Working for the Community

in Rotherfield, Town Row, Mark Cross, Eridge Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2015 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas (Chairman) Cllr. T. Gilbert Cllr. L. Pike

Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chairman) Cllr. D. Hiles Cllr. N. Wickenden

Cllr. Mrs. P. Halse Adamson Cllr. J. Kitchenham Cllr. R. Jaques

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

Cllr. P. Dixon.

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- •
- Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC) and Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC).
- Three members of the public.
- Two representatives of North Wealden Community Transport Partnership Ltd (NWCTP).

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING:-

a) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s 85).

Apologies were submitted by Cllr. A. Sharpe, Cllr. C. Clibbens and Cllr. F. Whittington.

b) Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda, and updates to members' register of interests.

Cllr. Hiles declared a personal interest in respect of item 2b) as he is a member of the Group.

c) District And County Councillor's reports.

Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC) reported the following:-

- B2100 Mark Cross Rotherfield Petition regarding request for action on large vehicles using this was presented at the February ESCC Full Council meeting.
 March 9th Apprenticeship Week with ESCC hoping to encourage creation of 500
- March 9th Apprenticeship Week with ESCC hoping to encourage creation of 500 apprenticeships in East Sussex via the "You're Hired East Sussex" scheme launching during this week and running from March August.
- Limekiln Forest BW53. More unwelcome nocturnal vehicle activity has been reported by a Parishioner. Positive news is that ESCC have advised that the landowner will be repairing the broken-down woodland boundaries with a robust fence or ditching and bunding as appropriate, hopefully in the next 4-8 weeks. Once this is complete, a metal barrier at the junction of Byway 53 and Limekiln Forest Road will be installed and the bollards reset at the Palesgate Lane end of Limekiln Forest Road.
- Argos Hill former "Cuckoo Line" land. Concerns reported regarding area of this that had been fenced off, investigation shows this relates to a section that has been in private ownership for some while. Is still pressing for the promised report and update regarding the bridges on the route.
- Gatwick. Is attending a conference next week regarding airspace matters and will report in due course.

Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) reported the following:-

• **Rotherfield School.** Visited recently and was impressed with what was with their achievements. He was updated on plans to reopen and encourage use of the Station Road path to the School.

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Gatwick. Has learned that in the South East there are 68K benefits claimants with 5.5K of these in East Sussex. Claims from Gatwick Airport are that expansion there would create 120K new jobs in the area. Even if all the benefit claimants can be found jobs at the Airport, there is still a substantial shortfall requiring others to travel into the area and he cannot understand how Gatwick's projections can be made to work.

d) Police Community Support Officer's report.

- A new Speedwatch site has been authorised in Mayfield Road, two (Station Road and Church Road) were rejected.
- Two "100 vehicle" checks have been undertaken in Church Road and Station Road; these indicated average speeds of 34 and 35mph.
- High visibility checks have been undertaken near the school and these seem to support the desirability for moving the 30mph toward Eridge. Vehicles parking in North Street have the effect of reducing vehicle speeds from that direction.
- One Other Than Dwelling (ODT) burglary reported, this from an outbuilding in Spout Hill. Free shed alarms are available from the Police if required.
- Cold callers in New Road had been concerning locals who had felt threatened by their presence – in these circumstances 999 should be called for urgent attention to the matter.
- Other callers offering "free boiler servicing" had caused concerns; investigation showed that the company were legitimate but they have been taken to task regarding their method of approach. Free "No Cold Caller" signs are available for those who required them.
- Reports received of two different vehicles parked in the centre of Rotherfield that appear to be using the same number plate. Information on these will be welcomed.
- Visits scheduled for School and Pre School, there had been no visitors to the recent Surgery and an alternative venue is being considered.

e) Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 29th January 2015 for approval as a true record, and matters arising from these minutes.

Copies of the draft minutes had been previously circulated to members. It was RESOLVED that they be confirmed as a true record.

f) Update regarding matters arising & action items from previous meetings. Long term matters.

Solicitors dealing with Recreation Ground diesel spill claim advise that the Loss Assessors acting for the third party's insurers went into administration in November; this has only recently been

January Council meeting

- **2f**) Feedback invited to item 2f) Review of meeting and Committee process and policy reviews. Item on March agenda to discuss.
- 2i) ESCC Highways confirm that extension to Rotherfield School "zig zags" will be included in the forthcoming Traffic Order to make them legally enforceable. They have also confirmed that the Traffic Order relating to the yellow lines outside St Denys' Church contains a derogation to permit parking of vehicles for funerals and weddings; copy has been requested to pass to Church.

 2j) Draft of letter to residents re: parking in the "Square" has been drafted and passed to
- Highways Chair and Vice Chair for comment prior to sending. Cllr. Clibbens had reported to the Clerk that he had visited the property who had erected the post and chain and that this had subsequently been removed. Chairman reported he had been contacted by several parishioners living in the village conservation area thanking the Parish Council for their swift action in this matter.

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2. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:-

a) Presentation by North Wealden Community Transport Partnership (NWCTP) who will be operating County supported bus services 224 & 226 serving the Parish from April. Information from ESCC regarding proposals for these services, and decision on provision of financial support by the Parish Council to enable continuation of the service(s) for 6 days per week.

See separate report accompanying these minutes for background. The presentation from NWCTP outlined their work and financial challenges faced. It is hoped that they will be able to offer a 6-day a week service between Rotherfield and Crowborough in some form, financial contribution to ESCC to enable this to be supported will be welcomed.

A letter from a parishioner raising complaints about current 224/226 timetables was read out by the Clerk, and Council were advised that the issues would be considered when finalising the new April 2015 schedules.

RESOLVED that Council will provide financial support to the service funded from reserves, CLERK to investigate basis for funding and add item to forthcoming Highways Committee meeting to consider grant amount.

b) Scout Hut Refurbishment Project. Information and decision on further action to ensure that Vat incurred on the renovation work may be reclaimed.

Cllr. Dixon is liaising with HMRC regarding Vat aspect of the project. Key points are as follows:-

- Project must be solely in Council name for Vat to be reclaimable.
- Council will need to register for Vat and "Opt to Tax" on the property.
- This will mean that future rental charges will include Vat and that the rent will need to be greater than the current £1 p.a. fee charged under the present licence arrangement to qualify.
- A draft Scout Hut Lease based on Heads of Terms finalised by Cllrs. Harris and Thomas, is being prepared by Hedleys Solicitors acting for the Council.
- The work of the Advising Architect, Mark Wakelin, was acknowledged; his clear explanation with prepared documents allowed the Councillors to swiftly gain an understanding of project status and to agree the best way forward with a combination of a prime contractor with nominated subcontractors with the Council providing a quality control role.

RESOLVED Cllr. Dixon is to update Council and Clerk with outcome once HMRC have communicated their decision and CLERK will then submit documents required by them for Vat registration and "Opt to Tax". There is to be another meeting between the Scouts and the Project Group after the 10th March planning and Building Committee meeting.

- c) Decision regarding arrangements for compilation and publication of Annual Newsletter. RESOLVED the following:-
 - Quote from Pureprint of £449 for printing enveloping and dispatching 1400 copies, plus 50p per envelope postage, be accepted.
 - Draft reports from Committees to be passed to Chairman by end of March. Clerk to provide summary draft accounts.
 - Cllr. Kitchenham to compile final version.
- d) WDC Streets Ahead project. Receive information regarding grant funding available under this scheme and consider suitable projects for which an application could be submitted. Application deadline is March 31st.

Although the Streets Ahead programme has been publicised and was clearly identified on the Council website as a topic on this Agenda, it was disappointing that the Council had received no response from individuals or organisations as to how the grant funding might be used. RESOLVED that Cllr. Pike is to obtain quotes for additional Christmas lighting, the use of the grant in this way will enhance the centre of the village for the benefit of those of all age in the

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community. A neighbouring Parish has approached the Council for advice on producing a Christmas lighting display of similar high quality to attract boost visitor numbers. CLERK to submit request to WDC once quotes received.

e) Consider grant requests from the following organisations: Sustrans, Tunbridge Wells Samaritans and Friends of Rotherfield Surgery. Details circulated prior to meeting.

It was RESOLVED to make the following grants using the General Power of Competence:-

- Tunbridge Wells and District Samaritans £200
- Sustrans £100. The Chairman's casting vote was used to decide this sum.

CLERK to note to issue these cheques at the April meeting.

- League of Friends of Rotherfield Surgery have requested £75 to cover cost of Public Liability insurance cover for the Annual August fund raising event on Court Meadow Green, CLERK to investigate and add to agenda of March meeting for decision.
- f) Decision regarding quote and design for signs to name Fp31a to honour St Chéron. RESOLVED to accept David Peacock's quote of £235 + Vat for 2 signs to include treated posts and that the path to be titled "Twitten St Chéron. CLERK to liaise regarding design and seek correct format of "Sussex Martlets" shield to use on the sign. Signs to be installed at New Road and King's Arms end of the path, Cllr. Pike to liaise with landlord of the latter to discuss suitable location. **Cllr. Dixon** to advise Twinning Association of proposed arrangements.
- g) Clerk matters. Decision on "charge out" rate for work done on behalf of third party organisations and holiday dates requested over the Easter period.
 - a) Currently researching information for solicitors in connection with a road traffic collision, Solicitors have agreed to cover costs. RESOLVED that hourly charge out rate for work of this nature is to be £75 in general, with a minimum of £200 for any request, which takes account of travelling cost and time to retrieve papers from store. Clerk advised that maximum hourly charge under the Freedom of Information Act be set at £25.
 - **b)** Clerk advised the following holiday dates; 30th and 31st March 7th 10th April (Easter Week) 6 days in total. RESOLVED that these dates be agreed.
- h) Decision on funding of white "private access" line in New Road at junction with South Street, this to discourage potentially unsafe parking near the junction. RESOLVED to authorise ESCC to proceed with this at cost of £45, CLERK to arrange.

3. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MATTERS ARISING.

- February 10th Recreation and Burial Committee February 17th Planning and Building Committee

TO RECEIVE REPORTS

Other committees and sub-committees.

Cllr. Harris is to circulate the notes from the previously mentioned meeting with Rotherfield Scouts.

Councillor "Have Your Say" session and arrangements for the next session. No Parishioners attended the 14th February meeting in the Institute. Item will be on March agenda to review of format of Councillor "Have Your Say" sessions and consider other methods of engaging the Community".

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• Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Cllr. Gilbert had recently attended the Village Hall Committee meeting. This discussed replacement of the kitchen but no issues concerning the Parish Council.
- Clerk reported that he had met with representatives of Rotherfield St Martin earlier today to discuss various issues and concerns. Details have been passed to Chair and Vice Chair to discuss these further with RSM and report back. The Chairman expressed concern that The Clerk had been questioned by RSM management about the Council's policy on grants and how the reduction in the grant planned for the RSM in 2015-2016 could be justified and other Councillors expressed the same concern. Chairman is to explain to RSM the Council's division of responsibilities thus:-
 - Council Clerk / Responsible Finance Officer is responsible for ensuring the Council operated within the law, keeps the official records, manages finances, investigates and manages issues and implements the decisions of Council.
 - Councillors' debate matters make Resolutions that establish Council Policies and actions, set Budgets and Precept and authorise actions and expenditure on behalf of the whole of the Parish community.
- Clerk's report and issues. None.

5. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

• Bank Reconciliation as at end of January 2015 and review of expenditure against Budget to date.

These had been circulated in advance of the meeting. There were no matters to draw to the Council's attention and it was RESOLVED that these documents be approved and they were signed by the Chairman.

Approval of Payments.

Details were circulated prior to the meeting and it was RESOLVED that the payments below be approved. Clerk advised that he had agreed the additional work costing £20 by Tony Moaby to clear around the meter cupboard near the Hall entrance; this as he was already on site doing other work, also that it was deemed to be urgent and within the Clerk's discretionary limit to authorise.

List of Payments authorised at the meeting

Payee Name	Cheque	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail			
	No.					
Trevor Thorpe	801889	£1,504.92	4.92 Clerk's salary for February			
Trevor Thorpe	801890	£62.59	Clerk's expenses for February			
HMRC	801891	£509.86	February Tax and NI			
Amber AC Ltd	801892	£288.00	Installation of AED enclosure			
Konica Minolta Ltd	801893	£10.07	Copier use Dec - Feb			
Rotherfield Village Hall	801894	£129.60	Hall hire for January			
Teambase	801895	£74.36	Ink cartridges			
Malcolm Lane and Son Ltd	801896	£832.80	Memorial bench for Rec.			
Gwen Pritchitt	801897	£206.50	2015 first audit inspection			
KPS Contractors Ltd	801898	£499.20	Double depth grave plot P20			
PJI Contract Packers Ltd	801899	£345.60	Feb street sweeping/litter pick			

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A.C. Moaby 801900 £450.00 Various ground and tree works

Total Payments £4,913.50

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

- Wealden CAB Letter of thanks for £300 donation.
- The Pensions Regulator Information regarding automatic enrolment into the new workplace pension scheme. Clerk is to investigate action required and cost to Council.
- Jameah Islamiyah Invitation to lunchtime event to honour the retiring MP, Charles Hendry.
- **Local resident** enquiry regarding skate park. Clerk to acknowledge.
- Co-op Legal Services Advice that Council has been bequeathed £500 "for the Village Centre" in the will of a Crowborough resident. Anticipate 5/6 months before this is paid.

Magazines and Circulars

- Saint-Chéron en Bref February 2015 edition.
- CPRE Sussex Winter 2015 Sussex Review

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

- No Health and Safety issues identified and Parishioners have raised no concerns.
- CLERK to investigate mole issues on left lower pitch at Rec., also behind Pavilion, and advise Mole Catcher if necessary.
- Cllr. Harris reported that fence at bottom right of Burial Ground has had props erected which will
 obstruct grass cutting. Clerk to monitor and request that owner remove these.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- Tuesday March 10th Planning and Building Committee.
- Tuesday March 17th Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee.
- Thursday March 26th March Council Meeting to be held at Mark Cross Village Hall at 19:30.
- Tuesday March 31st Planning and Building Committee.

All meetings start at 19:30 and, except where noted, are in the Parish Council Room at Rotherfield Village Hall.

9. TO RECEIVE URGENT ISSUES FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA

- Vodafone booster antennae Planning issues raised by Parishioner who wishes to have one installed. Clerk has enquired of WDC who believe that the aerial is highly unlikely to need planning permission in the AONB/Conservation Area provided it neither fronts a highway nor is affixed to the chimney. Believe it would benefit form Part 24 permitted development rights (this of Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995). Listed building consent would be required if relevant. Clerk recommends enquiries directed to WDC Planning.
- Litter by Commercial properties Issues raised by street sweeper and added to agenda of March meeting to consider action.
- Defibrillator. Now installed, volunteers for training please let Clerk know. Crowborough First Responders are to run training session(s) toward the end of March. Clerk has advised all Village organisations/businesses for which we have contact details; device will feature in the March "Magazine".
- Tree in adjacent to Court Meadow Close. WDC Tree Officer has visited site and raised concerns at work undertaken on an Oak Tree under a TPO order and has asked tree warden to

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- monitor and report. Clerk advised that correspondence from WDC regarding will be reported at the forthcoming Planning and Building Committee meeting.
- Light at front of Hall. Clerk has met with ESCC Lighting Officer and contractor to discuss a
 streetlight in this location. Once quote and details received will add to an agenda to decide the
 way forward with this project in conjunction with the Village Hall.
- Light at surgery end of Church Path. Reported out by Cllr. Kitchenham, Cllr. Wickenden to investigate.
- Gates at ends of Church Path. Clerk reported that these are to be reinstalled over the weekend.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:45.

10. PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR THE CLERK IN THE MONTH AHEAD.

Prepare for Annual Parish Meeting and End of Year.

11. PUBLIC FORUM.

Concerns raised that "long term" parking at front of Hall is a nuisance to Hall users, particularly
those with mobility issues. CLERK to add issue to agenda of forthcoming Recreation and Burial
Committee meeting to discuss and agree remedies/signage.

Confirmed	l as a true	record	at the 2	26 th Marcl	n 2015 m	eeting of	the (Counci
					Chairma	n		Date