

# ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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

## MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 19:30 ON THURSDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2011 AT ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

### COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chair)

Cllr. P. Halse Adamson (Vice Chair)

Cllr. N. Bolton

Cllr. J. Bowerman

Cllr. C. Clibbens

Cllr. R. Harris

Cllr. J. Padfield

Cllr. Mrs. A. Watson

Cllr. N. Wickenden

**ALSO PRESENT.** Four members of the public attended together with Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC), PCSO Matt Boyle and Claire Cromie of the "Courier".

**1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s 85).**

Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC), Cllr. R. Jaques and Cllr. D. Clark.

**2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

None.

**3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.**

**Cllr. Tidy (ESCC)** reported the following in response to questions raised regarding the "Big Society" and the Localism Bill currently being considered by Parliament:-

- ESCC are trying to gain understanding of the implications of the bill, which contains the following items.
- A "Community right to challenge" allowing the community to run services if they so wish.
- Measures to simplify matters if a community wishes to buy and run local shops/pubs.
- A right to review Council Tax increases and to call a referendum on these.
- A right to hold a referendum on any local issue although the results will not necessarily be binding.
- Councillors will now be allowed to express a view on planning matters prior to a meeting to discuss them.
- The Standards Boards is to be scrapped.
- Local Authorities will publish the pay rates for their senior staff and these will be subject to approval by a full council meeting.
- Central Government will no longer have a say on the quantity of new houses to be built in an area.
- Changes to the community infrastructure levy – the funds provided by the developers of significant local building projects toward community projects.
- Local building developments may progress without planning permission if at least 50% of local residents are in favour.
- Home Information Packs (HIPS) are to be scrapped.
- In addition to the above points it was reported that the ESCC Community Safety Grant is to be reduced by 20%, not as much as had originally been feared.

**Cllr. J. Padfield (WDC)** reported the following:-

- Central Government support to WDC will be reduced by 27.8% over the next 2 years.
- Council tax has been frozen at last year's level for Wealden, although only 11% of that which is collected by them is retained, the balance going to fire and police authorities and to County. All non-domestic rates collected are passed to Central Government.
- Council house rents have increased by 5.6%, lower than originally proposed.
- A Public enquiry is to be held regarding a large development at Polegate.

Cllr. Dennison joined the meeting at this point.

**4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT**

The following incidents were reported for last month:-

- A battery was stolen from a Rotherfield Farm.
- A van had a lock damaged in an attempted theft.

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- A shed was broken into.

In addition to the above, at a recent street meeting with PCSO Boyle Hornshurst Road residents have made a request for a grit bin. Sussex PCSO's now have Twitter accounts.

PCSO Boyle was requested to consider enforcement measures against vehicles parking illegally or obstructing pavements in Spout Hill, High St and North Street.

5. **TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2011 & MATTERS ARISING.** It was AGREED that these minutes be adopted and that there were no matters arising. The Chairman signed the minutes.

6. **TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS**

- a) **Information and quotes regarding provision of Royal Wedding souvenir items for Parish children.**

Information was given by the Clerk of various options for these and it was RESOLVED not to undertake this expenditure. Details are to remain on file for next year should the Council decide to provide mementos for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

- b) **Quote from ESCC for part night lighting and low energy lanterns for street lighting in Hornshurst Road and New Road.**

Quote still awaited, CLERK to add to agenda of forthcoming Highways Committee meeting.

- c) **Chant Lane. Suggested surface work at the Eridge Lane end, request for resurfacing at the Station Road end and information from ESCC regarding possible funding for the latter.**

Letter received from Chant Lane resident regarding state of surface at Station Road end. Article in Courier gave details of a similar lane in Burwash for which a contribution toward repairs had been made by ESCC with balance from residents and businesses adjacent to lane. ESCC are to visit Chant Lane to see if there is any possibility of matching funding but have not yet done so. RESOLVED, CLERK to obtain quotes from Coppards for surfacing of the Lane from the Station Road junction as far as the footpath to the Village and also for scraping and surfacing with road planings the section from Eridge Lane to the drainage channel.

- d) **Request from Rotherfield School Council for a dog bin near the side entrance to the school in Hornshurst Road.**

A letter received from the School Council was read to the meeting. RESOLVED that a bin be provided at the location requested with emptying funded by the Parish Council, CLERK to arrange this with WDC and advise school.

- e) **Quote for reduction of hedges and trees on Eridge Lane boundary of Recreation Ground.**

The Chairman declared a personal interest at this point as he occasionally assists this contractor. Tony Moaby has quoted £1730 for this work to reduce the height of the hedge to 1.5m, remove suppressed trees and treat all the remaining trees, estimated length of work is 165m. If agreed he will need to run a vehicle along path inside hedge. It was RESOLVED to waive the Council's Financial Regulation 11 iii relating to tenders for contracts and to accept this quote in view of the time required to write up a full specification to get further tenders, the short time scale in view of the approaching nesting season and because past work undertaken by him has been to the Council's satisfaction. It was RESOLVED to accept the quote and allow the vehicle access requested, CLERK to advise.

- f) **Updated Financial Regulations.**

Details circulated prior to meeting. To enable full consideration of the suggested amendments a decision is to be deferred until the March meeting, CLERK to add to agenda and ensure all Councillors have a copy of the amended document.

- g) **Response to the Hastings and Rother bus routes review including service 226 serving Town Row and Rotherfield.**

Draft timetable sent by County for comment, there are some minor timing differences and the addition of two morning services from Crowborough but otherwise no change in the level of service. Clerk is to respond to this and request that the afternoon school service to the Village, which starts at Beacon School and is available for public use, be extended to start in

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Crowborough. Clerk has reminded the County Passenger Transport team that bus stop columns at Town Row and Mark Cross require straightening/replacing respectively.

**h) Response to consultation by Wealden District Council in respect of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy Development Plan Documents.**

Document has been passed to Cllr. Bolton to review. Clerk commented on the increasing number of consultations being received, it is understood that some Council's have a dedicated sub committee to review and suggest response for full Council to consider.

**i) Response to invitation from WDC for comments regarding the Localism Bill.**

WDC seek confirmation that Parish Conference be brought forward to September/October to enable early discussion of this bill. AGREED that Clerk confirm to them that this is approved.

**j) Quote for replacement of damaged fingerpost FP02 Redgate Mill Lane.**

Confirmation received from ESCC of their 50% contribution, they request that the work is completed and invoiced by March 31<sup>st</sup>. RESOLVED to accept quote of £890 from JAKK, CLERK to advise them.

**k) Quote for regrading ramp onto top pitch at Recreation Ground by top barrier and provision of plastic mesh to protect surface.**

Coppard's have provided quotes for three options for this work. It is now considered that the existing ramp is suitable for vehicles and that if ground conditions were wet an ambulance would not wish to venture on to the pitch in any case. RESOLVED not to go ahead with this work, CLERK to advise Sports Club.

**l) Adoption of Standing Order 3b i) permitting the issue of summons and agenda to Councillors via e-mail if they so wish.**

It was RESOLVED that service of summons on councillors confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda for a meeting by delivery or post at their residences at least 3 clear days before a meeting is not expedient. In future, electronic means will be used to serve on councillors a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council, and a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee, at least three clear days before the meeting provided any such email contain the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer. Councillors may elect to receive this information by delivery or post if they so wish.

**m) Information regarding cost of signs for Annual Parish Meeting and draft agenda for this meeting.**

It was RESOLVED to accept the quote of £135 to supply and install three vinyl signs for this meeting, it is believed that they may be reused for future meetings with the salient details changed. CLERK to arrange. Local police commander is to be invited to address the meeting and an agenda item added regarding the investigation into the feasibility of a foot/cycleway to Jarvis Brook.

**n) Information regarding Clerk's CiLCA studies.**

Result still awaited.

**o) Correspondence containing invitations or requesting a response.**

- **Village Hall** – Letter from their Chairman regarding request for surfacing of side path. AGREED to respond stating that this expenditure is not in the precept, also pedestrians on this path would still need to cross the car park at the real and vehicles are moving at a slow speed.
- **FWAG** – CAIP training session invitation.
- **CPRE East Sussex** – Countryside Awards.
- **East Sussex Rural Forum** – Decentralisation and Localism Bill.
- **Bonfire Society** – Request for permission to use the Recreation Ground for the annual Easter Egg hunt on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. CLERK to add to Planning Committee Agenda for March 15<sup>th</sup> for formal consideration.
- E-mail from Parishioner expressing concerns regarding smokers on the pavement in the village centre.

**7. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MATTERS ARISING.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2011 – Planning and Building Committee.
- 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011 – Recreation and Burial Committee.

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It was RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted and that there were no matters arising.

## 8. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING

- **Other committees and sub-committees.**

None.

- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**

Chair of Planning Committee attended a meeting at the WDC offices in Crowborough in respect of some preliminary plans for 10 affordable houses/flats at Town Row. It is understood that a site meeting is scheduled for March 7<sup>th</sup>.

- **Clerk's report, issues and updates on work in progress.**

- ESCC are to replace the destroyed "Give Way" sign at the High Cross/Cottage Hill junction and also replace the large direction sign on the approach to Mark Cross from Catts Hill.
- Clerk will be adding an item to the March agenda to seek details of any Parish "odd jobs" requiring action in the Spring and suggestions are invited.

## 9. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation as at end of January 2011. The RFO presented the figures, which were agreed and signed by the Chairman.
- Review of Expenditure against Budget to end January 2011. The RFO provided the summary figures to Councillors and relevant detailed figures to the Committee Chairmen. Cllr. Clibbens was thanked for arranging delivery of the new bollard for North Street at no cost, thus saving the Council over £100 in carriage charges.
- Approval of Payments. After explanation it was agreed that the following payments be made:-

CHEQUE NO	CHEQUE PAYABLE	PAYMENTS DETAILS	AMOUNT
810219	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for February	£861.76
810220	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for February	£223.81
810221	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for February	£104.96
810222	St Denys' Church	Contribution to toward public footpath lighting - Parish Council Act 1957 s3(1)	£100.00
810223	Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau	Donation/grant LGA 1972 s142(2a)	£250.00
810224	Tunbridge Wells and District Samaritans	Donation/grant LGA 1972 s137	£100.00
810225	Wealden District Council	Dog bin emptying Oct-Dec 2010	£188.24
810226	Coppard Plant Hire	Installation of bollard and car park drainage work	£1,746.00
810227	Konica Minolta	Photocopying charge	£22.87
810228	SALC	Subscription to LCR	£15.50
810229	Jim Gander	February street sweeping	£110.70
810230	A C Moaby	Ditching and clearance in Chant Lane	£520.00
810231	Coppard Plant Hire	Extension work on Village Hall car park	£8,982.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£13,225.84</b>

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PAYMENT FROM	CREDITS DETAILS	AMOUNT
HMRC	Interest on 4% Consols holding	£29.74
Santander Bank	February interest on 4711394	£71.51
Burslem	Non Parishioner memorial fee	£160.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£261.25</b>

## 10. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE

### General

- **Unity Trust Bank** – Information regarding their services.
- **SALC** – Information regarding Councillor Introduction Sessions.
- **St Denys' Social Committee** – details of quiz night March 5<sup>th</sup> and “60's extravaganza night” at Mark Cross February 26<sup>th</sup>.

### Circulars and magazines

- **Wealden DC** – Parish Bulletin issue 7.
- **SLCC Sussex Branch Newsletter** – February 2011.
- **Saint-Chéron en Bref** – No. 271.
- **Sussex Ramblers** – Now Open February 2011.

## 11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

Due to the absence of Cllr. Clark these were not available.

## 12. DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- Tuesday 15th February - Planning and Building Committee.
  - Tuesday 22nd February - Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee.
  - Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March - March Council Meeting.
- All the above meetings are in Rotherfield Village Hall at 19:30.

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

- An application is due to be received shortly in respect of varying the events licence for events at Eridge Park and this will be added to the agenda of the Planning and Building Committee meeting.
- Paperwork regarding forthcoming Council Elections was received today; Clerk will circulate salient points when he has had the opportunity to digest the information.
- Cllr. Bolton tendered an apology for absence in advance for the 22<sup>nd</sup> March Highways Committee meeting.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:25.

## 14. PUBLIC FORUM.

- A Parishioner present expressed the view that the Parish should not be spending money on maintaining the surface of the Eridge Lane end of Chant Lane as this is the responsibility of ESCC. Vehicles had again been seen using the Lane the previous weekend; it is considered that County should be restricting vehicle access during the winter months as the lane fulfils the criteria detailed on their website and other similar lanes under their jurisdiction had been temporarily closed.

Once quotes have been received for the surface repairs mentioned on this agenda CLERK is to arrange a site meeting with County to discuss the various issues relating to the Lane

.....Chairman.....Date

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