

ROOTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2012 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chairman)	Cllr. M. Hall	Cllr. J. Kitchenham
Cllr. N. Bolton (Vice Chairman)	Cllr. R. Harris	Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson	Cllr. R. Jaques	Cllr. A. Watson
		Cllr. N. Wickenden

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC), Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC).
- Two members of the public.

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

- Apologies for absence were tendered and accepted on behalf of Cllr. Mrs. Arabia Sharpe, Cllr. C. Prince, Cllr. C. Clibbens, Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC), Cllr. Rutherford (WDC), Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC), Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC) and PcsO Boyle.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

No declarations received. The Chairman reminded Councillors that, if at any point in the meeting they became aware that they had an interest in an item under discussion, they should declare it.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

No reports submitted.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT

The following report was submitted by the Clerk on behalf of PcsO Boyle:-

Crimes November

07/11 - Catalytic converter stolen from van parked on Steep Road.

12/11 - Battery stolen from outbuilding on Hadlow Down Road.

13/11 - Theft of Royal Mail box on Trembler's Road.

23/11 - Engine parts stolen from vehicle parked at Big Millhole Wood car park.

Other

- Enforcement alongside Community Speedwatch Group on the 27th at 1500 hours, there were two vehicles doing 40mph on Mayfield Road - both are now going on the speed awareness course.
- Beware of a credit card scam where a delivery man turns up at your door with an unexpected gift from an unknown sender, they then ask for a £3 delivery charge which you have to pay by card as proof of delivery and enter your pin into their mobile device which cloned their card. This happened to a couple in St Albans but please be aware as you should never have to pay for a transaction you did not authorise.

5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25TH OCTOBER 2012 AND MATTERS ARISING.

Clerk advised the following updates regarding the minutes of this meeting:-

- Cllr Rutherford clarified that the change of interpretation of rural exception housing policy was not related to the 7km Ashdown Forest zone as implied by the minutes.

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- Item 8 reports from sub committees. The Sports Association passed their thanks to Cllr Hall regarding the clearance of the top bank, not Cllr. Harris as minuted.
- Cllr. Whetstone had submitted an apology for absence from the meeting.

It was RESOLVED that there were no other matters arising and that the minutes be approved. The Chairman signed the minutes.

Prior to the formal business of the meeting the Chairman permitted the Site Manager for the Town Row Development to report progress as follows:-

- Heavy rain had led to increased water run-off from the site and complaints from residents, underground springs had added to the issue, steps taken to remedy the problem.
- Most of the “muck away” had been completed, 250 lorry loads removed and all vehicles had been instructed to travel via Mark Cross and not Rotherfield.
- Application has been submitted by ESCC relocate the 30mph to the foot of Catts’ Hill near the new crash barrier.
- Complaints had been received that the development was too close to the boundary, plans had proved this not to be the case.
- The Councillors who had visited the site commented on the cleanliness.
- Target date for hand over is August 2013.

6. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.

a) **Response to letter to Parishioner expressing concern at vehicle speeds on Catt’s Hill.**

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow the author of this letter to address the meeting. Details were given of various near misses involving pedestrians and vehicle speeds. Clerk has obtained and circulated to the Councillors the Accident information map for the 10 years to July 2012, this shows 2 serious and 1 slight injury accident recorded; Information awaited for background to these. The figures did not support inclusion in the ESCC rural speed limit review and external funding would be required for any change to the limit. Cllr. Kitchenham is drawing up a petition for the residents of Catt’s Hill to sign for presentation to their County Councillor, Cllr. Jacques offered to promote it in Cuckoo Line Stores. CLERK to add an item to the agenda of the forthcoming SLR meeting with Highways Department.

b) **Information and decision regarding further action in respect of Town Row Green and the Council’s powers under the Commons Act 2006.**

Letter from nearby resident circulated regarding this issue together with the relevant extract from the Act detailing the Council’s power to act on behalf of the community and those with Commoners Rights registered should the need arise. RESOLVED not to progress with attempting to register the land in the name of the Parish Council as the 2006 Act gives power for it to act as owners to protect the land and the interests of the community and holders of commoners rights should the need arise. CLERK to write to all parties involved with the issue confirming this.

c) **Adoption of the General Power of Competence as contained in the Localism Act 2011.**

A summary of the Power and eligibility conditions was circulated in advance of the meeting. It was RESOLVED the Council adopt the power as it is now eligible. It was noted that eligibility needed to be reaffirmed at the first Statutory meeting after the ordinary election.

d) **Consider increase to Clerk’s pay scale point as a consequence of achieving the General Power of Competence.**

July meeting resolved that Clerk’s Salary be increased to Scale point 26 on the National LC1 pay scale, this be backdated to April and to take effect when the Quality Council status has been achieved. As the initial submission for this has been unsuccessful Clerk requests that salary be increased on this basis to reflect successful achievement of the qualification required to allow adoption of the General Power of Competence by the Council. RESOLVED that Clerk be moved to Scale point 26 on the LC1 scale, CLERK amend records accordingly.

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- e) **Consider Clerk's request for holiday.**
Request for leave on 27th, 28th and 31st December, also Friday 22nd February was APPROVED.
- f) **Information regarding Christmas Lights in the village.**
Chairman confirmed that he had personally assisted in the installation of these in the rain and that the lighting ceremony would be on Sunday 2nd December at 19:30. Enquiries will be made regarding the Christmas trees provided and thanks passed to those involved with this. The meeting thanked the Chairman for his efforts, and that of the Bonfire Society and Rotherfield Trust in funding the lights and it was hoped that they would be enjoyed for many years to come. CLERK to enquire of ESCC regarding pollarding of trees in the Square. If this is done carefully, it will be feasible to leave the Christmas lights in place, Parish Council would be willing to take over responsibility for the pollarding.
- g) **Response to Boundary Commission consultation regarding changes in the Parliamentary Constituency boundary.**
RESOLVED that no comment be submitted to this.
- h) **Response to East Sussex Fire and Rescue medium term plan 2013/14 – 2017/18.**
RESOLVED that no comment be submitted to this.
- i) **Response to ESCC Cultural Strategy consultation, deadline 8th February 2013.**
- j) RESOLVED that no comment be submitted to this.
- k) **Report from subcommittee and decision regarding responsibilities, remuneration and advertising for a new Street Cleaner. Decision regarding arrangements for a farewell event for Jim Gander.**
Collection and card is being hosted at RSM Centre, mention will appear in December Magazine. Wednesday 19th or Thursday 20th would be the most suitable day for a "farewell", Jo is happy to do some "nibbles". Chair agreed that up to £50 would be available from the Chairman's allowance to support this, CLERK to liaise with RSM regarding catering requirements and send invitation to Jim. No progress made regarding new job description or hours for new Cleaner, CLERK add item to agenda of forthcoming Finance Committee meeting to discuss and also add item to agenda of January meeting.
- l) **Information regarding recent "Active Play" session funded by the Council and decision regarding a possible session during February Half Term week.**
Poor attendance, only 4 despite details being sent to schools and Pre-school in advance and details in Parish Magazine. Those attending stated that they had not received information from the schools but felt that more would have attended if they had known. Monday or Tuesday of half term is available should another session be considered. RESOLVED to hold a session in February Half Term week, CLERK to arrange with Hall and Freedom Leisure. In addition to usual publicity CLERK to produce some coloured "flyers" and request that Schools circulate these via pupil's bags.
- m) **Decision regarding request for grant support from Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau.**
Last grant paid to the Bureau was £250 in February 2011, £250 in precept for 2011/12 but not requested, same sum in budget for this financial year. RESOLVED to grant £350 in support of the valuable work of the Bureau, additional £100 to reflect that no funds granted last year. CLERK to arrange for cheque to be raised for signature at December meeting, General Power of Competence to be used for this.
- n) **Decision regarding request from Millennium Green Trust for grant toward replacement fencing, gates and noticeboards.**
RESOLVED to grant £500 toward this work, CLERK to arrange for cheque to be raised for signature at December meeting, General Power of Competence to be used for this.

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- o) **Review of “Councillor Surgery” format and decision regarding future dates and venues.**
Reported that four people had attended that session in November and that various issues had been raised. It is considered that parishioners felt more comfortable raising issues in an informal setting and that daytime sessions are more accessible to many who would not be willing or able to attend evening meetings. RESOLVED to hold further sessions to be titled “Councillor Drop In Sessions”, publicity to stress that no appointment is needed. CLERK to establish availability of Memorial Institute in January and February, and the Reading Room at St Mark’s Church for March, all for second Saturday of the month, 10:30 – 11:30. CLERK to enquire of Institute whether the Parish Council could have a set of keys to simplify Saturday morning access.
- p) **Information from Clerk regarding records currently stored in the Village Hall and decision on further action regarding general correspondence retained.**
Nine boxes transferred to Community Storage area, six boxes of general correspondence and minutes remain. RESOLVED that CLERK purchase the further boxes required to enable transfer of remaining papers.
- q) **Request for support for a further joint seminar between Council and Rotherfield St Martin.**
A successful presentation had been made by the Centre at the recent Wealden Parish Conference and eight Councils had expressed an interest. RESOLVED Parish Council to hold a further joint seminar with RSM late February/Early March. Council will fund Hall hire and deal with invitations, CLERK to liaise with RSM regarding arrangements.
7. **TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MATTERS ARISING.**
- 23rd October 2012 – Planning and Building Committee.
It was RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted.
8. **TO RECEIVE REPORTS**
- **Other committees and sub-committees.**
None.
 - **Councillor Surgery**
See item o) above.
 - **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**
Cllr. Kitchenham fed back information regarding the recent SALC course that he and Cllr. Watson had attended.
 - **Clerk’s report and issues.**
None.
9. **TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION**
- Bank Reconciliation at end of October 2012. Due to the absence of the statement for the Deposit account, it was not possible to sign this, CLERK to provide statement and carry forward to December agenda.
 - Review of Expenditure against Budget to end of October 2012.
 - Approval of Payments.
It was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

CHEQUE NO	CHEQUE PAYABLE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801494	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for November	£1,221.80
801495	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for November	£383.21
801496	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for November	£96.98
801497	Rotherfield Village Hall	Hall hire fees for August	£50.40
801498	Jim Gander	Street sweeping for November	£125.95

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801499	Rotherfield Memorial Institute	Hall hire for joint RSM event	£4.25
801500	ESCC	New lamp column and lantern costs	£79.38
801501	Teambase	Stationery	£174.12
801502	Tony Moaby	Various hedge tree and groundworks in Parish	£2,250.00
801503	Rotherfield Pre School	Half yearly grant due September	£250.00
801504	Mrs. Pritchitt	First internal audit visit	£199.00
801505	Les Pike/Mastercard	Reimbursement for purchase of material for partitioning in Pre School storage area	£56.39
801506	Trevor Thorpe	Reimbursement for purchase of grit spreader	£220.00
801508	Anne Watson/Lloyds TSB	Reimbursement for purchase of tarpaulin to cover rock salt.	£15.93
801509	Teambase	Stationery	£17.94
Total			£5,145.35

801507	Rotherfield Memorial Institute	To replace lost cheque 801446 of 19/07/12 - now stopped	£12.00
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CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Santander	Bank interest - October	£61.04
Dignity	Inscription fee	£30.00
Tester and Jones	Grant and interment fee	£125.00
Tester and Jones	Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial	£75.00
Tester and Jones	Memorial Plaque fee	£40.00
Millennium Green Trust	Half share of charge for dog bin emptying	£31.20
Total		£362.24

10. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Letters/e-mails

- Crowborough Chamber of Trade – e-mail expressing disappointment at poor response to petition to support high-speed broadband.
- WDC – Parish Council Tax bases.
- English Rural Housing Association – Annual Report for 2012.

Circulars and magazines

- Sussex Area Ramblers – November newsletter
- CPRE – Countryside Voice Winter 2012
- Clerks and Councils Direct – Issue 84
- Saint-Chéron en Bref – No 290
- CPRE Sussex – Review Winter 2012
- War Memorials Trust – Bulletin No.55
- The Clerk Magazine – November 2012

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11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were signed by the Chairman. CLERK to amend inspection sheets to clarify position section dealing with comments or reports from the public, and the section relating to the Knotweed in the Burial Ground.

12. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 4th December – Planning and Building Committee
- 11th December - Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 20th December – Monthly meeting combined with Planning and Building Committee.

All of these meetings will be held in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall, and will start at 19:30.

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

- Notification received for diversion of Peeps Lane bridleway, this will feature on the December agenda for consideration of the response.
- Stile at end of Ashley Road is unsafe, CLERK to report to ESCC.
- Cllr. Wickenden has inspected the bench seat offered to the Council.
- CLERK to add snow clearance planning to December agenda.
- CLERK to liaise with contractor requested to cut back alongside B2100 Palesgate Lane – Village regarding public liability cover required for this.
- CLERK to add item to Finance Committee agenda regarding grant submission timing.
- Chairman commented on the length of meetings and requested that items be held to appear on the agenda of the relevant Committee unless urgent.

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

14. PUBLIC FORUM.

- None.

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