

MARESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING THE VILLAGES OF MARESFIELD, NUTLEY AND FAIRWARP

Minutes of the Maresfield Parish Council Meeting held at Maresfield Village Hall on Tuesday 16th June 2026 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Mr M. Craddock (Chair), Cllr Mrs. L. Reeves (Vice Chair), Cllr Mrs. S. Cumming, Cllr Dr. P. Handley, Cllr Mr. A. Koeppen, Cllr Mr. T. Lewin, , Cllr Mr. H. Rai, Cllr Dr. B. Smith, Cllr Mrs. L. Stevens-Smith, Cllr Mr. P. Taylor, CCllr Mrs. C. Coleman, DCllr Mr. I. Tysh and Mrs. N. O'Hanlon (Clerk)

A. Public session. None

4472. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance.

Apologies were received from Cllr Mr. R. Hunter and Cllr Mr. J. Polhill.

4473. Declarations of Interest. None.

4474. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations . None.

4475. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th May 2026: -

1. For adoption. The minutes as circulated with the meeting papers were **Agreed** to be a true and accurate record. The Chairman proposed Adoption and this was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.
2. Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the agenda. None.

4476. Reports by and questions to: -

1. County Councillors. CCllr Coleman reported some local government reorganisation news: that there is a Judicial Review underway into the proposed carving up of the 'One East Sussex' unitary plan, favoured by ESCC, in favour of increasing the boundaries of the Brighton and Hove Council. An expanded Brighton and Hove Council could adversely affect ESCC's financial stability.

It has been calculated that to undertake all necessary A and B road repairs in East Sussex, it would cost in the region of £350m, funds which are not available.

At the Annual Parish Meeting it was queried whether the tarmac used for repairing potholes is the correct material. Advice was sought from the highways department and they confirmed that the materials used are of a sufficient quality for the job.

CCllr Coleman has been in consultation with representatives of both The Ashdown Forest Conservators and the Fords Green Management Committee to see if a resolution can be reached regarding their lease issues.

2. District Councillors. DCllr Tysh submitted a report which was circulated with the meeting papers.

DCllr Tysh also reported that Wealden DC have formally opposed the Governments modified proposal for new unitary authorities in East Sussex.

Apologies have been given by a Government Minister regarding the lack of communication about the Crowborough asylum seeker camp. The camp seems to be running well with no reports of any incidents. Discussions are on going regarding the possibility of the camp continuing to be used to house asylum seekers until 2030 rather than the 12 months initially indicated.

DCllr Tysh was asked if the local plan, once adopted, would be taken into account for larger developments which, after October, will no longer be going to Committee for decisions. DCllr Tysh advised that in theory, once adopted the local plan would provide a starting point for the deciding Officer and Government Inspectorate but that the new planning framework may override this.

4477. Parish Wards – issues, needs and Councillors' reports: -

1. Fairwarp Ward. None.
2. Maresfield Ward. It was reported that traffic through the village, especially lorries, appears to be increasing.
3. Nutley Ward. The traffic lights by the damaged Coffee House are causing disruption in the village with long tailbacks at peak times Is there any help that be given with the repairs so that the road can be fully opened again? DCllr Tysh will look into this.

The speed of traffic continues to be a concern on the Crowborough Road, highlighted by the statistics gained from the MVAS device sited there and a further serious road accident.

ACTION: Clerk to ask police if they can do some speed check sessions along there and also look into getting an ESCC Highways assessment carried out.

4478. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and any questions: -

1. Finance & Administration Committee

- i. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June 2026. Noted.
- ii. To review Months 1 and 2 2026/27 accounts. Noted.
- iii. To Approve Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26. This was proposed by the Chairman, seconded and **Agreed** unanimously and signed as required.
- iv. To Approve Annual Accounting Statement for 2025/26. This was proposed by the Chairman, seconded and **Agreed** unanimously and signed as required
- v. To consider and approve updated quote for Ford's Green play area surface.
An updated quotation was obtained as several months had elapsed since the Council resolved to proceed with the replacement of the remaining wood chip surfacing with rubber mulch to match the existing surface. The Chair proposed that the updated quotation of £23,692 plus VAT for the Eco Surface, together with £2,500 for the removal of the existing wood chip, be approved. The proposal was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.
- vi. To note: Bond re-investment. It was noted that the F&A Committee had agreed, upon the maturity of the £60,000 bond, to re-invest £30,000 in a further six-month bond with Cambridge & Counties Bank, which offered the most favourable interest rate. The remaining £30,000, together with accrued interest, was returned to the Council's bank account.

- vii. To review and adopt a new policy:
 - i. Flexible Working Policy.
- viii. To review and re-adopt the council's policies:
 - i. Lone Working Policy.
 - ii. Performance Management Scheme.
 - iii. Recruitment and Retention Policy.
 - iv. Whistleblowing Policy.

The Chairman proposed that the new Flexible Working Policy, and the four policies in viii above, with proposed amendments, as circulated with the meeting papers, are adopted. This was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.

It was questioned if lone working was safe for the Clerks as the parish office is within a building where alcohol is served (The Nutley Social Club). On reflection it is not felt that this poses a risk as the Clerks always keep the office door locked and the hours when they are in the office do not coincide with the Social Club's opening hours.

- ix. Annual Appraisals:
 - i. To note: Annual appraisals completed for Clerk and Clerical Assistant. Noted.
 - ii. Consider and approve the recommendation that the Clerk and the Clerical Assistant each receive a performance related salary increase of 1 salary scale point, back dated to 1st April 2026. This was proposed by the Chairman, seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.
 - iii. To note: The Clerical Assistant was promoted to Assistant Clerk. This promotion reflects the sound working knowledge, competence, and experience that she has developed in the role. This was noted, with Councillors unanimously recognising the valuable contribution made by the Assistant Clerk to the Council.
- x. Update from Chairman. None.

2. Planning Committee.

- i. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 11th May 2026. Noted.
- ii. Update from Chairman. None.

3. Environment Committee.

- i. Update from Chairman. There was an Environment Meeting held on the 9th June, the minutes will be included with meeting papers for the next Council meeting.

4. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee.

- i. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 19th May 2026. Noted.
- ii. Update from Chairman. The cricket and stoolball seasons are well underway and at the recent meeting a representative of the new under 18's football team attended and it was agreed that from next season they will play at MRG.
It was also agreed at the last meeting that quotes should be sought for re-treating the outside of the pavilion and making repairs where necessary.

4479. Outside bodies matters. None.

4480. To receive a report from, and put questions to, the Chairman. None.

4481. To receive a report from, and put questions to, the Clerk. None.

4482. Matters arising from the meeting for public communication. None.

4483. Date of next meeting – 21st July 2026 (Fairwarp).

The Parish Council Meeting will close and reconvene as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground

IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF SOME ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA, THE PRESS AND PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Matters relating to Council as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground (MRG).

1. Consider and approve the MRG Parking Protocol proposed amendments.

It was proposed that the amendments to the Parking Protocol, as per the copy circulated with the meeting papers, be adopted with additional wording specifying that there is to be no parking on Park Farm Lane. This was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.

2. Update on MRG parking scheme.

Cllr Taylor advised that the scheme is now largely complete, although some areas remain cordoned off to allow the grass to become established. Following the recent rainfall, additional parking spaces are ready to be opened for use.

Councillors expressed their continued appreciation to Cllr Taylor for the considerable amount of time and effort he has devoted to the project.

Cllr Polhill has kindly undertaken the installation of reflectors on all wooden bollards and has made good progress with this work.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.40pm