financial year. 10/06 – clerk to ask Highway if any remedial works will take place to stop the road falling away while a design is being drawn up.
04/02/25	THF003389	Width of footpath between Limes Lane and Pound Green Lane – request to cut back and uncover footpath	ONGOING 10/02/25 – Highway Steward has inspected and does not consider works are needed at this time but would keep an eye on it. 14/02/25 – Raised with Cllr Galley at meeting. He is raising this issue again with Highways. March 25 - Issue now CLOSED after work carried out by Cllr Furber 01/04/25 – Highways confirmed job is now scheduled!
17/02/25	CCY000737	Broken away tarmac (50cm) in Framfield Road/Limes Lane outside	REOPENED 20/02/25 – ESCC Highways do not consider work is necessary at this

		KSV and bollard fallen over	time but would continue to monitor – Raise again with Highways. 17/3 – Highway Steward revisited. Road still does not meet criteria, but bollard will be replaced. May – work should be carried out in conjunction with culvert repair works (as above EA007FRAMFIELD)
24/03/25	HED004006	Hedge at Totease House, High Street, Buxted	Reported to highways by a Buxted resident. Chased throughout following months by Cllr Galley. Some hedge cut back 20/08 – confirmed remaining hedge to be cut is owned by ESCC Highways and should be cut in 28 days. 30/09 – Cllr Galley confirmed the hedge has not been cut but is now scheduled to be cut within 72 days
27/08/25	Wealden District Council	Broken Court Lane street sign from UKPN works	ONGOING Reported to Highways. Highways advised this is the responsibility of Wealden 27/08 – reported to WDC 02/09 – WDC acknowledged and advised it is on list of works
April 2026	SLO001980	Sink hole outside of Buxted Primary School on Hurstwood Road	April 26 – reported by school to Highways. Various ongoing emails – some discrepancy on whose responsibility it is as there is a water leak underground 29/09 – Operations Supervisor visiting site to dig trial holes requiring emergency road closure (outside of peak hours) 02/10 – Highways confirmed it is a South East Water leak so has been handed over for repairs.

Appendix

List of Buxted Parish Council Policies and Procedures to be Reviewed – 14 October 2025

1. BACS Payment Policy
2. Bullying & Harassment (External) Policy
3. Communications Policy for Buxted Parish Council Meetings
4. Co-Options Policy
5. Dignity and Work Policy
6. Disciplinary Procedure
7. Document Retention Policy
8. Employees Code of Conduct
9. Equality and Diversity Policy
10. Financial Reserves Policy
11. Financial Risk Assessment
12. Grievance Procedure and Problem-Solving Policy
13. Health & Safety Policy
14. Lone Working Policy
15. Press/Media Policy
16. Protocol on Consultation Meetings with Developers, Pre-application meetings, and meetings during the application process
17. Gifts and Hospitality Procedure
18. Consultation Requests Procedure
19. Publication Scheme
20. Recording of Meetings Policy
21. Risk Management Policy
22. Social Media Policy
23. Vexatious Complaints Policy
24. Whistleblowing Policy
25. Protocol for Site Visits
26. Risk Assessments
27. Adopted Model Financial Regulations
28. Standing Orders

Ionides Trust Update 14th October 2025:

- 1. Apologies – DM and PS**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. Scout Hut - Request to hold Bonfire Event 15th November and any other update**

No objection, however, can the Scouts confirm if they are using the new hut in conjunction with the event as it is not open to the public.

Prior to the meeting an email was received confirming the Scout Hut could be available for use outside of the Scouts however it is not a replacement for a full shared community space and would have the following restrictions:

- 1) No commercial activities (see previous concerns about VAT)
- 2) No events open to the public (this also applies to our group - the opening party will be the one and only event where the SC is open to the public)
- 3) No recurring bookings (we cannot guarantee availability week in, week out)
- 4) No evening bookings (given our usage) and limited weekends

From the information provided, we will advise those who ask if the hall can be hired, that conditions and limitations make it unlikely, but we will pass on any details to the Scouts.

The Scouts do not agree to put the flagpole where the IT suggested, therefore it needs to be situated either on the side or behind the Scout Hut as placing it on the grass opposite the hut will restrict vehicle movements.

Pathway – the IT were surprised the Health and Safety consultant had no issue with the slope of the pathway and therefore the IT reiterate it has no responsibility for this path maintenance and safety, now and in the future.

- 4. New gate creating unauthorised access onto Ionides land and unauthorised cutting of hedge** – advise has been sought from the council's solicitor who has advised the following:

In brief I think if they want to put a gate in their own fence then can but if they are then going onto private land and have no right of way over that land, they should not be using the gate to go onto the land in question. If they have cut your hedge down though then they should not do that without permission.

People can acquire rights (easements) over land through constant use over time but only on the basis that the right has been exercised without complaint from anyone who own the land in question or indeed formal permission from them. So, lodging the objection would help defeat any such claim."

Clerk to write to the homeowners to confirm this information.

- 5. Registration of Land as a Village Green – update** – update at next meeting once a response has been received from all parties.
- 6. Hedges** - clerk and Chair met with James of ACE landscapes who has sent in a reasonable quote (£1,436.40) as there is around two years + growth to be removed to bring the hedge into a manageable condition, fronting the Framfield Road and partially along the border which fronts the A272 on surgery side. May set up ongoing maintenance when grass quote comes in. **Agree** to ask him carry out this urgent work.
- 7. Any update on long term vision of Ionides land** - No update, defer to November agenda.
- 8. Grant request from Friends of St Margarets (FOSM) Church for £1,000** - Approved

9. Car Park Barrier – Cllr Rose asked to contact welder to fix barrier to Ionides car park.

10. Rifle Club lease – consider solicitor costs of £1500 – agree.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm