



# BUXTED

## PARISH COUNCIL

Clerks: Beccy Macklen & Claudine Feltham  
PO Box 202, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 1BN

t: 01435 515219 e: [clerk@buxted-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@buxted-pc.gov.uk) w: [buxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://buxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk)

11<sup>th</sup> November 2025

### MINUTES

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held in Five Ash Down Village Hall on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 7.28p.m.**

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

**Public :** 1 – a resident of Buxted who was also a previous Speedwatch member wished to raise the issue of speeding in the Pound Green area of Buxted. There has been police presence and improvement to road signage in Hadlow Down, so why has Buxted been overlooked? *See minute 07/11/25 'Speeding in Buxted' for a response.*

01/11/25 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Mallett and Marshall and WDC Cllr Shaw.

02/11/25 **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 Smith declared a personal interest in any matters related to allotments due to being an allotment holder

Cllrs Smith and Furber declared a personal interest in any matters relating to Buxted Together by virtue of being members of the voluntary group.

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.

03/11/25 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

04/11/25 **ESCC REPORT**

Cllr Galley circulated a report earlier in the week which focussed on the Home Office proposed use of Crowborough Army Camp to house up to 600 male asylum

seekers between the ages of 18-60 and advised he believes there was a meeting between the local MP, and WDC representatives the previous day. The clerk commented that she has listened to the four-hour WDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> November at which representatives from the Home Office were present and confirmed they have not yet made a final decision as to whether the camp will be used. It was also reported that the Home Office would not need planning permission and could use the camp under permitted development rights for a period of up to twelve months.

It was also reported that the clerks and chairman had attended the ESALC conference the previous week at which the PCC Katy Bourne advised the police have not yet been given any extra funding to assist with any issues at the army camp and should funding come forward it would mean taking officers away from other duties to cover this issue.

Cllr Galley also reported that the financial situation at county is resulting in it becoming harder to achieve a balanced budget. Adult social cases have risen 7% in the last year, and the number of children asking for education plans has risen by 53%. Government's answer is for the council to either borrow more money or increase council tax, neither of which are viable.

Cllr Galley referred to the speeding issue and what was discussed at the recent SLR meeting. The Road Safety Officer at Highways is happy to assess potential suggested sites for a VAS/SID once received. It was also confirmed that Buxted was included in the county wide speed assessment, but it did not meet the criteria for improvement works. He has some issues with some of the areas that have been left off the list when others have been included.

Cllr Furber commented that a member of his family has now waited weeks for a response from Highways regarding the speed assessment and the chosen location; after Highways initially lost the correspondence.

The chairman advised the A272/A267 Road Safety Group have contacted Buxted Parish Council and have been invited to the next parish council meeting. *Following the meeting it was confirmed their attendance on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December meeting.*

Finally, members were reminded waste/recycling facilities operate a booking system from 24<sup>th</sup> November.

Cllr Humphrey wished to minute his disappointment that we have no representation from WDC at the meeting and thank you to Cllr Galley for always attending.

## **05/11/25 BUDGET AND PRECEPT SETTING 2026-27**

In the absence of a chairman of the finance committee, the RFO advised members of the current expenditure versus budget for 2025-2026 which was largely on target. The RBS reports showing the current years income/expenditure v budget, the earmarked reserves and cash & investment reconciliations had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, giving all members a clear overview of the current financial position of the council at the half way point of the current financial year.

A detailed report and budget spreadsheet for 2026-2027 had also been circulated to full council prior to the meeting for their consideration, and then discussion at the meeting.

To meet the minimum estimated expenditure (minus any other estimated income) if would require a 10.7% increase on the current year's precept, to bring the precept amount to £143,677. However, this would not take into account additional projects and additional services that were being considered by members.

It was acknowledged by councillors that costs have risen significantly alongside services previously provided by other authorities being reduced, resulting in the parish council having to take on extra responsibilities to ensure the service levels are maintained in addition to progressing improvement programmes which benefit the parish.

The chairman did remind members that at the current time, there is no cap on parish councils precept limits, but this could be implemented in the future.

Councillors commented the parish council has previously raised the precept in line with inflation but given that we are taking on more services it would not be unreasonable to increase the precept above inflation levels. The council is wanting to do more within the parish and therefore costs need to reflect this. The impact of devolution is not yet known, with other possible services potentially being passed down to Town/Parish level.

Members considered the additional costs, and it was resolved: as proposed by Cllr Humphrey, seconded by Cllr Rose, and reached by **unanimous approval** to increase the precept by 15% on last year's amount equating to £149,254 which would result in approximately 86 pence increase per month per Band D household.

Proposed by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Muddle, **approved unanimously** that upon receipt of the 2026-27 precept forms from WDC, they would be completed by the clerk/RFO for the amount of £149,254 and signed by the Chairman and Clerk and returned to WDC.

#### 06/11/25 REQUEST TO AMEND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS EXPENDITURE AMOUNTS

The clerks have requested members consider amending the Financial Regulations to reflect increasing day to day costs and to increase the amounts required prior to requiring more than one quote. This is especially relevant when using regular, reliable, contractors for works to playground equipment and trees.

This would allow the clerks, in consultation with the council to approve works much quicker, using reliable contractors. The clerks would not authorise anything without notification to councillors (unless in an emergency when the chairman would be consulted) and each quote would normally be considered at a parish council meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Rose and seconded by Cllr Smith unanimously approved the following increases:

*1.1 For contracts greater than £5,000 (excluding VAT) the Clerk shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes; **Change to £10,000***

*1.2. Where the value is between £2,500 and £5,000 (excluding VAT), the Clerk shall try to obtain 3 estimates (which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers). **Change to £5,000 to £10,000***

*1.3. For smaller purchases, the Clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.*

*1.4. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:*

- the Clerk/RFO, under delegated authority, for any items below £500 (excluding VAT). **Change to £1000***
- the Clerk/RFO, in consultation with the Chair of the Council for any items below £2,500 (excluding VAT). **Change to £5,000***
- a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £5,000 (excluding VAT).*
- in respect of grants, these will be considered by full council*
- the council for all items over £5,000.*

*In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to **£5,000** (excluding VAT) on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.*

## 07/11/25 **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**  
Having received a quote for the works totalling £685.20 the council agreed via email the quote should be accepted and the works go ahead. Resolved to ratify the decision at this meeting.

**Road Safety:**

- **Any feedback from SLR meeting** – The chairman and clerk attended the SLR meeting along with the Head Teacher of Buxted Primary School at the ESCC offices in Ringmer. Minutes of the meeting have been circulated to all. Main points noted from the meeting were:
  - Hedge cutting works recognised by Highways that need to be carried but are not done by the owner, are not guaranteed to be cut by Highways. They will obtain quotes for the work (if not an easy job) and those quotes will be considered by Highways, who will then determine if this work is value for money. It does not guarantee the hedge will be cut.
  - Painted speed roundels on the road will only be repainted IF there is not an accompanying speed sign adjacent to it. They will not double up on speed notifications.
- **Speeding in Buxted – any update** – *see minute 04/11/25 above*. Cllr Furber to provide locations to clerk for SID/VAR for Highways to make assessment.

**Wealden Local Development Framework:** Nothing to report

**Property issues:**

- **Parish Council owned Land – locations to register as Assets of Community Value**  
Following the previous meeting, the clerk circulated further information sought from WDC regarding any limitations if a parish council impose an ACV on its own land. It effectively would only hold up any sale of the land for six months while the consultation to sell takes place. Cllr Smith to refer the matter to the BAA as to whether they wish to submit an ACV or if they wish to the PC to do it.
- **Buxted Recreation Ground – drainage improvements** – Cllr Humphrey and the clerk are due to meet with representatives of the football club on Friday to work through the Pitchpower ground assessment.
- **High Hurstwood Play Equipment repairs** – costs have been received to repair

parts of the play equipment which are quoted at £2,704.00. Given the parish council resolution above to amend Financial Regulations, the clerk will arrange for the works to be completed as per the quote received.

- **Buxted Allotments** - to consider the request from Buxted Allotment Association for the installation of a 10ft x 20ft shed and costs of up to £4,000 to come from CIL – Proposed Cllr Rose and seconded by Cllr Humphrey - **Agreed**
- **BT Phone Box painting** – update – a quote has been received via the Lengthsman of £1000 per BT box. The work would be carried out by a professional painter and decorator who has also worked on the BT boxes in Wadhurst. The work could be funded through CIL – **Agreed**.
- **High Hurstwood Allotment field** – review of rent charges – the site is currently rented by the neighbour at a charge of £520 per year. **Agreed to increase rent from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 to £550 and review on a yearly basis.**

**Communications Matters:** Nothing to report.

**08/11/25      CORRESPONDENCE**

**P1 ESCC Highways - Urban Grass Cutting Options 2026/27** – confirm option 1, two cuts provided by Highways and parish council have contractor to provide extra cuts

**P2 Various Sources - Home Office to use Crowborough Army Barracks to house asylum seekers** – see minute 04/11/25 above

**09/11/25      COMMITTEE MEETINGS**  
None

**10/11/25      FINANCE**

- Payments:** On the proposal of Cllr. Rose seconded by Cllr. Muddle, payments totalling £11,785 + VAT and updated October 2025 figure £14,559 + VAT. covered by BACS payments and direct debits were approved.
- Bank reconciliations:** The clerk had circulated a completed reconciliation for October which was signed
- Noted:** RBS reports: Ear marked reserves, Trial Balance, Receipts and Payments, Cash and Investment Reconciliation
- consider grant request of £800 from Holy Trinity Church, High Hurstwood for community events and youth work** – agreed to pay in this financial year.
- consider grant request of £100 from East Sussex Vision Support for vital IT access and training for blind and partially sighted residents in Hailsham and East Sussex** – agreed.
- request from Buxted Together to purchase a further six Hi-Viz vests** – agreed.

**11/11/25      OTHER MEETINGS**

**ESALC Conference – feedback** – Speakers included PC Katy Bourne, the Chief Executive of West Sussex County Council on devolution; and Steve Tilbury on planning and the NPPF.

**12/11/25      MEMBERS QUESTIONS**  
None

**13/11/25      ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Next Meeting** – Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025 in St Marys Church Hall, Church Road,

Buxted ( *Cllr Furber is apologies for next meeting*)

The meeting closed at 8.58p.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.
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 – <b>Raise again with Highways.</b> 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 woks (as above EA007FRAMFIELD)
24/03/25	HED004006	Hedge at Totease House, High Street, Buxted	ONGOING 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	<p>April 26 – reported by school to Highways.</p> <p>Various ongoing emails – some discrepancy on whose responsibility it is as there is a water leak underground</p> <p>29/09 – Operations Supervisor visiting site to dig trial holes requiring emergency road closure (outside of peak hours)</p> <p>02/10 – Confirmed the issue is with South East Water to passed to them to fix. No timescale given.</p>
20/10/25	HED005343	Verge/hedge opposite Howbourne Lane	<p><b>ONGONG</b></p> <p>20/10 – reported overgrown verge to Highways. It is a wildflower verge so cannot be cut. Also requested wildflower status is removed.</p> <p>27/10 – Highways advised no overgrown verges/hedges, just fallen leaves which is WDC responsibility. Clerk to ask Lengthsman to clear leaves.</p> <p>Highways consulting internally on wildflower status</p>
23/10/25	SIG002311	Verge on A272 between mini roundabout and bridge in Buxted	<p><b>CLOSED</b></p> <p>23/10 – reported overgrown hedge over low bridge sign</p> <p>27/10 – Highway Steward cut back the hedge</p>

## **Ionides Trust Update 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025:**

- 1. Apologies – D Mallett & A Marshall**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. Barrier Repairs – confirm costs of £336 – ratify the costs of the barrier repair and confirm the works were completed last week.**
- 4. New gate creating unauthorised access onto Ionides land and unauthorised cutting of hedge – any response from owner – no response to date.**
- 5. Grant request from Buxted Bonfire Society for Christmas Light Switch on Event – agreed given the BBS are unable to use the Scout Hut in association with the event so have had to hire toilets. There is also a loss of income from stall holders that would have gone inside the Scout Hut building.**
- 6. Registration of Land as a Village Green – update – no response from owner of surgery site.**
- 7. Hedge Cutting – completed but need to maintain cutting regularly.**
- 8. Any update on long term vision of Ionides land (SF & PS) – having discussions on next steps which would be to engage with the planning authority, and any variations on existing permission. Clerk to contact the WDC planning department to ascertain if it would be possible for a planning officer to make a site visit to discuss the vision.**

**Meeting closed 9.11pm**