MARESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING THE VILLAGES OF MARESFIELD, NUTLEY AND FAIRWARP

Minutes of the Maresfield Parish Council Meeting held at Nutley Church Hall on Tuesday 15th September 2026 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Mr M. Craddock (Chair), Cllr Mrs. S. Cumming, Cllr Dr. P. Handley, Cllr Mr. R. Hunter, 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

4496. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance.

Apologies were received from: Cllr Mr. A. Koeppen, Cllr Mr. T. Lewin, Cllr Mr. J. Polhill, Cllr Mr. H. Rai, Cllr Mrs. L. Reeves and Cllr Dr. B. Smith.

4497. Declarations of Interest. None.

4498. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations . None.

4499. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st July 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, this was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.

2. Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the agenda. None.

4500. Reports by and questions to: -

1. County Councillors. CCllr Coleman submitted a report which had been circulated with the meeting papers and also updated Councillors as follows:

Wilder Wealden: The five-year nature recovery initiative was launched at the end of July, led by Sussex Wildlife Trust in partnership with Wealden District Council. The project has £1.2m Council funding, matched in kind by the Wildlife Trust, and will work with landowners, farmers and volunteers to restore habitats and support nature recovery across Wealden.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR): The Government has announced a pause to LGR to allow a review. Elections to the existing Wealden District Council are therefore expected to take place next year. The separate devolution/Mayoral Strategic Authority process is continuing, with Mayoral elections expected in 2028.

Road Safety in Nutley: After a meeting with the Safety Officer from ES Highways it was agreed that the white, access protection line, near the A22 junction with Bell Lane would be extended and the Keep Clear road marking on the A22 junction with Nursery Lane would be refreshed.

Anti Social Driving: There have been many complaints about anti social driving in the area and after consultation with different agencies there doesn't appear to be an easy answer but if anyone witnesses dangerous or anti social driving they are urged to report it on the police Operation Crackdown website, including any dashcam footage.

A22 Improvements: The long awaited road surface improvements on the A22 between Millbrook Hill and Wych Cross are underway and should be completed in the near future.

Coach and Horses, Danehill: There has been strong community support for a community-led purchase of the pub. A Community Benefit Society has been established, allowing residents to invest through shares from £250, with shareholders having a vote and profits reinvested for the benefit of the pub and community.

Fletching Music and Arts Festival: This festival promotes classical music and music-making, including outreach to local schools. Councillor Ward Budget funding was provided in support of the initiative. The festival runs from the 23rd to the 25th September 2026.

2. District Councillors. DCllr Tysh submitted a report which had been circulated with the meeting papers and also updated Councillors as follows:

Wealden DC Councillors will be voting on Friday 18th September on whether to have the final Reg19 consultation of the draft Local Plan. If the vote is 'yes' the consultation will get underway and will end on Monday 2nd November 2026.

DCllr Tysh was asked if the very serious objections raised by planning experts, to earlier drafts of the Local Plan, had been taken into account as no responses have been seen. Most notably are the concerns over the possible developments at Ashdown Business Park and Owlesbury. DCllr Tysh believes there is a document reporting on the results of the consultation and will circulate the link.

At 10pm on Wednesday 16th September there is a Chanel 4 documentary about the Crowborough Asylum Seekers camp. Whilst on this subject Councillors reported that they had not heard any negative feedback regarding increased crime or anti social behaviour since the camp opened, this is backed up by the regular police reports given to WDC.

There will be a hard hitting film shown, about different aspects of the climate crisis, at Nutley Memorial Hall at 7pm on Friday 9th October, with a discussion afterwards.

CCllr Coleman left the meeting.

4501. Parish Wards – issues, needs and Councillors' reports: -

1. Fairwarp Ward. None.
2. Maresfield Ward. None.
3. Nutley Ward. There have been reports of damage to a car parked at the A22/Nether Lane junction. Any damage to property is unacceptable and cannot be condoned. However, there have also been a number of concerns raised regarding the vehicle's position, including the impact on visibility at an already hazardous junction. Concerns have also been raised about the potential damage to the grassed area and the spring bulbs planted there, particularly during wet weather.

4502. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and any questions: -

1. Finance & Administration Committee

i. To review Months 4 and 5 2026/27 accounts. Noted.

ii. To note: External auditor report 2025/26. Noted.

iii. To note: Local Government pay award agreed at 3.3%, backdated to 1st April 2026. Noted.

iv. Update from Chairman. None.

2. Planning Committee.

i. Update from Chairman. A Planning Committee meeting was held on 14th September, with the main business being a presentation by representatives of the proposed Oakwood Park development, followed by questions from Councillors and members of the public. A full account of the meeting will be included in the draft minutes, which will be published on the Parish Council website.

3. Environment Committee.

i. To Note:

- Fords Green Play Area rubber surface to be installed week commencing 28th September 2026. Noted.
- Three new picnic benches installed at Parklands Play Area. Noted.
- Noticeboard installed in the bus shelter by Nutley Church. Noted.

ii. Consider and approve the purchase of two new benches for Fords Green Play Area. As the two existing benches are old and beyond economic repair it was proposed that the Parish Council purchase two new composite benches at a cost of no more than £1000 + Vat, to include installation. This was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.

iii. Consider and approve the purchase of one new bench and one new picnic table for Maresfield Recreation Ground Play Area. As the existing bench and picnic table are old and beyond economic repair it was proposed that the Parish Council purchase a new composite bench and a new composite picnic table at a cost of no more than £1600 + Vat, to include installation. This was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.

iv. Update from Chairman. None.

4. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee.

i. Consider and approve contractor to carry out repairs and re-treatment to outside of pavilion. Three quotes had been secured for the repair and re-treatment works needed on the outside of the pavilion. The contractor who gave the most competitive quote is local but has not been used by the Council previously. On the procurement of excellent references and satisfaction that the contractor holds the appropriate insurance it was proposed that Wayne Holford be appointed to carry out these works for a price of £4280. This was seconded and **Agreed** Unanimously.

ii. To note: First aid course to be held at MRG on 26th October 2026. Noted.

iii. Update from Chairman.

The Royal Signals will be staying at the Pavilion again this year, the night before the Remembrance Sunday service.

It has been identified that modifications need to be made to the pavilion loft space to prevent the pipes freezing this winter. **ACTION:** Clerk to seek advice as to the best course of action.

4503. Outside bodies matters. None.

4504. To receive a report from, and put questions to, the Chairman. None.

4505. To receive a report from, and put questions to, the Clerk. None.

4506. Matters arising from the meeting for public communication. None.

4507. Date of next meeting – 20th October 2026 (Maresfield).

The Parish Council Meeting closed and reconvened 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 Trustee report and accounts for Charity Commission.

A copy of the accounts and Trustee report, as circulated with the meeting papers were deemed to be a true and accurate account of the Maresfield Recreation Ground activities for 2025-26. It was proposed they be approved for submission to the Charity Commission, this was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously.

The accounts and report were subsequently signed and dated by the Chair of the Trustees and the Chair of the Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee.

2. **Update on MRG parking scheme.**

i. Retrospectively approve purchase of additional posts to be installed between new access track and the recreation ground to prevent vehicles accessing the playing fields. Cost for purchase and installation of 22 additional posts, as per the existing ones, plus 1 removable post for emergency access would be £1800 + Vat.

It was proposed that retrospective approval be given to the purchase of these posts, it was an urgent purchase as the lead time was long. This was seconded and **Agreed** unanimously. This will be funded from CIL monies.

ii. Update from Cllr P Taylor.

Cllr Taylor advised that the car parking project, which has been three years in development, is now nearing completion of its second phase. A small amount of Cellpave remains to be laid once ground conditions are suitable, together with the installation of the additional posts.

Cllr Taylor has devoted a considerable amount of time and effort to bringing the project to fruition and has faced a number of challenges and difficulties along the way. Despite these, the scheme is now nearing completion and has received considerable positive feedback and many compliments on the improvements achieved.

Councillors passed a **Resolution** formally thanking Cllr Taylor for the considerable time and effort he has devoted to bringing this project to fruition.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm