

# 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 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2013 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

### COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chairman)	Cllr. M. Hall	Cllr. A. Sharpe
Cllr. N. Bolton (Vice Chairman)	Cllr. R. Harris	Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson	Cllr. R. Jaques	Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. C. Clibbens		

### ALSO PRESENT.

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

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

Cllr. A. Watson, Cllr. J. Kitchenham and PcsO Matt Boyle.

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

None. The Chairman reminded Councillors that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one during the course of the meeting.

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

**Cllr Tidy (ESCC) reported the following:-**

- Public consultation on budget proposals for the next 3 years had disclosed that the main concern was of a resulting reduction in services.
- Council Officers had identified £60m in savings over the next 3 years and a further £10m to enable mitigation of reduction in funds to services that are of overriding benefit. The following areas would not face budget reductions over the next 3 years:-
  - Winter Highway maintenance.
  - Many of the services targeted at young people
- There are to be no increases in the Police or Fire and Rescue elements of the Council Tax for the next 3 years. £19m set aside as part of the Newhaven Waste Incinerator project was now available to the main capital spending budget of £417m for the next 4 years. This spending would include:-
  - High Speed Broadband in the County.
  - Bexhill – Hastings link road.
  - Academies.
  - Newhaven Port Access road.
  - Highway resurfacing programme.
- The petition from Catt's Hill residents regarding extension of the 40mph limit to the A267 will be presented to ESCC Highways and Environment Committee for consideration on 12th February. It is possible that any decisions regarding this will not be made until after the "Purdah" period imposed for the forthcoming Councillor Elections.

The Councillors raised the following questions:

Q. Why was the pre-election "Purdah" period likely to affect the timing of a decision re the Catt's Hill speed limit?

A. Because it may be considered as a political decision as it involved County Council members.

Q. How closely tied to the ESCC budget is the new Police Commissioners budget?

A. It is independent of the County budget but ESCC are kept closely informed of the Commissioner's plans. There is no increase in the budget for this year.

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Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC) reported the following:-

- Due to weather conditions there had been no “green” waste collection in /Wealden for w/c 24th.
- WDC propose a “zero increase” in Council Tax for 2013/14
- The books were thought to have balanced but less was received from the Government Settlement than had been anticipated.
- Some Council Tax rebates have been removed and empty houses will now attract the tax at 150% rate.
- The “New Homes Bonus “ received from Central Government will be used to fund capital improvements to the Leisure Centres in the District.
- The good work of the snow clearing team in the Parish, co-ordinated by Cllr. Watson, was acknowledged and he had assisted with their work.
- Ashdown Forest “7km zone” issue. He has been appointed to the sub committee formed to seek solutions to the issue with the assistance of Consultants.

It was commented that messages of thanks regarding snow clearance had been received from various areas of the Parish. Cllr. Wickenden had used his tractor to clear the Hall car park, by the Surgery and in New Road. It was reiterated that the grit purchased by the Parish Council, and that provided by ESCC, was for clearance of public paths, not private drives and pathways. No pavement clearance had been noted in Crowborough.

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

The Clerk reported on behalf of PcsO Boyle that two cars parked on the double yellow lines by the Institute had been ticketed. It was commented at the meeting that a Police patrol car had recently passed by this location twice and failed to stop and ticket vehicles parked there.

#### 5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2012 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th December 2012, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 6. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.

##### a) Decision regarding level of grant to the Memorial Institute toward replacement of porch. Suggestion that Council budget for possible future land purchase for community use. Approval of 2013/14 Budget and Precept and completion of Precept documentation for WDC.

Budget and suggested precept information attached as agreed at the Finance and General Purpose Committee Meeting in December, together with the final information regarding the calculations received from WDC, were circulated. The Chairman declared a personal interest, as he is a member of the Institute committee. He advised that cost of work was anticipated at £2K subject to much of the basic work such as painting being done by the Committee members. It was RESOLVED to defer a decision on the sum to be granted until the February meeting. CLERK to add to agenda and advise the Institute. It was RESOLVED that it was inappropriate to budget for land purchase but that the possibility of borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board should be considered should the opportunity arise for land purchase. The budget and precept was discussed and the view was expressed that, in view of the possibility of future restrictions being placed on Town and Parish Council precept increases, an increase equating to £5 pa on the Parish “Band D” element of the Tax be requested. This would generate a precept figure of £60431.50 with a further sum of £1885 from WDC as a support grant; the 2012/13 precept was £54755. For a “Band D” property this will represent an annual Council Tax figure of £39.96 compared to £34.96 for 2012/13, a 14.3% increase equivalent to just over 9.5p per week. This would protect the Council’s ability to provide and enhance services, also enable the possibility to cover gaps in the services provided by County and District. Standing Orders were suspended whilst the opportunity was given to the members of the public present comment and they considered that, viewed in cash terms, the sum involved was acceptable. It was RESOLVED that the Budget be accepted and that the Precept figure of £60431.50 be requested from WDC and that the documents for this be completed for submission; Also CLERK to compile press release explaining reasons for the increase to accompany minutes copy sent to local press

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- b) **Response to WDC consultation regarding 2013/14 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.**  
It was RESOLVED to comment that their balanced budget be supported in confidence that they will do all possible to maintain service levels in this period of financial stringency.
- c) **Information from SALC regarding 2013 Course programme and candidates for courses.**  
Details circulated, RESOLVED that the Council Chairman and Vice – Chairman attend the Chairmanship update session at Seaford on March 6<sup>th</sup> at total cost of £100 ex Vat, CLERK to organise.
- d) **Concerns regarding dog fouling issue at Mark Cross raised by a resident.**  
Email circulated regarding concerns at fouling on the grass outside the Church. RESOLVED CLERK to raise issue in Parish magazine and seek some suitable signs from WDC for attachment to Council noticeboard at Mark Cross after reference to the Church.
- e) **Arrangements for advertising the vacancy for a Parish Street Sweeper**  
Draft advertisement circulated. It was AGREED that, after amendments discussed, the notice be advertised initially within the Parish and submitted for inclusion in the Courier local news section. Closing date for applications to be February 28<sup>th</sup>, interview panel to consist of Council Chairman, Chairs of Highways and Recreation and Burial Committee and Clerk.
- f) **Arrangements for format and publicising of the Annual Parish Meeting and location of advertising boards.**  
Annual Parish Meeting May 8<sup>th</sup> in the Hall. RESOLVED to contact organisations serving or near the Parish to see if they would like the opportunity to attend and raise their profile by way of a small tabletop display. Meeting to be 19:30 for a 20:00 start to allow time for those attending to view displays. CLERK to investigate availability of sites in the village for the usual billboard as for the past two years other village events have put their adverts in first. Item to be added to February agenda for update and further action.
- g) **Arrangements for the 2013 Parish Newsletter.**  
It was RESOLVED to ask Cllr. Kitchenham to compile the newsletter with the assistance of Cllr. Bolton and submission of annual reports by the Committee Chairman.
- h) **Donation for use of reading room at St Mark's Church for Councillor "drop in" session.**  
RESOLVED £10 donation agreed, CLERK to arrange payment at next meeting.
- i) **Offer from a Parishioner to give Old Parish OS maps to Council in exchange for a donation to the Millennium Green Trust.**  
RESOLVED Cllr. Wickenden to meet with Parishioner and view maps which may be suitable for framing and display in the Parish Council Room. Cllr. Wickenden to report at February meeting.
- j) **Review format of inspection checklists.**  
CLERK to circulate updated checklists based on comments and suggestions made at previous meeting.
- k) **Level of contact information for Councillors to be published on the Council website.**  
RESOLVED information to remain at present level of names and telephone numbers.
7. **TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MATTERS ARISING.**
- Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013.  
It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of this Meeting, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, be adopted by the Full Council.
8. **TO RECEIVE REPORTS**
- **Other committees and sub-committees.**  
None.
  - **Councillor "Have Your Say" session.**  
January session had been well supported with six parishioners attending.
  - **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**
    - **Cllr. Thomas** had attended executive committee meeting of SALC. Items discussed included budgets and precepts and traveller incursions. At the recent meeting with the Chief Constable, it was recommended that owners of fields keep photographic evidence (to include local resident) of locked gateways to their land, this would aid proof of forced entry to a field if it proved necessary.
    - **Chairman** had attended meeting with Scouts to discuss improvement plans for the Scout Hut and an item will be on the agenda of the February Recreation and Burial Committee meeting to discuss this.

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- **Cllr. Clibbens** had attended the recent meeting of the Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee. The Committee are seeking input from local users of the route regarding issues that they would like pursued by the Committee, CLERK will feature the work of the Committee in the Parish magazine and invite comments.
  - **Clerk's report and issues.**  
None.
- 9. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION**
- **Bank Reconciliation at end of December 2012.**  
Clerk explained difference in this is due to a credit item for £31.20 not being added to the reconciliation and a cheque issued for an amount 30p less than it appears in the ledgers.
  - **Review of Expenditure against Budget to end of December 2012.**  
It was RESOLVED that the reconciliation and expenditure review be accepted and signed.
  - **Approval of Payments.**  
It was RESOLVED that payment of the invoice for grass and hedge cutting be withheld until a breakdown is received from the contractor and that the following payments be made:-

**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**

CHEQUE NO	CHEQUE PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801523	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for January	£1,253.85
801524	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for January	£405.01
801525	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for January	£92.76
801526	Rotherfield Village Hall	Hall hire fees for November	£30.00
801527	Konica Minolta	September - November lease charge	£41.08
801528	Freedom Leisure	Charge for Active Play session	£89.45
801529	Coppard Plant Hire Ltd	Patching in Hall car park	£132.00
801530	Teambase	Stationery	£113.40
801531	SLCC	Attendance fee for SE Regional Conference	£41.40
801532	Information Commissioner's Office	Annual registration	£35.00
801533	Rotherfield Friendship Club	Grant	£100.00
801534	B.E.S.	Hi vis jackets and snow brooms	£164.88
<b>Total</b>			<b>£2,498.83</b>

**Cheque 001535 spoiled. Cheque 001536 for 30p issued to Jim Gander in respect of error issuing cheque 801498 for £125.65 instead of the correct £125.95 recorded**

## CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Santander	Bank interest - December	£61.15
H.M.R.C.	Vat reclaimed 1/10 - 31/12	£1,732.47
Paul Bysouth Funeral Services	Grant of Burial Right and interment fee	£720.00
Tester and Jones	Memorial fee	£45.00

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Miss E.M. Canavan	Purchase of Exclusive rights of burial x2	£170.00
Tester and Jones	Ashes interment fee	£110.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,838.62</b>

## 10. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE GENERAL

- Rotherfield Millennium Green Trust – Letter of thanks for recent grant.
- Wealden DC - Core Strategy Local Plan as adopted by WDC, subject to adoption by South Downs National Park.

## MAGAZINES AND CIRCULARS

- SALC – January Newsletter
- Saint-Chéron en Bref – No. 291 & 292
- The Clerk Magazine – January 2013
- South East Water – Winter 2012 resources update.
- Local Council Review – Winter 2012
- Sussex Area Ramblers – January 2013
- SALC – Christmas update
- Clerks and Councils Direct – January 2013
- WDC – December 2012 Parish Bulletin.

## 11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

- Due to recent weather conditions no inspections had taken place

## 12. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- Tuesday 29th January – Planning and Building Committee (Institute).
- Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February – Recreation and Burial Committee
- Tuesday 19th – Planning and Building Committee
- Thursday 28th – February Council Meeting

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

- Water bill received from landlord in respect of allotments, this is to be discussed at the forthcoming Recreation and Burial Committee meeting.
- Speed of vehicles entering the car park at school times has been noted. To be discussed at next Highways Committee meeting, CLERK to add to agenda.
- Item to be added to February agenda regarding “George” sign.
- Hall to be contacted by CLERK regarding issues with heating in the Parish Council Room.
- Car rolled on Spout Hill 10<sup>th</sup> January due to mud on road, CLERK to investigate.
- Meeting with Coppards regarding “twtitten” is to be re-arranged.
- Lorries have again been spotted using North Street to access the work at Redgate Mill, CLERK to raise with contractors.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:30.

## 14. PUBLIC FORUM.

In response to a question raised, it was advised that the new street sweeper when appointed would be an employee of the Council and covered by their employer’s liability insurance.

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