

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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 27TH NOVEMBER 2014 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. Mrs. P. Halse-Adamson	Cllr. A. Sharpe
Cllr. C. Clibbens	Cllr. D. Hiles	Cllr. F. Whittington
Cllr. P. Dixon	Cllr. J. Kitchenham	Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe and Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) and Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC). Three members of the public attended together with a representative of Rotherfield Pre-School.

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING:-

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

Psco Pearce Martin, Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) and Cllr. R. Jaques.

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

None declared. The Chairman reminded the councillors that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one at any point in the meeting.

c) District And County Councillor's reports.

Cllr. Standley's report regarding ESCC matters contained the following key points:-

• White Ribbon Status.

- The White Ribbon Campaign aims to ensure men take responsibility for reducing the level of violence against women by raising awareness and understanding. Based on research, it is estimated that more than 40,000 women and almost 1,250 men living in East Sussex could experience four or more incidents of domestic abuse as adults. This figure is surprisingly high.
- The Council has been successful in its application for White Ribbon status and East Sussex County Councillors have been encouraged to sign up as Ambassadors and been offered training. As ambassadors, officers and councillors will act as role models for the wider community and raise awareness of the issues and the help available.
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In East Sussex, the 2013/14 figures on domestic abuse show that 6,360 incidents were reported to the police – an increase of 165 on the previous year. The violence, mainly, against women is not necessarily physical and mental pressure.

• Bexhill Link Road

The first section of the link has opened and is on time to complete in the spring. The new road largely funded by the County Council will make a significant difference to travel times and

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anyone who has travelled between Bexhill and Hastings (or vice versa) knows what a tortuous journey that can be.

- **A27**

Is part of the A27 reference group, MPs, Councillors and Officers, which is lobbying for a new dual carriageway on a new route to replace the current A27 between Polegate and Lewes. If the project has a chance on progress, it will need to be included in the Autumn Financial Statement in a few weeks' time. The lobbying through a Reference Group was eventually successful on the A21 campaign, which is the reason for this adopted method.

- **Limekiln Forest issues**

Whilst progress has been made officers are still working on gathering information on landowners before setting up the long awaited meeting on site. Various matters are delaying this but he is pressing on

- **Cuckoo Line**

Reports, on bridges etc., will be available this month and a meeting will then be arranged between interested parties. As previously indicated I am happy to assist where I can, if the Parishes wish me to.

In response to a question from the Clerk Cllr. Standley confirmed that Rupert Clubb is the best person to contact at County for information regarding mobile phone signal issues in rural areas.

Cllr. H. Merriman's report regarding WDC matters focussed on recent meeting between Councillor's and the new Chief Constable for the County, Giles York. Key points made at them meeting were as follows:-

- He had been Sussex deputy chief constable for 6 years; his reason for joining the Police was not for planning, finance and strategy reasons but to concentrate on traditional policing.
- He saw the police role as protecting the vulnerable and catching "bad people" who created victims, but also acknowledged that these could fall into both categories.
- He wished to bring integrity to the police.
- Communication with the public is important; he is a user of "Twitter".
- There was a need to create an "affordable model" for the force.
- With regard to cash savings his view was that if the "front line" saved £1 the "back office" should save £2 - some measures have improved service as well as saving money.
- He wished to keep Pcsos in the communities they served for a reasonable term so that they get to know the area and public.

Cllr. Merriman is pursuing the concerns he recently raised regarding planning appeals being decided by "paperwork" at the Inspectorate without including proper representations from those affected.

d) **Police Community Support Officer's report.**

Our Pcsos are on leave and this report was presented on her behalf:-

- Apologies for not attending the meeting – on annual leave until December 3rd.
- Parking No issues on yellow lines. Parking bay outside shop has only had one report of a vehicle blocking the bay and making a delivery impossible. Sadly not on duty that day.
- Disabled bay in Lower Hornshurst Road. Have had complaints about cars without disabled badges parking overnight. Regular patrols. Any vehicles will be traced and words of advice given.
- Advertising hoarding in Rotherfield layby. This vehicle is not committing an offence but have advised Parish clerk to telephone the company and request its removal. Clerk has made two requests for it to be moved and made enquiries regarding planning implications for vehicles of this nature.

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- Complaints of a vehicle parking on a verge in Mark Cross on the A267. This is limiting visibility for the neighbour trying to exit his drive. I have visited the owner of the vehicle and advised him that this parking will result in a ticket – and possibly a visit from Traffic police. All residents on this bend have been given words of advice about parking considerately and not blocking visibility for other homeowners.
- Parking on dark lane with no lights, Burnt Oak Lane. The vehicles belonged to a house that was having a driveway constructed. Advised owner to light the vehicles until the driveway is finished.
- School. Regularly visiting Rotherfield pre-school and Rotherfield Primary school.
- Speeding. Further Hi Viz checks have been carried out. 100 vehicle checks will be carried out in unmarked car at regular intervals.
- BW53 Limekiln Forest. A joint site meeting with landowners, ESCC, PcsO and other interested parties will be held shortly..
- Community News. The new café will soon be opening and I am mindful that this may compound parking issues in the village. Will be patrolling this when the café opens

e) Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30th October 2014 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 the Minutes of this Meeting be confirmed as a true record and the Chairman signed them.

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

Numbers refer to those on the agenda of the October meeting:-

7c) Defibrillator enclosure now received, will visit Village Hall shortly to agree location and fitting arrangements. No response so far to note in Parish Magazine seeking interest in brief training sessions run by local First Responders regarding the device – although it is intuitive in its use these will raise profile. When installed will “mailshot” organisations in the Village to publicise these.

2. TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS IF REQUIRED REGARDING ACTION FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:-

a) Petition from Parishioners regarding measures to discourage/prohibit large vehicles using the B2100 between the A267 at Mark Cross and Rotherfield Village Centre; arrangements for submission to ESCC.

100 signatures gathered so far regarding this from customers of Cuckoo Line stores. Cllr. Standley advised that signatures could be presented to the ESCC Council meeting on Tuesday if wished; the next meeting is in February. The King’s Arms had apparently mislaid their petition forms; attempts would be made to gain more signatures at the Christmas Lights “switch on” on Sunday.

b) Adoption of the following managing documents:

- Updated Standing Orders based on NALC/SLCC model document.**
- Financial Regulations based on NALC model document.**

Updated versions circulated taking into account comments from Cllr. Dixon. RESOLVED that these be adopted and published, CLERK to action.

c) WDC Community Dividend Scheme; agree use of for remaining funds allocated to the Parish.

Clerk calculates that, after taking into account pending application for funds toward noticeboard and picnic bench for Mark Cross, there will be just over £500 of the Parish allocation remaining. WDC advise that the absolute deadline for receipt of applications is December 10th. RESOLVED that application be submitted for these residual funds to be used toward the signs to name the “St

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Cheron Twitten”, CLERK to complete application and obtain Councillor Merriman’s signature prior to submission to WDC.

d) Council Representation to Surrey and Sussex Association of Local Councils, and Wealden District Association of Local Councils.

Chair summarised his reasons for standing down as Vice Chair of the WDALC and declining a role on the board of the SSALC, he will continue to represent the Council on the former body. He advised that Parishes could have two representatives at WDALC quarterly meetings that are held in Uckfield. Cllr. Hiles volunteered to become the Council’s second representative to this body. CLERK to note.

e) Arrangements for buffet to follow the December Council meeting.

Chair paid tribute to his predecessor, Cllr. Pike, who had instigated the tradition of a chairman funded Christmas buffet for the Councillors and other attendees after each December Council meeting. He is to continue the tradition and will liaise with the providers of previous buffets who have kindly offered to continue assisting with the catering.

f) Request from Rotherfield Pre School for grant support.

A representative of the Pre School was present and summarised various issues for the meeting:-

- The Pre School is highly successful and has achieved OFSTED “outstanding” rating in their last three inspections.
- Wished to keep the school “accessible to all”.
- 60 children are on the School roll; up to 30 per day attend for varying durations averaging 4 hours.
- The free early year’s scheme allows eligible children to have up to 15 hours per week, Government pay £3.60 per hour for this representing a shortfall of 90p on the Pre School’s rate of £4.50 per hour; Pre School are not permitted to charge parents the difference.
- Margins are tight and any support from the Parish to support the Pre School, who are a charity, would be welcomed.
- Fees are reviewed June each year and those charged by other local providers are compared.
- Tribute was paid to the staff who, it is estimated, give up time equivalent in cash terms to around £7K for training and gaining qualifications; also the parent fund raisers who have gathered £4.5K to enhance the facilities at the school.

RESOLVED to consider a grant of £500 in this financial year and a further £1K in 2015/16, this to be considered at the forthcoming Finance and General Purpose Committee meeting and an agenda item added for the December meeting for a decision, CLERK to note.

g) Request from Wealden CAB for grant support.

Details circulated prior to meeting. £600 paid at end of January 2014, £765 remains of this year’s £5K grant budget. RESOLVED this request to be considered at the forthcoming Finance and General Purpose Committee meeting and a figure recommended for payment during the 2015/16 financial year.

h) Information regarding possible benefits of membership of the Ashdown Forest Tourist Association and decision regarding joining.

RESOLVED to join for a trial period of one year at £130.00, CLERK to arrange.

i) Suggestion from a Parishioner that a Public Access Defibrillator be acquired for Mark Cross.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Kitchenham review suitable location for this device and report back, CLERK to monitor progress and add to agenda of future meeting for a decision.

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j) Trees overgrowing the footpath and neighbouring properties alongside fp31a King's Arms – New Road "twitten".

Site visit undertaken to view issues with tree leaning over the footpath at the New Road end and branches overhanging in the area of the stile entering the Millennium Green, contractor has quoted £220 to raise the canopies here. CLERK to investigate boundary/ownership for the tree toward the New Road end, and Tree Preservation Order situation for the trees near the stile requiring canopy lift and report so that all relevant permissions may be obtained prior to work. Council has been advised that the owner of the large hedge between the stile and King's Arms is to arrange for it to be cut.

A working group, to be headed by Cllr Wickenden, is to consider Parish Council procedures on dealing with owners of trees and hedges overhanging roads/paths; The Group, will report its recommendations to the next Highways Committee.

k) Christmas lights and trees. Confirm payment for trees and installation costs.

Cllr. Pike reported that the Christmas trees installed in the Village cost £300 RESOLVED that this be paid to the supplier. He estimates that the additional lights installed will cost £250 with set up/take down /emergency cover costs will be £400. It was RESOLVED to accept these costs. Cllr. Pike has given his own time to assist with installation, therefore the cost to the Parish had been reduced; subject to continuing good health he is willing to assist in future years after he has ceased being a Councillor. The meeting gave its grateful thanks to Cllr. Pike for his efforts in connection with the Christmas Lighting.

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

- 4th November 2014 – Highways Lighting and Transport Committee.
- 18th November 2014 – Planning and Building Committee.

Minutes of the above meetings have been circulated to the Councillors and it was RESOLVED that they be adopted by the Full Council.

- 25th November 2014 – Recreation and Burial Committee. Minutes not yet circulated, to be carried forward to next agenda.

4. TO RECEIVE OTHER REPORTS

• Other committees and sub-committees.

Cllr Kitchenham updated the position regarding Mark Cross Hall. Solicitors have gained absolute title for the freehold and talks have been held with WDC regarding future of site, which is outside the 7km Ashdown Forest zone but adjacent to the A267. Intention is that any funds realised from the site be used to fund an extension to the Church to provide space for Community use. Diocese is broadly in favour of this, subject usual permission and consents.

• Arrangements for the next Councillor "Have Your Say" session.

Saturday 13th December 10:30 – 11:30 in the Institute with Cllr Dixon volunteering to host. Cllrs. Thomas and Harris have volunteered to host the 14th Feb. session at same venue.

• Items for next Council News in the Parish Magazine.

Speedwatch and the volunteer snow patrol were suggested; Clerk advised that these were already to feature in the December edition.

• Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Councillors Dixon and Wickenden attended the WDC Planning Conference recently held at Hailsham.
- Chairman attended the AGM of Rotherfield St Martin. He reported that RSM estimate that the valuable contribution of their volunteers had been costed as worth £1/4m if translated into cash terms.

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- Cllr. Dixon had attended the recent meeting of the Twinning Association. Reported that the e naming ceremony for the St Chéron “twitten” is scheduled to take place on the first day of the visit of our twins, 15th May 2015 at 19:00.

- **Clerk’s report and issues.**

Reported that the formal confirmation of the National 2 year pay agreement was awaited. Estimates that this will add £39 per month to employment costs.

5. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- **Bank Reconciliation as at end of October 2014 and review of expenditure against Budget to date.**

Papers relating to these were circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. It was RESOLVED that they be approved and they were signed by the Chairman.

- **Approval of Payments.**

It was RESOLVED that the payments below be approved.

Payee Name	Amount Paid £	Cheque Ref	Transaction Detail
Trevor Thorpe	1,478.20	801849	November salary
H M R C	491.95	891850	November Tax and NI
SSALC Ltd	19.20	801851	Governance & accountability manual
Konica Minolta Ltd	17.59	801852	Photocopier use 1/9 to 30/11
Mark Cross Memorial Hall	25.00	801853	Hall hire April and September
Norris & Fisher	12.51	801854	Premium for PAD and cabinet
KPS Contractors Ltd	499.20	801855	Grave digging plot G11
Rotherfield Village Hall	34.20	801856	October hall hire
Tollwood Garden Service	280.00	801857	November grass cutting
Graham Long	86.40	801858	Mole catching Rec & Cemetery
Trevor Thorpe	59.09	801859	Mileage for Nov 2014
Trevor Thorpe	38.66	801859	Non Vat expenses
Trevor Thorpe	8.80	801859	T&T Keys
Trevor Thorpe	4.40	801859	T&T Light tube
Teambase	23.99	801860	Black ink cartridge
A.C. Moaby	442.00	801861	Work in Rec, Square and Mark X
SLCC	187.00	801862	Renewal of subs for 2015
David Harman	300.00	801863	Christmas Trees
Total Payments	4,008.19		

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE. MAGAZINES AND CIRCULARS

- SLCC – November “Clerk” Magazine.
- CPRE – Countryside Voice and Field Work magazines for Winter 2014.
- War Memorials Trust – Bulletin November 2014.

LETTERS

- **Rotherfield School** – Request for support in lobbying for 20mph speed limit and other speed awareness measures outside the School. CLERK to advise that this will be on the agenda of the

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January Highways Committee meeting, not the December Council Meeting as previously advised to them.

- **League of Friends of the Rotherfield and Brook Surgeries** – request to use Court Meadow Green for the annual August Coffee Morning. Added to agenda of the December Council Meeting to discuss.
- **Sussex Country Gardener** – Letter confirming financial support toward cost of closing “one way” slip road at Mark Cross. Letter of thanks sent and ESCC to be advised of this support.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were signed by the Chairman. No issues requiring action noted, or concerns raised by the public relating to Parish land.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 2nd December – Finance and General Purpose Committee
- 9th December – Planning and Building Committee.
- 18th December – Monthly Council Meeting to include consideration of any planning applications.

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

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

- Step at Surgery end of Church Walk has been reported to ESCC Rights of Way team for repair.
- CLERK to arrange Christmas Cards to St Cheron, Parish flag raiser, street sweeper and our County and District Councillors.
- Keys have provided to Cllrs. Dixon and Wickenden to access storage area under Pre School to collect snow clearing equipment if required.
- Concerns raised regarding vehicle blocking pavement in the square by former “George”, CLERK to investigate and report to PcsO, ownership of land to be researched.
- Concerns raised at possible damage to brick pavements caused by vehicles parking on them. CLERK to add agenda item for January SLR and Highways Committee meeting to discuss measures to deter this.
- CLERK to add agenda item for December meeting to consider support from Council toward hall hire cost for January senior citizens lunch.
- CLERK to arrange notices for board erected in Recreation Ground to include “Welcome to the Recreation Ground Car Park” and conditions of use.
- Cllr. Wickenden has spoken with the Scout Group and Bowls Club and offered the use of his truck to remove the debris near their buildings; much of the waste is flammable. Bowls Club clearance will take place when ground conditions permit.
- Meeting of the Land Acquisition Advisory Group will take place immediately after next Tuesday’s Planning and Building Committee meeting.

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

- Clerk to review asset register in conjunction with insurance cover held.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 22:00.

11. PUBLIC FORUM.

- Concerns were expressed regarding poor service received in connection with installation and maintenance of domestic high-speed broadband at a Parishioner’s property.

Confirmed as a true record at the 18th December 2014 meeting of the Council

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

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