

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community
in Rotherfield, Town Row, Mark Cross, Eridge Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND BURIAL COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT 19:30 ON TUESDAY 11th JUNE 2013 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas (Chairman) Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson Cllr. L. Pike
Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chair) Cllr. N. Wickenden

ALSO ATTENDING. The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe. Cllr. Kitchenham attended the meeting.

1. **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s 85).**
Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. N. Bolton and Cllr. A. Watson.
2. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS.**
Cllr. Wickenden declared an interest in item 6iii as he is related to the owner of land forming access to the site.
The Council Chairman advised that, after discussion with Cllr. Thomas, he was in agreement with item 6iii appearing on this agenda in accord with the Committee terms of reference rather than at full council as it was considered that urgent action was required.
3. **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9TH APRIL 2013 AS A TRUE RECORD.**
It was RESOLVED that the minutes were a true record of the meeting and that there were no matters arising. The Chairman signed the minutes.
4. **UPDATE FROM CLERK REGARDING MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.**
Numbers relate to agenda of 9th April meeting.
7 iv. Kier have been chased to empty the 240L bin by the Hall which it is assumed will be the "free" one provided. They were unsure whether emptying would form part of the domestic or commercial emptying cycle.
7 v. Litter picker now active in the Parish.
8 i Parts obtained and fitted to play equipment as per recommendation of annual inspection by Wickstead.
8ii Clerk has arranged four site meetings with various play equipment providers to discuss options for additional item(s). Rotherfield Trust required details of proposals prior to funding commitment. Outcome of site meetings will be added to agenda of next available meeting.

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MATTERS

5. **ALLOTMENT ISSUES**
 - i. **Report from recent inaugural meeting of the Rotherfield Allotment Association.**
Cllr. Thomas attended this meeting in the absence of the Council Chairman who is the designated representative to the Association. It was attended by the acting officers of the Association and other allotment holders. The acting officers of the Association were all appointed to the equivalent roles in the new Association, also two committee members. Cllr. Thomas reported that the Committee expressed their thanks to the Parish Council, Council Chair and landowners of site for their help and support. Council Chairman had been thanked on behalf of the Association for Cllr. Thomas' support and help during the inaugural meeting. The Association plan regular Saturday work parties to undertake minor repairs and tidying of the site.
 - ii. **Information and further action regarding management of the allotments**
CLERK to liaise with Association regarding completion of the agreement between it and the Council which had previously been drawn up and approved by the Councillors. CLERK to liaise with Treasurer regarding grant and subsidy agreed at 9th April meeting of this

Parish Council Website: www.rotherfieldparishcouncil.co.uk
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Committee, Association to pay rent cheque to Council for rentals, collected less Council contributions agreed.

iii. Agreement document between Allotment Association and the Council

See ii above.

iv. Progress with collection of rents.

Clerk has reminded RHAA that money has been collected by them in respect of rentals due in 2012, they have acknowledged that this should be paid to the Council and will send a cheque for the £200 due. Monies due for 2013 rental await formalisation of the new Association and activation of bank account.

v. Water bill for allotment usage submitted by landlord.

It is believed that the landlords have kindly offered to cover the water bills for September 2012 and March 2013, totalling £58.02. RESOLVED that Council pay this sum to them in acknowledgment of their help and support during the transition to the new Association, CLERK to arrange for June Council meeting.

6. GENERAL RECREATION AND BURIAL ISSUES, AND OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS

i. Risk assessment format for events run on Council land C /fwd. from February meeting.

Details circulated to Councillors, RESOLVED that documents be studied by Councillors and an item added to June Council meeting agenda for final amendments and agreement.

ii. Report, recommendation and decision in respect of creating new entrance and pathway to the Bowls Club.

Site visit undertaken with Club representative on June 8th. RESOLVED that return visit be made on 18th June for plan to be drawn up thus enabling quotes to be obtained for work. CLERK to add item to June Council meeting agenda.

iii. Amenity Land. Receive update regarding into investigation by Rotherfield St Martin into feasibility of using part of site for possible use as a location for a permanent centre, subject to planning permission and agreement of all parties potentially affected. Agree Council's position on this proposal.

Prior to discussion a statement was read on behalf of Cllr. Bolton expressing concerns at the lack of feedback from RSM on their plans for the site; also that she personally opposed any developments on the Amenity Land. The Clerk summarised the items in the Council minutes regarding the RSM enquiries concerning the site, and read the response from the RSM Chairman to a request for a progress report. The following concerns were expressed:-

- a) Lack of feedback given by RSM, unless requested, regarding progress with the matter.
- b) Comments in the response from RSM regarding progress implied that extension of the parking area and increase in scale of the building proposed were now being considered, together with the implication of scope for other use to generate an income.
- c) Aspirations for the scale of the proposed building were becoming more ambitious; it was considered that a modest single – storey structure or extension to the surgery was the original plan.
- d) WDC comments/advice as minuted for the 28th February 2013 Council Meeting appeared to be disregarded – have WDC been consulted since the meeting with their senior officers?
- e) There was no evidence that the Surgery or owner of the land forming access to the site had been contacted to seek their views on the matter.
- f) The original purpose of the “Amenity Land” was to act as a “buffer” between the Court Meadow development and the Church. This would be undermined if a large development took place.
- g) Although Council held the land under absolute title concerns expressed that this could somehow be challenged and removed.

Council Chairman proposed the following which was unanimously RESOLVED

Clerk to contact Council Solicitor seeking advice regarding point f) above

CLERK to draft letter in conjunction with Cllr. Thomas expressing concerns above and restating that Council's intention was that RSM to look into feasibility and options for what may be possible on the site with due regard to Planning issues; no consent to use of site had

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been implied by the Council at that stage without a clear picture of what was being proposed and consideration of the views of other Parishioners and those adjoining the site.

iv. Offer from ESCC to reduce legal fees for s278 agreement for extension to parking area at Mark Cross and agree any further action.

Prior to discussion a statement was read on behalf of Cllr. Bolton expressing concerns at non-disclosure of legal fees by ESCC and overall cost of project relative to benefits.

E-mail from Cllr. Whetstone and scan of letter from ESCC, offering to reduce rate charged, circulated prior to meeting.

RESOLVED that in view of the escalating cost that this project be cancelled.

v. Town Row Development. Update regarding letting of properties and other issues.

Housing Association advises that there will be a small opening ceremony, probably late August, between handover and occupation. The requested suggestions for invitees and a name was put forward by the meeting for CLERK to pass on.

WDC advise that currently 20 applicants (families and individuals) with Parish connections on the waiting list, properties are not yet open for formal "bids", anticipated that this will be later in the summer.

7. RECREATION GROUND.

i. Issues and actions arising from monthly safety inspections.

Play area – most recent inspection checklist held is for 20/05/2013. Noted that issue regarding clearance under roundabout is to be discussed at this meeting.

Recreation Ground – most recent inspection checklist held is for 20/05/2013. Noted that "be aware..." signs regarding livestock are to be installed.

ii. Decision on further action regarding modifications to the roundabout.

RESOLVED that CLERK contact Goodlands to request production of metal angle fitting as per their quote, this to be collected by Council Chairman and arrangements made by him for fitting "on site". CLERK to clarify additional cost if Goodlands apply final paint later to fitting.

iii. Decision regarding location and installation of new litter bins.

Five allocated to Rec, one each to the bus stops at Mark Cross garden centre and Rotherfield Millennium Green. Clerk has checked with WDC, who use this style of bin, and they recommend filling base with concrete for stability and security. RESOLVED that bins be sited as follows:-

Mark Cross bus stop by Garden Centre, Town Row bus stop, Recreation Ground by Pavillion, by clothes recycling bin, flagpole, seat by middle of "1200" path and in play area, old bins to be removed.

CLERK to chase order.

iv. Information regarding further work on lower pitch to be undertaken by Sports Club and decision regarding disposal of soil arising from this work.

Letter from Club circulated prior to meeting. RESOLVED CLERK to contact Club requesting that soil excavated is deposited in bottom right corner of lower pitch by waste removed from hedge line. Soil is not considered suitable for use as grave infill at St Denys'.

v. Update regarding cattle warning signs for Rec. boundary and quote for installation work.

Delivery of these is anticipated this week and CLERK to liaise with Tony Moaby regarding installation. Councillors are visiting site on Tuesday 18th and will mark location of the signs.

8. ST DENYS' BURIAL GROUND

i. Issues and actions arising from safety inspections.

Latest checklist held is for 23/03/2013. No issues requiring action noted, graves still require inspection re any filling required.

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ii. Information from local Royal British Legion regarding their proposals for maintenance of the War Graves within the Burial Ground.

Letter from Legion, and response from Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), circulated. The CWGC recommend laying to grass and regular mowing of the graves, with possible enhancement of spring flowering bulbs as RBL proposal for refurbishment of the graves would prove difficult to maintain in perpetuity. They will contact RBL to arrange site visit. RESOLVED that Council agree with CWGC recommendation and wish to be represented at site meeting. CLERK to contact CWGC and RBL to arrange.

9. ROTHERFIELD PARISH CEMETERY

i. Issues and actions arising from safety inspections.

Latest checklist held date 20/05/2013. No items noted as requiring action. Mole catcher has visited and caught one mole, no mole activity noted in lower field. CLERK to advise Committee Chairman of mole catching costs.

ii. Report from site visit undertaken by Councillors to consider drainage issues and commissioning of extension section of the Cemetery. Recommendation and decision regarding further action.

RESOLVED the following:-

- CLERK to contact Will Clark to arrange topping of lower field.
- Council Chairman to discuss with contractor the specification for rabbit proof fencing so that tenders may be invited.
- CLERK to obtain quotes from local contractors for new fencing to take in extending site and "squaring off" to lower gate on South boundary. When site is finally commissioned path will require extending down centre of burial ground and course of water main crossing lower field will need to be identified.
- Funds released by cancellation of Mark Cross car park extension may be utilised for this work.

iii. Information regarding H & S conditions regarding use of shuttering when digging graves. Recommendation and decision regarding rules for grave digging in the Cemetery.

It is understood that two nearby Councils have ceased to use a local gravedigger due to his refusal to use shuttering when digging, this being an H&S requirement. The local councils concerned now use a contractor. RESOLVED letter to be drafted for sending to local funeral directors outlining H&S requirements for grave digging in the Cemetery and Burial Ground. They must ensure that these requirements are observed.

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

- St Denys have contacted with a query regarding grass cutting of Churchyard, particularly the memorial. Chris White at WDC advises that they pay a grant to them and that they arrange their own cutting and monitoring of quality.
- WDC are planning a consultation in the summer on proposals to tighten enforcement against dog fouling, complaints to them are running at 3-4 per week regarding this. This may lead to the introduction of a district wide Dog Control Order that would authorise WDC officers, Pcsos and employees of parish and town councils to issue Fixed Penalty Notices of up to £75. CLERK to ensure that Millennium Green Trust is involved in consultations as this is a major issue for them.
- A village family are still planning to give a memorial bench for siting in the recreation ground.
- St Denys' have approached regarding possible use of Amenity Land for fundraising activity. Details and dates have been requested so that further consideration may be given.

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- Pre School have requested that they be allowed to install a poster for their quiz night on the Chestnut Tree by their driveway. CLERK to advise that there is no objection to the siting but that poster should be on a board and free standing, not fixed to tree. Alternative would be to see permission to fix on Scout Hut.
- Complaints received that Rochester Lane public footpath is becoming overgrown, CLERK to report to ESCC ROW team.
- CLERK to obtain quotes for clearing weeds, gutters and strimming edges of pavement on Station Road from Village Centre to Town Row, also cutting of hedge on “inland” section of footpath from Station Road to New Road.
- Cllr. Thomas to Liaise with Council Chairman regarding attending WDC “Armed Forces Day” event in his place at Hailsham at 11:00 on June 24th.
- CLERK to arrange site meeting with Coppards 13:00 Tuesday 18th to discuss missed section of surfacing on fp3 1a, Council Chairman to liaise with landlord of King’s Arms regarding attending meeting.
- IOG Saltex Trade Show is to be held at Windsor Racecourse 1st – 3rd September. Cllr. Wickenden wishes to attend this free trade event, other Councillors who wish to attend please contact Clerk so that he may register them for event.

11. TO RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE.

- Tuesday 13th August 2013, Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:35

12. PUBLIC FORUM.

- Cllr. Kitchenham expressed his concerns that the project to extend the parking area opposite Mark Cross Church had been abandoned; this after the condition of the area had been an issue for many years and which he had raised prior to becoming a Councillor. £1000 had already been spent on ESCC design fees. He felt that Mark Cross was neglected with regard to Parish funds spent on it. It was suggested that the matter of ESCC fees charged to Councils for work of this nature should be raised with the local press
CLERK to contact ESCC re paint markings that have appeared on the grass strip by Mark Cross Church, does this indicate that work is planned to eliminate the trip hazard here?
Cllr Kitchenham has been advised that Council Standing Orders include process for revisiting decisions under Section 11 Rescission of Previous Resolutions.

_____ Chairman _____ Date