

ROOTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS LIGHTING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH MARCH 2016 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL AT 19:30

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. A. Martin (Chairman)	Cllr. T. Gilbert	Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. G. Watson-Smith (Vice Chairman)	Cllr. R. Harris.	Cllr. L. Watts
Cllr. C. Clibbens		Cllr. N. Wickenden

ALSO PRESENT

Clerk to the Parish Council, Trevor Thorpe, and four Parishioners.

ABSENT

None.

Before the formal business of the meeting commenced the meeting was addressed by the Parishioners present in respect of the following concerns.

- **Owner of business in North Street – forthcoming roadworks**

The following points were raised in connection with the forthcoming road and footway closure from 29th March – 4th April as recently advised by UK Power Networks. This will be for a short distance from the junction with the Square and will enable excavations and installation of a new power supply to a nearby property.

- Concern expressed at absence of consultation regarding this and unsympathetic response when contacting the agency involved.
- Diversion would be in the region of 8 miles if needed to travel to Crowborough which is a regular requirement for both his business and another nearby.
- Clerk advised that closure notice does state that “.Access to properties will be maintained where possible...” and that he had sent an email had been sent to ESCC Highways requesting that measures be taken to ensure that excavations were covered to allow vehicles to pass over if possible.
- Meeting also suggested that site foreman be spoken to at start of the work to raise access concerns from the outset.

- **Parishioner living near Eridge Station – Parking issues.**

Emails regarding this issue have been circulated to Councillor’s prior to the meeting.

Raised concerns regarding continuing problems with commuter parking in Forge Lane and Groombridge Lane/old A26 as follows:-

- It is not possible for two cars to pass in these areas due to parked cars.
- Large vehicles from nearby forestry work exacerbate the issue.
- Part of the station car park is being utilised by plant and vehicles undertaking Platform extension work, thus encouraging more vehicles to park on the surrounding roads.
- Access to nearby houses is impeded by parked vehicles. Abuse has been directed at residents if they delay or obstruct the vehicles of station user’s when trying to access their homes.
- No one appears interested in the issues here, what can be done to relieve the problems?

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- **Two Parishioners, both resident in Church Road/Rotherfield Hill area – vehicle speeds**
The following concerns were raised in connection with this section of road
 - The 30mph limit applicable in this location is ignored by vehicles both entering and leaving the village, this almost without exception.
 - The village is now a “rat run” for vehicles.
 - The Parish Council has, over the years, failed to take measures to address these issues unlike many other nearby Parishes.
 - Manoeuvring in and out of driveways is hazardous and often subject to abuse from motorists delayed by this.
 - One of the complainants had been struck on the arm by the wing mirror of a passing vehicle which failed to stop.
1. **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s 85).**
Apologies for absence were submitted by Cllr. James Kitchenham, Cllr. Keith Curtis and Cllr. David Hiles.
 2. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND UPDATES TO MEMBERS’ REGISTER OF INTERESTS.**
None. The Chairman reminded those present that they should declare an interest if at any point during the meeting they became aware of one relating to a matter being discussed.
 3. **TO CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF CLLR. L. HENRICK TO THIS COMMITTEE.**
It was RESOLVED that Cllr. Henrick be appointed as a member of this Committee,
ACTION: Clerk to update records.
 4. **UPDATE FROM CLERK REGARDING MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.**
All matters from the previous meeting have either been concluded or carried forward for further discussion at this meeting.
 5. **TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH JANUARY 2016 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD, AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.**
The draft minutes of this meeting have been circulated to the Councillors and it was RESOLVED that they be signed by the Committee Chairman as a true record.
 6. **TO CONSIDER AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ANY FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS**
 - a) **Concerns raised by Parishioners regarding Speeding issues:-**
 - i. **Church Road. Vehicle speeds entering and leaving the Village 30mph limit.**
Emails regarding this issue have been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.
Cllr. Clibbens responded to this matter and expressed concern at the claims that the Council had been doing nothing to address speeding issues in the Parish. His key points were as follows:-
 - The Local Highway Authority, in our case East Sussex County Council, have the final say on what measures are installed to heighten speed awareness even if a Parish is willing and able to fund these.
 - Provision of measures is primarily driven by the incidence of collisions resulting in personal injury and for which speed is the causing factor. Fortunately these are rare in the Village. Speed reminder measures are not generally installed on a proactive preventative basis.

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- A “Community Speedwatch” scheme using Parish volunteers started in early 2012. This operated from sites authorised by Sussex Police in Station Road (toward Village), by Court Meadow and two sites in Mark Cross.
- Due to lack of volunteers, and the perception that the “follow up” letters sent to the owner of vehicles breaching the speed limit were either ineffective or even not being sent, the Scheme is currently in abeyance.
- Although other sites were considered these were not approved for use, the laybys at the top of Rotherfield Hill were not authorised as they were less than 200m from the start of the 30mph limit.

ii. **Mayfield Road – request for measures to discourage speeding.**

Emails from a Parishioner who has raised concerns regarding this were circulated prior to the meeting.

- Cllr. Clibbens also advised that provision of speed bumps or build outs had been investigated for Mayfield Road in 2011, funding would have been by the Parish Council as accident record did not support ESCC providing this.
- To enable installation of these the quality and location of street lighting would have needed alteration.
- Full cost of project was estimated in the order of £60K which the Parish Council could not afford; hence the scheme did not proceed.
- The matter of 30mph road markings and reminder roundels at roadside had been raised on several occasions by Parishioners. However Section 82 of the 1984 Road Traffic Act states that if a road has a “system of street lighting furnished by means of lamps placed not more than 200 yards apart” then it is a Restricted Road on which a 30mph limit automatically applies. In this case no additional signage or markings are permissible.
- Recommended that if Parishioners held strong views on provision of additional speed awareness measures that they should organise a petition for presentation to ESCC.
- Whatever measures were introduced it should be born in mind that once local Policing is reorganised it is unlikely that there will be resources available from them to provide any speed enforcement.

The Clerk reported the following:-

- £5K has been allocated in the Council’s 2016/17 budget for provision of “Village Gateway” to raise awareness of speed limits on entering the Parish.
- Enquiries had been made of ESCC as to the effectiveness of these “gateways”. ESCC advised that these are generally installed simultaneously with improved signage, and sometimes a change in speed limit, therefore is it not possible for any conclusions to be drawn as to whether they are effective on their own.
- Cost of a solar powered Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) for speed reminder is in the order of £6.5K. If the Parish Council wished to fund this, subject to ESCC approval regarding installation and siting, they would also be responsible for ongoing maintenance and eventual decommission and replacement.

RESOLVED that ESCC be approached to organise speed surveys on the entry points to the 30mph limit in Rotherfield at Mayfield Road and Rotherfield Hill; also ESCC initial views on the provision of VAS at these points.

ACTION for Clerk to organise and report progress at the May meeting of this Committee.

b) Launch of the “We’re Keeping an Eye on You” Road Safety Campaign in Wealden. Report from Councillors who attended this event, and actions arising.

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Cllr. Curtis attended this event on behalf of the Council and his report was circulated prior to the meeting. No handouts were provided at the session, and we have yet to receive the promised copy of the associated PowerPoint Presentation from the Launch Organisers. It is understood that the campaign will still rely on letters being sent to vehicle owners breaching speed limits, with three such letters earning them a personal visit from the Police. Disappointment was expressed that there would be no effective deterrent in the form of fines and points on licences for those breaking the law.

c) Eridge Station area. Request from resident to extend yellow lines in this area due to problems accessing Forge Road caused by parked vehicles.

This matter was discussed at the February Council meeting and will be raised at the June Strengthening Local Relationships meeting with ESCC Highways Officers. It was recommended that nearby residents raise their concerns with local press, also organise petition to encourage ESCC to increase parking restrictions in the area. It was again noted that Police are unlikely to be enforcing parking restrictions in future due to reduction Police resources in rural areas.

d) Parking issues in Rotherfield Village Centre – update and further action.

Positive news is that the unlicensed white van park abandoned within the Village Centre had now been removed, also that the vehicle parked so as to obstruct the right of way by the King's Arms had relocated. With regard to vehicles parked on the Church side of the Square, Clerk has determined from HMLR records that the properties do not own the frontage extending to the kerb and ESCC confirm that this area is unadopted highway over which the public have a right to pass. RESOLVED that letters advising this information be hand delivered to the properties concerned; letter also to request that vehicles parked and planters installed thereon should not obstruct the public. Cllr. Watts has kindly volunteered to deliver the letters.

ACTION for CLERK and CLLR. WATTS. Clerk to provide letters for Cllr. Watts to hand deliver.

e) Update and further action regarding street light columns identified as requiring replacement.

As a result of the recent survey initiated by ESCC one column in Catt's Hill requiring immediate attention has been cut down to 2m height and disconnected from the electricity supply. Fourteen other columns at various locations in the Parish also require attention within the next twelve months at estimated cost of £1.3K per unit. Clerk already has an action point from the February Parish Council meeting to raise concerns with ESCC on this matter; this to determine the testing methodology, how the results are interpreted, and resulting recommended actions determined. ESCC themselves seem unclear on these points.

ACTION for Clerk to investigate engaging independent tester to provide "second opinion test" on columns for which action is recommended, and add item to May agenda for report and consideration of further action.

f) Response to ESCC Consultation regarding proposed length restriction on B2100, B2101 and Yew Tree Lane for 12 months trial period.

ESCC report that, whilst it is still intended to proceed with the trial scheme, the impending lack of Police resource to enforce the measures may result in some modification to it.

g) Update re: consent sought from ESCC for installation of bollards by Rotherfield Institute, Highgate Flats and at Yew Tree Lane/A267 junction.

ESCC response is as follows:-

- i. The pavement outside the Rotherfield Institute is too narrow to site a bollard thereon

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- ii. Triangle at Yew Tree Lane is also unsuitable for bollards or other physical barrier to vehicles.
- iii. Subject to licence they are willing to agree bollard(s) on the verge outside Highgate Flats, either rounded wood with reflectors or plastic black and white style.

RESOLVED that licence be obtained from ESCC for installation of bollards outside the Flats, Glasdon Vergemaster style at £22.36 per bollard.

h) Bus shelters

- i. **Request from the Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee that bus shelters be considered for the Eridge Station stops, and that the A26 northbound stop be relocated.**
Despite requesting data from bus companies serving these stops none has been provided to support this request. RESOLVED that the Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee be asked to obtain usage information for these stops to substantiate the level of use to warrant provision of shelters, estimated cost in the region of £8K for the two. No funds are available in the 2016/17 budget for these.
- ii. **Update on progress fault with rectification of faults with the new Eridge Forstal northbound shelter, and decision on repair/replacement of the shelter opposite.**
ACTION for Clerk to chase contractor for the completion of the remedial work.
ACTION for Cllr. Harris to provide Clerk with contact detail of contractor who can inspect the southbound shelter and quote for repair if possible, replacement if not.
- iii. **Clerk recommendations regarding maintenance work on other shelters.**
ACTION for Clerk to check condition of our shelters and seek quote from contractor for treatment work.

i) Clerk update and recommendations regarding fingerposts requiring cleaning/refurbishment.

Clerk to inspect fingerposts and identify those in need of refurbishment or cleaning. It is not yet known if, as has been the case in previous years, ESCC will have funds available to match those of the Parish Council for any work required.

j) Measures to deter dog fouling in the “Twitten” and elsewhere.

RESOLVED, ACTION for the Communication and Social Media Committee to investigate and produce a sign that stresses the health risks associated with dog fouling, particularly to children. Details to be passed to Clerk so that quotes may be obtained for signs.

k) Footpath and Right of Way issues.

Gillridge Lane Rotherfield 66. Site meeting is being held here on the 9th March to discuss various issues. ACTION. Cllr. Martin to produce summarised report of the outcome of this meeting.

l) Consultant’s report re: cost and detail for a possible pedestrian route between Rotherfield and Jarvis Brook.

Report still awaited, CLERK to carry forward to next agenda of this Committee.

m) Street sweeping. Consider request for increase in hourly rate and receive risk assessment.

Current contractor requests 5% increase from £12 to £12.60 to cover the additional cost of increasing PL Insurance from £5m to £10m and has also enclosed a risk assessment for the work undertaken. Average hours invoiced for during 2015 are 5.40.

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RESOLVED that requested increase in hourly rate be approved. Risk assessment details accepted with proviso that the matter of suitable protective/high visibility clothing suitable for work alongside “B” roads be worn. ACTION for Clerk to advise contractor of new rate and conditions regarding protective clothing.

n) ESCC request for comments regarding proposed installation of Guard Rails outside Rotherfield School.

RESOLVED that design of rail submitted by ESCC was acceptable, ACTION for Clerk to advise ESCC.

7. TO CONSIDER URGENT ITEMS ON BEHALF OF OTHER COMMITTEES

None.

8. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.

Emails regarding speeding and parking matters as covered in agenda items 6a) i and ii and 6c)

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

- 10th May 2016 at 19:30 in the Scout and Youth Community Hall.

10. URGENT ISSUES FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA.

a) Mark Cross. Issues have been raised as follows:-

i. Both of the speed VAS need recalibrating as they can be off at speed below 20mph, but are not being triggered by speeds over the 40mph limit.
ACTION for Clerk to report to ESCC.

ii. Overgrowing hedges are obscuring signs on the approach to the A267 crossroads from the Mayfield direction. Clerk has already reported this to ESCC via “Fix My Street”.

iii. Vehicles parking in the Brickyard Lane northbound bus layby are obstructing the view for vehicles emerging from the Lane, and causing buses to stop in the highway thus creating a hazard. Clerk has already reported this to our PCSO as well as raising an “Operation Crackdown” report.

iv. Concerns raised that grass overgrowing on the corner of Mark Cross Millennium Green was obstructing vision at the junction - ACTION for Clerk to investigate.

b) Reported that footpath from Station Road to Chant Lane is becoming overgrown, also that fence is broken.

ACTION for Clerk to investigate and ask Contractors to cut.

c) Cllr. Wickenden requested agenda item added to 12th Recreation and Burial Committee meeting to discuss Lime Trees in St Denys’ Churchyard.

ACTION for Clerk to add to Agenda.

d) Reported that corner chevrons on the grass triangle at the “Bicycle Arms” junction were a siting hazard for vehicles of van size emerging on to A267, this issue has been raised previously.

ACTION for Clerk to report to ESCC and suggest that remedial work could take place at same time as work for new speed limits in this vicinity.

e) Reported that free running dogs and pedestrians in the road near Town Row Green and woods was a potential hazard.

ACTION for Clerk to raise with ESCC and enquire if signage could be installed warning of pedestrians in road.

f) ACTION for Clerk to enquire of ESCC of procedure for temporary warning signs in relation to a wedding in the Village in the summer. This will involve vehicles parking on private land on village outskirts in Church Road and guests walking to the Church. Information to be passed to parishioner concerned.

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

11. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Adopted as a true record at the 10th May 2016 meeting of the Committee

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