

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 28TH MARCH 2013 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

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

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC), Cllr. Bob Stanley (Leader, WDC), Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC), Ian Hayes Cole (IH-C), Trinity Homes site agent for the Town Row development.
- Two members of the public.

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

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr. A. Sharpe, Cllr. W. Rutherford (WDC) and PcsO Matt Boyle.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR SIGNIFICANT OTHER INTERESTS.

- Cllr. Clibbens declared a personal interest in item 7 j) as he is the Chairman of the football club.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

Cllr. Tidy reported the following:-

- A22 roadwork's south of Boship Roundabout are now completed, ahead of schedule and under budget.
- ESCC are joining with Hastings Borough Council to support a Local Authority Mortgage Scheme to help first time buyers to buy property with a smaller deposit. County are hoping to work with other districts and boroughs with match funding for similar schemes.
- Petition regarding the speed limit in Catt's Hill is to be discussed by ESCC on 23rd April.
- From 1st April, a section of the local NHS has transferred to ESCC to create strategy for local doctors via the "Health and Wellbeing Board". This will liaise with local doctors to address health issues in the County and discrepancy in life expectancy in different areas of the County. Further details are on the ESCC website.

Cllr Tidy is standing is not seeking re-election at the May Council Elections and the meeting thanked him for his hard work in supporting the Parish over his years as one of our County Councillors.

Cllr. Merriman reported the following:-

- Local Development Framework. Areas of the District have been identified for housing development in this document; however, developers are currently not building due to the shortage of buyers.
- Waste disposal costs. He is lobbying on behalf of the Council and local businesses regarding the sharp rise in this cost now that it has been outsourced from WDC. As a commercial operation, Vat now has to be charged. The deadline for accepting the new terms or making alternative arrangements has been extended by a fortnight.
- Issue had been raised by him in respect of the impact of the Ashdown Forest "7km" zone on a new application for a development adjoining Court Meadow Close.

Cllr. Stanley reported the following:-

- He is a candidate for the Wadhurst Division in the forthcoming County Council election.
- As a member of the Joint Waste Committee, he is aware that issues have arisen from the new arrangements for non-domestic waste collection. As part of the package to introduce a joint

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collection service in four districts, thus saving an estimated £3/4m in cost, this element had been outsourced.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT

Clerk delivered the following report on behalf of PcsO Boyle.

- Suspect for “smash and grab” at Village hairdressers had pleaded guilty to the offence and will be sentenced on 11/04/13.
- Suspect van seen following theft of car parts on Spout Hill last month was a blue Ford Transit, no index known at this time.
- There has been a number of break ins to vehicles in Heathfield over the weekend all of which were left insecure. Please lock your car and never leave anything on display, if you see any suspicious people or vehicles please call us
- All crimes can be found at www.police.uk and enter your postcode.

5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28TH FEBRUARY 2013 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th February 2013, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, be confirmed as a true record. Clerk apologised for oversight that the wrong minutes had been brought to the meeting, minutes to be brought to planning meeting on 2nd April to enable signature.

6. UPDATE FROM CLERK REGARDING MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.

Numbers refer to agenda of 28th February meeting.

6 f) Charity have arranged for bin to be provided as agreed, bin ordered with arrival anticipated mid-April.

6 h) Clerk to liaise with Cllr. Wickenden re map size to get quote for framing.

7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.

a) Town Row housing development:-

i. Site manager/representative of developer to update on progress with specific reference to bus shelters, hedge planting and screening of neighbouring property.

IH-C reported the following:-

- Two bus shelters would be provided adjacent to the site and that they would be provided by the local maker of the two new shelters in the Parish.
- Screening in accordance with WDC requirements was due to be provided within the next two weeks. Cllr Merriman expressed concerns at the delay with this as he had lobbied on behalf of the neighbouring property to get screening of suitable scale planted.

ii. Parish Council's requirement for additional street lighting in connection with development.

Consulting Engineers for the developer has approached the Council seeking requirements for street lighting by the site. RESOLVED that Cllrs. Clibbens and Harris visit and investigate spacing of existing lighting nearby. Whilst it is considered desirable that lighting be provided for the site entrance and bus stops concerns were expressed that an additional light may reduce the spacing here below 183m, thus compromising the possibility of speed limit reminder roundel and road markings being introduced.

iii. Concerns raised by nearby residents regarding sewage disposal and landscaping issues.

Clerk has investigated this in response to concerns raised by nearby residents that has been copied to the Chairman. It would appear that this is an issue to deal with between the developers and Southern Water. Correspondence from the WDC planning website has been passed to the Chairman together with sections of the 1991 Water Industries Act of relevance. It is unclear why the developer has not made application for an order under s98 of the Act requiring SW to upgrade the sewer, SW themselves have already identified inadequate capacity. IH-C reported that, in accordance with current regulations, surface water draining from the site is disposed of separately to the foul water and is to investigate and report regarding the sewer situation.

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b) Review of waste collection arrangements in light of significant charge increase advised by new contractor.

Clerk summarised situation regarding large increase in costs advised by new contractors and alternative quotes obtained for the service. Situation is changing rapidly and an item has been added to the agenda of the forthcoming Planning Committee meeting to discuss these and agree alternative provider of service.

Signature of Section 142 Licence from ESCC for Parish Council to take over tree maintenance in the Square.

RESOLVED that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council sign this licence with the Clerk to witness, CLERK to forward completed document to ESCC.

c) Parishioner suggestion that portable defibrillator(s) be purchased and situated in the Parish for public use.

Clerk has been making enquiries of the Crowborough First Responder Group (who facilitated the device on Crowborough Town Hall), also SECAMB but has yet to receive a response CLERK to carry forward to the April agenda.

d) Arrangements for production and dispatch of annual Council Newsletter.

Four quotes requested, two received. RESOLVED to accept Pureprint quote of £436 (plus postage cost) for print and dispatch of 1400 copies and that Cllr. Bolton to produce Newsletter with input from Committee chairs and the Clerk.

e) Adoption of recommendations of the Wealden Parish Remuneration Panel for 2013/14.

Details circulated prior to meeting. RESOLVED to accept the recommendation of the Panel regarding level of expenses; as with previous years no allowance will be paid to the members, Chairman's allowance of £250 is to be available if required. Chairman considered that it might in future years be necessary to budget for expenses, particularly for travelling.

f) Adoption of terms of reference for Council Committees.

Details circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. Thomas reported that at the recent Chairman's briefing SALC had recommended a "fast start" approach to the annual meeting with all candidates for Chair, Vice Chair, Committee membership and Chair, and representative on outside body appointments, be encouraged to put their names forward in advance of the meeting rather than "on the night". CLERK to carry forward this item to agenda of April meeting.

g) Decision regarding sites and wording of posters to publicise the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was RESOLVED that the wording be as follows:-

Rotherfield Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting
8pm, Wednesday 8th May 2013
in Rotherfield Village Hall

Come and have your say!

Groups from the Community
will be present to share details
of their activities

Cllr. Bolton is to contact owner of the "Stores" to book the site on the corner for a poster. CLERK to arrange for production and display of poster.

Cllr. Clibbens left the meeting at this point due to a prior engagement.

h) Update and decision on future action regarding replacement sign for former "George".

The decision not to enforce the planning condition for retention of the sign has been reviewed by the WDC Head of Planning, local team leader and Conservation Officer. They consider that the case was a low priority, which they would not pursue further for the following reasons:

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- Based on case law and legal advice the failure to comply with the condition did not justify legal action.
- Expenditure on legal costs for this would be considered bad practice when cases that are more serious were being dealt with.

Cllrs. Merriman and Stanley were concerned with this decision and will take the matter up with the Head of Planning.

i) Request from Rotherfield Sports Club for grant support for annual pitch maintenance programme.

RESOLVED that £1500 be paid to the Club to support this important work, money to come from Recreation Ground general repairs and maintenance budget. CLERK to advise and arrange for cheque to be issued at April meeting.

j) Specimen agreement between the Parish Council and the Rotherfield Allotment Association.

Draft agreement sent to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Association and the RHAA secretary are pursuing outstanding rents from 2012 and collecting the 2013 monies. A copy of the document will be sent to the landowners for information. Chairman and Clerk are meeting with the new committee for an update regarding formation of the Association. The agreement wording will be discussed. Item is already on agenda for next Tuesdays Recreation and Burial Committee meeting.

k) Arrangements for Clerk's forthcoming holiday and request for holiday in May.

RESOLVED that Phone and e-mail messages advise to contact Chairman in Clerk's absence and that Burial Records be deposited with Chairman for the week. CLERK is to contact local funeral directors and provisionally allocate grave spaces.

RESOLVED holiday request for 4 days from Tuesday 25th May be granted.

l) Future use of Mark Cross Village Hall for meetings and alternative locations.

RESOLVED that the April, June and September Council meetings be held in Mark Cross School and that situation be reviewed regarding the September Highways Committee meeting based on support for new venue. School have indicated willingness to allow use of their Hall free of charge but would welcome a donation to school funds. CLERK to liaise with School and Hall regarding these arrangements.

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

- 29th January - Planning and Building
- 12th February - Recreation and Burial
- 19th February - Planning and Building

It was RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted by the Council.

9. TO RECEIVE REPORTS

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

None.

- **Councillor "Have Your Say" session.**

One person had attended this session at Mark Cross and had raised several issues, CLERK to investigate concerns regarding grass encroaching on pavement in Mark Cross Village centre.

Quote has been requested for infilling of grass strip by pavement at front of Church and information will be sought from ESCC regarding what arrangements would be required for this as it is their land. June meeting is to be held here, CLERK to publicise.

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

Chairman reported that the event recently attended at Seaford with Cllr. Thomas had been interesting and worthwhile. He reported that, based on this meeting, the Council appears to be well managed in general and the actions reported by some of the other parishes present had concerned him.

- **Clerk's report and issues.**

None.

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10. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation at end of February 2013.
- Review of Expenditure against Budget to end of February 2013.
Clerk reported the following
 - “Part night” conversion for street lighting. Energy cost for 2009/10 – the last year before any conversions - was £2848. Energy cost for 2013/14 was down to £1959, this without any adjustment for increased unit charges in the interim.
 - Income against expenditure for 2012/13 shows a shortfall of £14250 after adjustment for Vat.
 - Transfer of £1000 from deposit is required to cover cheques issue/outstanding.
 - Vat reclaim of £1419 has been submitted for payment.
 - Non domestic rate bills have been received for the Burial Ground and Cemetery, £131 and £207 respectively. As in the previous few years 100% small business rate relief has been applied so again there is zero cost to the Council.

It was RESOLVED that the Bank Reconciliation and Expenditure against Budget report be approved and signed by the Chairman.

- Approval of Payments.

It was RESOLVED to approve the following payments:-

CHEQUE NO	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Payments are made using the General Power of Competence as contained in the Localism Act 2011. The Power was adopted by Rotherfield Parish Council at their monthly meeting held on 29th November 2012			
801553	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for January	£1,254.05
801554	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for January	£404.81
801555	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for January	£132.63
801556	ESCC	Street lighting energy and maintenance contract 2012/13	£5,232.37
801557	Rotherfield Village Hall	Hall hire - February	£51.00
801558	East Sussex ALC Ltd	Subscription to SALC and NALC	£873.60
801559	SALC	Chairman briefing session March 6th	£120.00
801560	Konica Minolta	Photocopying lease March - May	£41.08
801562	Millennium Green Trust	Donation to acknowledge maps donated by a Parishioner	£50.00
801563	Mark Cross Village Hall	Hall hire 2011 - to date	£80.50
801564	Rotherfield Pre School	Half yearly donation	£250.00
801565	Mr. & Mrs. J. Sweeney	Half year Allotment rent due March 25th	£500.00
801566	A.C. Moaby	Various hedge and tree works in Rec. and Cemetery	£2,292.72
801567	A.C. Moaby	Securing fence in boundary of lower pitch	£150.00
Total			£11,432.76

Please note that cheque 801561 is spoiled

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CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Santander	Bank interest - February	£55.50
Co-op Funeral Services	Interment fee non Parishioner	£450.00
Rotherfield Millennium Green Trust	Contribution toward dog bin emptying	£28.80
Dignity Funerals Ltd.	Interment fee	£150.00
Rotherfield Primary School	Contribution toward pitch maintenance expenses	£500.00
Tester and Jones	Ashes interment fees x 2	£165.00
	Total	£1,349.30

11. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Magazines and Circulars.

- Sussex Area Ramblers – March “Now Open”
- Clerk Magazine March 2013
- LCR Spring 2013
- Clerks and Council’s Direct – March 2013
- Saint Chéron-en-Bref – No 294.
- Spa Valley Railway – Spring 2013
- Wealden Parish Bulletin – March 2013

Correspondence

- Wealden District Council –update on Commercial Waste and Recycling arrangements 2012/13
- St Denys’ Church – Invitation to launch of “St Denys’ Goes Forward” Saturday April 27th 10:00 – 12:00.
- SALC – Request to send up to two representatives to their AGM 17th May 2013 at Herstmonceux Village Hall. Cllr. Thomas will attend; the Chairman will advise if he is available. CLERK to advise SALC.

12. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

- These were given to the Chairman for signature. It was noted that no incidents or concerns have been reported to the Council by the Public in respect of Parish Council managed land.

13. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- Planning and Building Committee – Tuesday April 2nd
- Recreation and Burial Committee – Tuesday April 9th
- Finance and General Purpose Committee – Tuesday April 16th
- Planning and Building Committee – Tuesday April 23rd

All of the above meetings are in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall starting at 19:30.

- Monthly Council Meeting – Thursday April 25th in Mark Cross Village Hall at 19:30. CLERK is to confirm if this meeting will be held at the School instead.

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

- No request has been received to hold a by election for the vacancy on the Council which may be filled by co-option.
- Cllr. Prince has submitted written resignation from the Council, CLERK to advise WDC and send note of thanks to him.
- Street Sweepers barrow needs new hand grips, CLERK to investigate and arrange.
- Snow shovels, hi vis vests and grit spreader are to be placed in Community Store for safekeeping.

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- Potholes in Catts' Hill remain unfilled and water continues to run in the Cottage Hill/Castle Hill triangle area. CLERK to investigate/report.
- Clerk confirmed that 11th May Councillor "Drop In" session is to be in the Parish Council Room as Institute is unavailable.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:50.

15. PUBLIC FORUM.

Cllr. Kitchenham gave an update regarding the petition he has arranged in his personal capacity to highlight concerns regarding traffic in Catt's Hill and seeking a reduction in limit on this stretch of road to 40mph.

- Petition has been passed to ESCC and will be considered at their April 23rd meeting.
- Because of a site visit by Sussex Police, the 40mph limit at the Town Row end is to be extended further than originally planned. It will now end near Jameah leaving a distance of around 600m at national 60mph limit to the A267 junction.
- This limit extension is in connection with the 30mph limit extension arising from the Town Row development, the developers of this site are to fund the work.
- ESCC have contacted him to advise that pressing further for the limit to extend to Mark Cross will delay implementation and may not be supported. The Police rationale for the 60mph "buffer zone" at the Mark Cross end is that, as there are less houses visible adjacent to the road, traffic will be inclined to exceed a 40mph limit on this stretch. Provision of signage further down will reinforce the effectiveness of a 40mph limit on this length of road where there are more houses

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