BUXTED PARISH COUNCIL

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13th October 2026

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held in St Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Buxted on Tuesday 13th October 2026 at 7.25p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Mallett (acting Chairman), Blandford, Duck, Furber, Marshall, Muddle and Tunna.
Also present: ESCC Cllr. Coleman, and Clerks Beccy Macklen and Claudine Feltham.

Public : Member of the public who had previously contacted the parish council *(see minute 09/10/26 below – Correspondence List*) introduced himself and highlighted the issue of children crossing the A272 at Howbourne Lane to access the school bus on a busy road. He noted the approval of new dwellings at Saxon Court which will increase the number of children using the 'unmarked' bus stop (currently ten children). He would ideally have a pedestrian crossing and a bus shelter but understands this would take time. In the interim there should be signs erected, lighting and road marking to make it clearer to drivers that children are crossing, and waiting for a school bus.

Council was asking if it can influence ESCC Cllr Coleman met with the member of the public at 8am on site to look at the situation, which was dangerous. She has subsequently addressed the matter at Full Council, speaking specifically about the case with unanimous support for reducing the speed limit. The Scrutiny Committee will now consider this matter. When this issue was highlighted to the Road Safety Team, she has received the standard response, so has requested a meeting with one of the officers and a police representative to discuss speed enforcement. She also asked if the parish council can allocate funding for a bus stop to signpost to drivers that it is a pedestrian area.

The member of the public did express a fear that reducing the speed limit alone may not be the best way forward as cars do not necessarily drop their speeds. The chairman commented that the parish council could be very sympathetic to a bus stop in this location and requested the clerk contact both ESCC and the developers of Saxon Court to establish if we could work in collaboration to install a bus stop in this location. This matter to be added to the November agenda.

Bonfire Society representatives referred to the complaint received by both the parish council and bonfire society regarding the fireworks at the bonfire event which was circulated prior to the meeting. From their perspective, the event went to plan, with great feedback from Sussex Police with no concerns. A comprehensive reply letter from the Bonfire Society was sent to the complainant that day. *(see minute 09/10/26 correspondence list below)*.

01/10/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Smith, Humphrey, and WDC Cllr Shaw.

02/10/26 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 Furber declared a personal interest in any matters related to allotments due to being an allotment holder.

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 Duck declared a personal interest in matter relating to Fireflies Nursery who hire the High Hurstwood Village Hall.

03/10/26 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2026 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

04/10/26 ESCC/WDC REPORT

ESCC Cllr Coleman updated the council on:

WDC Local Plan – she can see the benefits of having an adopted local plan but does not think it should be at any cost and voted against it on various grounds. Having a plan does mean meeting housing targets. She did comment though that moving to the Regulation 19 stage would mean the plan does carry weight in considering planning applications. Following the current consultation the plan will be submitted to the Inspector before December, to ensure it falls within previous NPPF growth targets.

Development boundary for Buxted – the chairman queried why land outside the new development boundary has been suggested by WDC for development. Does this then make the development boundary arbitrary? Cllr Coleman suggest addressing that question to WDC Cllr Shaw.

Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) Meeting – given the current highway concerns in the parish, Cllr Coleman suggested arranging an SLR meeting with Highways. The chairman asked if the police could be in attendance. Councillor Coleman agreed this should be possible (Steve O'Connell – Community Speedwatch Officer), Clerk to contact Highways to arrange a suitable date.

NEETS – Fletching Parish Council are starting an initiative for NEETS (Not in Education Employment or Training), funded by the parish council and led by Nature Sense for young people to get involved with local nature projects. Cllr Coleman to keep us updated on the progress of the initiative. The Council agreed it would be sympathetic to helping with this scheme.

CLIF Funding – the original concept was for £2million to be available over 3 years from May 2025 – all £2 million has been allocated with further funding now available. There are currently six projects on the waiting list. Cllr Duck confirmed the High Hurstwood Village Hall have started the application but have found the process complicated and laborious with thirty-seven pages to complete. Cllr Coleman would feedback that the process is not as easy as it could be.

Coach and Horses, Danehill – The Community Benefits Society which has brought the pub has a launch 18th October.

Leisure Centres – the Wealden owned leisure centres in Uckfield, Crowborough and Hailsham are undergoing much needed improvements.

Cllr Shaw submitted a report via email as set out below:

Ward budget

I have used this year's ward budget to assist High Hurstwood School, the Allotment Association, the Horticultural Association and Buxted Together. However, I still have about £1000 left of my 2026/7 budget for grants to local charities and voluntary. I have approached a couple to offer help but did not receive a reply! Obviously, if anyone knows someone who might benefit, please let them and me know. I really don't want to end the financial year with any grant left.

National Scheme of Delegation

As reported in my last update the government is changing the way we must make decisions about planning applications. From 31st October, most applications will have to be decided on by planning officers, not councillors. Larger or more complex applications may still be decided by the committee, but only if certain legal criteria are satisfied. Importantly, councillors' ability to refer a proposed officer decision to the committee (often called a call-in) comes to an end. The Council protested about this strongly in responding to the government's consultation, along with many others, but to no avail.

Local Plan

The Council voted to have the final consultation on the draft Local Plan at its meeting on 18th September. I know it caused a lot of disquiet, but we are between a rock and a hard place – either have a plan and make the case for lower target housing numbers (which is what we propose) or reject a plan and have the government impose a plan with their own target minus the environmental and design standards we proposed. The consultation closes on 2nd November after which a final version goes to the Planning Inspectorate for their consideration.

Land North of A272

You will be aware of this new application – you may be discussing it tonight. As I did when the earlier application came to committee, I shall speak against it. I have received some very valuable analysis from residents not least in relation to changes in the NPPF which have happened during the preparation and submission of the new application.

Crowborough Camp

The twists and turns around the Camp continue, not least around planning issues. Suffice to say that the Secretary of State insists that planning decisions relating to the Camp are his prerogative, rather than WDC as the local panning authority, though latest correspondence does not appear to give any reasoning. We continue to consult with legal advisers.
In addition, despite our opposition to the Camp, government expects WDC to manage additional funding to support those that are providing support to asylum seekers within the Camp and is making "per head" funds available for that purpose (with very tight criterion for its use). From our existing resources we also propose to create a Crowborough Community Investment Fund to invest an additional £170K to the Crowborough Town Council, the Cadets, for town centre improvements and local groups/projects. ESCC have indicated they will undertake their duties to the Camp using their existing resources. The NHS and Police receive separate funding

for costs they may incur. More details can be found in the papers for the latest WDC Cabinet meeting.

05/10/26 **CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR**

On the proposal of Cllr Blanford, seconded by Cllr Furber, Rob Tunna was unanimously voted on the parish council. Cllr Tunna signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was invited to join the meeting and welcomed by all.

06/10/26 **UPDATING OF DATA PROTECTION POLICY TO COMPLY WITH NEW REQUIREMENTS**

In response to new requirements on complaints handling which came into force in June 2026, the clerks have updated the council's data protection policy. This has also been reviewed and amended by our Data Protection Officer, Satswana. The draft policy was circulated to all prior to the meeting.
Proposed by Cllr Muddle, seconded by Cllr Marshall, unanimously **Resolved** to **adopt** the revised policy.

07/10/26 **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.

The Financial Risk Assessment can now be updated and referred to the November meeting in preparation for the internal audit.

08/10/26 **OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

Road Safety: Speeding in Buxted – update on VAS sign – feedback from ESCC regarding costs.

As requested, the clerk forwarded the road safety costs to Cllr Coleman who queried this with the Head of Highways. He thanked her for highlighting the issue and how frustrating it must be for parish councils who are carrying out highway works. He also commented that it is "*highly relevant to the wider conversation about the volunteer sector and Parish Councils taking on more highway works. Whilst there is often enthusiasm to take on greater local decision-making, the associated costs, regulatory requirements, and liabilities are not always immediately apparent. Highway works are subject to a range of legal and safety obligations, and these can significantly increase the cost of even relatively minor schemes."* However, what he could not do was change the cost for the work.

Cllr Fuber does not think the proposed VAS is in the right location and would not wish to spend the required installation costs on a sign which could be better placed elsewhere. It was therefore suggested that the existing flashing speed signs at either end of Buxted Village could be replaced with VAS signs which would not only advise drivers what speed they are traveling at but would also record speed information. Clerk to contact ESCC to ascertain if this is possible.

Wealden Local Development Framework – Local Plan: Publication of Regulation 19 consultation: It was agreed that as this is a final consultation based on the legalities of the plan, the parish council does not need to comment any further. However, it would make the point, as highlighted by Crowborough Town Council that parish and town councils DO have statutory duties as the plan currently states: *"Town or Parish Council - These operate at a level below district and borough councils and in some cases, unitary authorities. Because of their great diversity, parishes do not generally have statutory functions, although they are often responsible for smaller local services such as allotments, parks, and community centres."* This is simply not true.

Property issues:

- **Nevill Road site** – possible disposal of site – update
- Since the previous meeting, the Government Valuation Office Agency responded to advise they have no capacity for this work at present. Therefore, legal advice was sought and the following response received:

  "In my view the Transfer to Uckfield can be for nil consideration using the deemed consent of the Secretary of State under Circular 06/03 to transfers at less than best consideration in that it contributes to the economic wellbeing of Buxted by removing the obligation to maintain land which is not in the parish of Buxted.

  If Buxted wants to receive market consideration they would need an independent valuation. It is then up to Uckfield as to whether they want their own valuation and whether they were prepared to pay for the land."

  Members discussed the matter with a proposal from Cllr Mallett to sell the land to Uckfield TC to a nominal value but to include an overage clause. The Council agreed that the site was a liability and not an asset. Unanimously **agreed**. Clerk to make contact with Uckfield Town Council with this proposal.

- **BT Box**: Tanyard's Cottages, Framfield Road – feedback from ESCC regarding costs
  As per the Highways response to the VAS sign, there would be no reducing the safety works costs for the BT Box to be renovated. The costs for the safety works are three times higher than the renovation costs. Councillors do not think this is fair value for money and therefore would not fund the renovations.

09/10/26 **CORRESPONDENCE**

P1 – WDC: invitation to Wealden Town and Parish Conference - 10 November 2026 – clerk to recirculate details.

P2 – Buxted Resident: request for the Parish Council to formally support the request to East Sussex County Council for an urgent road-safety assessment of the A272 school transport crossing point immediately west of Howbourne Lane – (*see minute 09/10/26 above).* All councillors are favour of supporting the proposal and will address this issue with ESCC and developers at Saxon Court. Cllr Furber also commented that Speedwatch is reforming (but seems to be taking a lot of time to organise). If that area were changed to a 30mph limit Speed Watch could work in that area.

P2 – Buxted Resident: request for PC assistance to liaise with Buxted Bonfire Society to change fireworks to a less noisy display – Councillors acknowledge and are cognisant of the concerns raised by the resident, however on balance it was recognised that the event was well attended and there were far more residents in favour of the event than complaints received. The Council has confidence the Bonfire Society would do its best to mitigate residents' concerns. This issue is essentially between the organisers and the bodies that regulate the event, which is not the parish council.

10/10/26 **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**
Finance Working Party taking place on Tuesday 3rd November at Buxted Football Club at 7pm.

11/10/26 FINANCE

i) **Payments:** On the proposal of Cllr. Marshall seconded by Cllr. Muddle, updated payments list for September 2026 totalling £18,682.87 was approved.

ii) **Payments** On the proposal of Cllr. Marshall seconded by Cllr Muddle payments totalling £12,816.92 covered by direct debit or BACS payments for October were approved.

iii) **Bank reconciliations:** The clerk had circulated completed reconciliations for May which were signed.

iv) **Noted:** RBS reports for September: Earmarked reserves, Trial Balance, Receipts and Payments, Cash, and Investment Reconciliation

v) **Request for annual grant for Buxted Bonfire Society -** It was commented that it is not the council's job to chase the grant applicant to ensure it is submitted on time. The Bonfire Society has committed to submit its application in a timely manner in future – **grant approved.**

12/10/26 OTHER MEETINGS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS
None

13/10/26 MEMBERS QUESTIONS
Cllr Duck has been asked about the Royal Oak Tree in Royal Oak Road as it needs attention. Clerks to refer to Highways to establish ownership.

14/10/26 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Date of next meeting – Next meeting 10th November 2026 Five Ash Down Village Hall

The meeting closed at 8.30p.m.

R Macklen, Clerk to the Council

Copy to ESCC Cllr Coleman, WDC Cllr Shaw

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. 17/06/26 – update from Highways. Work will commence on 1st September 2026. 20/08 – notification from Highways repairs to culvert will commence on Mon 21/9 – Fri 13/11 with a road

			closure in place on Framfield Road between the junctions of Limes Lane and Orchard Lane.
17/02/25	**CCY000737**	**Broken away tarmac (50cm) in Framfield Road/Limes Lane outside KSV and bollard fallen over**	**REOPENED** **20/02/25 – ESCC Highways do not consider work is necessary at this 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)** **24/8 – notified by Highways the repairs to the broken tarmac are now NOT included in the works to the culvert.** **Sept 26 – Culvert works started. Clerk querying the removal of the tarmac work.** **29/09 – Head of Highways acknowledged email and will respond once background to case is established**
27/05/26	**CCY001221/CWY009219**	**State of road and Highway verge roadside of High Hurstwood Village Hall Car Park/Field gate**	**ONGOING** **Current state of the road and dip in the highway verge to entrances of HHVH car park and field entrance. Cars bottom out entering car park. Cars cannot access the field gate due to drop in land on verge.** **27/05 – Highways have instructed Steward to assess. Highway Steward could not find the tree despite the W3W and photo. Steward asked to reassess** **11/06/26 – confirmation from Highways repairs will take place.** **Repairs to entrance to Village Hall have taken place.** **21/09 – notified works to field entrance have been completed.** **30/9 – Cllr Duck confirmed works have not been adequately completed so clerk has asked for the matter to be reopened.** **5/10 – Cllr Duck confirmed work had taken place but not in the right place and not in accordance with what had been agreed by contractor. Clerk reported this back to Highways with photos**

Appendix

List of Buxted Parish Council Policies and Procedures to be Reviewed – 14 October 2026

1. BACS Payment Policy
2. Bullying & Harassment (External) Policy
3. Communications Policy for Buxted Parish Council Meetings
4. Complaints Procedure
5. Co-Options Policy
6. Councillors Code of Conduct
7. Dignity and Work Policy
8. Disciplinary Procedure
9. Document Retention Policy
10. Employees Code of Conduct
11. Equality and Diversity Policy
12. Financial Reserves Policy
13. Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Request
14. GDPR Data Protection Policy
15. Grievance Procedure and Problem-Solving Policy
16. Health & Safety Policy
17. Information Asset Register
18. Information Technology Policy
19. Lone Working Policy
20. Press/Media Policy
21. Protocol on Consultation Meetings with Developers, Pre-application meetings, and meetings during the application process
22. Gifts and Hospitality Procedure
23. Consultation Requests Procedure
24. Publication Scheme
25. Recording of Meetings Policy
26. Risk Management Policy
27. Subject Access Request (SAR) Policy and Procedure
28. Social Media Policy
29. Vexatious Complaints Policy
30. Whistleblowing Policy
31. Protocol for Site Visits
32. Risk Assessments
33. Adopted Model Financial Regulations
34. Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults Policy
35. Standing Orders
36. Volunteer Policy

Ionides Trust Update 13th October 2026 following the parish council meeting:

1. **Apologies – Cllrs Humphrey and Smith. Proposed Cllr Tunna a member of the trust seconded by Cllr Muddle.**

2. **Declarations of Interest -** none

3. **Request from Buxted Scouts for Bonfire/Firework event Saturday 14th November 2026** – Agreed, but they must clear up after the event.

4. **Fireflies Nursery – request to put a banner on the railings of the play area in Buxted play park** – Agreed, for a 3 months' time limit. Clerk to research policy wording for future meeting.

5. **Replacement of dog bin (near noticeboard) –** belongs to WDC so clerk will contact Wealden to ask for a replacement.

6. **Village Hub - update –** Miller Bourne have been given a brief for outline costings.

7. **Any urgent business -** Clerk to asked to establish ownership of land on which the current Christmas tree lighting switch is situated, with a view to asking Npower to install a smart meter/cabinet.

Meeting closed 8.55pm