



Working for the Community in Rotherfield, Mark Cross,  
ErIDGE Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON THURSDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2017 AT 19:30  
IN THE ROTHERFIELD SCOUT AND YOUTH COMMUNITY HALL**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT**

|                              |                     |                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Cllr. D. Thomas (Chair)      | Cllr. A. Hardy      | Cllr. J. Richardson   |
| Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chair) | Cllr. L. Henrick    | Cllr. G. Watson Smith |
| Cllr. J. Cahan               | Cllr. J. Kitchenham | Cllr. N. Wickenden    |
| Cllr. T. Gilbert             | Cllr. A. Martin     |                       |

**COUNCILLORS ABSENT**

None.

**ALSO PRESENT**

The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe. Cllr. Dixon (WDC) and Cllr. Standley (ESSC).

**1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -**

- a) **Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s 85).**  
Cllrs. A. Hardy, Cllr. D. Hiles, and Cllr. L. Watts submitted their apologies.
- b) **Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda, and updates to members' register of interests.**  
None. The Chair reminded Councillors that they should declare an interest if at any point in the meeting they became aware of one in connection with an agenda item.
- c) **District and County Councillor reports.**  
**Cllr. R. Standley's (ESSC) report contained the following key points: -**
  - ESCC Budget has gone before Cabinet with a 2% increase and the Adult Social Care Budget increasing by 3%. It was noted that 40% of the Adult Social Care budget is spent on those below pensionable age.
  - County expenditure on the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme is not being cut.
  - Additional £1m had been included in the Highways Budget for drainage work
  - Community Match Funding for local Highways projects had been increased to £250K for 2107/18.
  - Special Educational Needs (SEN) has had its budget increased by £5m due to rising costs of this service.
  - Broadband provision. Is to attend a meeting next week and had received a good level of response from residents to requests for information published on social media by Parishes in the Division.
  - Parish speed limit petition. Acknowledgment received from Rupert Clubb.
  - Recommended viewing/responding to the ESCC online health quiz which may be viewed at [ESCC Health eating quiz](#) .

Responses to questions raised by the meeting were as follows: -

- Total ESCC budget for 2017/18 is in the region of £360m. Whilst this a lot of money it is having to be stretched thinly, £24m will need to be saved in the 2018/19 budget.
- Duke of Edinburgh scheme. Current support is by way of County co-ordinating the scheme. Personal view was that it was a valuable scheme which provided important benefits for the participants, in return for the relatively small amount spent on it.

**Commented [TTCTPC1]:** See item 1a), Cllr. Hardy was not present and his name has been deleted from the paper copy of the minutes

- Parish Councillor raised question passed to him by a parishioner who enquired whether their pension would be increasing to pay the increase in Council Tax. It was acknowledged that the pension "triple lock" will assist this, although the proposed ESCC increase is greater than inflation. It was difficult to balance the wish to keep taxes low whilst simultaneously trying to protect the services intended to help those on fixed incomes.

**Cllr. P. Dixon's report contained the following key points: -**

- Thanksgiving service for the life of Keith Curtis is to be held at St Denys' on Tuesday 31st at 12.45. Cllr. Dixon paid tribute to him as a past Parish Councillor, as an active member and trustee of the Millennium Green and worker for the Rotherfield St Martin "Monday Club". The Council Chairman also paid tribute to him for his time on the Council and work in the Village Community.
- Smart Meter session in the Village Hall organised by WDC. Disappointed that this was sparsely attended.
- Wealden Local Plan. Hope to have this published in March.
- House numbers in Crowborough. 300 is the number allocated, and this is being carefully monitored.
- "Rough Sleepers" in Wealden. This is becoming an issue and the Council are working with other agencies to assist with this.

Responses to questions raised by the meeting were as follows: -

- He is to raise with Conservation Officer the matter of recent South East Water repair work in the Village centre which had left a tarmac "patch" in the brick paving of the Conservation Area. Clerk reported that this matter had also been logged with ESCC, it is assumed that this is a temporary repair.
- Houses at Steel Cross, part of this area falls within the Parish. This application should shortly be appearing before the Planning Committee.

**d) Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2016.**

Draft minutes have been circulated to the Councillors prior this meeting, it was **RESOLVED** that these be adopted as a true record and the Chairman signed them.

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

**ITEMS FROM THE 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2016 COUNCIL MEETING  
NUMBERS REFER TO THE AGENDA OF THAT MEETING SECTION 3**

**vi. Realignment of ashes memorial slabs in Parish Cemetery.**

Cllr. Harris reported that several of these required realigning to preserve the tidy appearance of this area.

**RESOLVED ACTION** for Cllr. Harris to provide list of slabs requiring action so that **CLERK** may contact owners to advise them of the proposed work and reasons for undertaking it.

*Update from Clerk – Letters have been sent to the the owners of the four plots identified as requiring action detailing the work to be undertaken and seeking consent. Two replies have been received so far.*

**9 REPORT DETAILS OF ITEMS AND ISSUES NOTIFIED TO CLERK IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING FOR INVESTIGATION, FURTHER ACTION OR FOR FUTURE AGENDA.**

*Annual Tree Survey. CLERK to forward papers for this to Cllrs. Wickenden and Martin so that they may undertake this survey.*

**UPDATE PLEASE FROM CLLRS. WICKENDEN AND MARTIN  
Clerk to resend the documents.**

**ITEMS FROM THE 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2016 COUNCIL MEETING  
NUMBERS REFER TO THE AGENDA OF THAT MEETING SECTION 3**

**i. Quotes for installation of bollards in North Street outside the Memorial Institute, a dropped kerb by “Copper Kettle” and a post for SID outside Highgate Flats.**

Quotes circulated prior to meeting from Coppard and Newton and Frost

**a) Dropped kerb/crossover.**

£1350 quote from Coppard for this work, £1500 quote received from Drive-Tech, both including traffic management cost but are ex. VAT. Cllr. Martin is to speak with Coppard to ensure that quote is for work required which is to drop kerb setts and brick pavement, thus ensuring that appearance of the kerb matches the existing pavement in the Conservation Area.

**RESOLVED** that **Cllr. Martin** review both quotes to ensure they comply with our required specification and accept lowest quote if pre VAT cost is £1500 or lower.

*In progress and on action list for Highways Committee to monitor progress, Clerk will remove from this list.*

**b) Post for Speed Indicating Device on verge by Highgate Flats.**

Cllr. Martin suggested that as post cost was £58 plus VAT the Council purchased it themselves with Cllrs. Martin and Harris dealing with the installation and billing Council.

**RESOLVED** that **Cllrs. Martin** and **Harris** undertake the purchase and installation of the post and invoice Council for the work as this will cost considerably less than using local Contractor for this small project.

*Installed, COMPLETED.*

**c) Bollards in pavement by Memorial Institute to protect the reinstalled porch.**

ESCC will currently only licence “Vergemaster” posts rather than the preferred “Manchester” flexible bollards, both from Glasdon. It is considered that the Manchester bollard will offer better protection and offer a more appropriate appearance in the Conservation Area. Concern that insurers funding reinstallation of porch will not be satisfied with the protection offered by a less substantial bollard and this had been raised with an ESCC Officer on a recent site visit.

**RESOLVED** that **CLLR. MARTIN** discuss the matter further with ESCC to encourage the licencing of the Manchester bollards. **CLLR. MARTIN** to arrange with **CLERK** re: addition of item to agenda of future meeting to report progress and agree further action.

*In progress and on action list for Highways Committee to monitor progress, Clerk will remove from this list.*

**ii. Council’s response to letters from pupils of Rotherfield Primary School re: traffic concerns in the community.**

Letters have been sent to the Council from Year 6 pupils at the school. Key issues expressed by the letters are as follows: -

- Vehicle speeds in the Village and suggestion of 20mph limit by School and in the Square.
- Provision of safe crossing point in the village centre near the church.
- Inconsiderate parking hindering pedestrians.

**RESOLVED** scans of letters are sent to Parish Councillors, Cllr. Standley also requested that copies be sent to him. **ACTION** for **CLLR. MARTIN** and **CHAIR** to draft response to the concerns for communicating to the School by the end of this term, also advise that actions have been agreed by ESCC regarding prohibiting large vehicles from passing

through the Village.

***In progress and on action list for Highways Committee to monitor progress, Clerk will remove from this list.***

**2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT END OF DECEMBER 2016, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND APPROVE PAYMENTS.**

**i. Clerks report and recommendations from half year budget review.**

Clerk highlighted areas that were over budget. It was RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation be approved and that cheques be signed in respect of the following payments: -

**PAYMENTS**

| Date Paid             | Payee Name               | Ref.       | Amount           | Transaction Detail                                     |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------|------------------|--|
| 02/01/2017            | Santander                | Correction | £4.81            | Correction interest posted twice                       |
| 26/01/2017            | Trevor Thorpe            | 802266     | £1,535.22        | January salary   |
| 26/01/2017            | H M R C                  | 802267     | £498.69          | January Tax & N.I.                                     |
| 26/01/2017            | Phil Ireland             | 802269     | £245.70          | January sweeping and litter                            |
| 26/01/2017            | Konica Minolta Ltd       | 802270     | £0.53            | Balance of account                                     |
| 26/01/2017            | KPS Contractors Ltd      | 802271     | £480.94          | Gravedigging P26                                       |
| 26/01/2017            | Rotherfield Village Hall | 802272     | £48.00           | December Hall Hire                                     |
| 26/01/2017            | SSALC Ltd                | 802273     | £17.00           | LCR Subscription                                       |
| 26/01/2017            | A. Martin                | 802274     | £209.96          | Minor works various car park, SID and signs at Eridge. |
| 26/01/2017            | Gwen Pritchitt           | 802275     | £214.00          | November audit costs                                   |
| 26/01/2017            | Trevor Thorpe            | 802276     | £148.14          | Jan. expenses/reimbursements                           |
| 26/01/2017            | Costain Ltd              | 802268     | £518.30          | Payee correction of chq 802240                         |
| 27/01/2017            | Information Commissioner | DD         | £35.00           | Annual fee   |
| <b>Total Payments</b> |                          |            | <b>£3,956.29</b> |  |

**RECEIPTS**

| Receipt date          | Name of Payer                | Amount  |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| 20/01/2017            | Dignity Funerals Ltd         | £400.00 | Fees re: interment P17 |
| 05/01/2017            | Rotherfield Millennium Green | £30.00  | Dog bin contribution   |
| 02/01/2017            | Santander Bank               | £4.81   | December interest      |
| <b>Total Receipts</b> |                              |         | <b>£434.81</b>         |

**3. TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE AS REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.**

**i. Consider adoption of the Draft budget agreed at the December meeting of the Finance and General Purpose Committee, and recommendation regarding Precept for 2017/18; Complete and sign Precept Notification form for submission to Wealden District Council.**

Papers relating to the draft budget, proposed precept and associated items were circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. Harris advised that December meeting of the Finance and General Purpose Committee (F&GP) had approved this draft budget, which will require an increase of just under 20% in the Parish element of the Council Tax. The Chair and Vice Chair of the F&GP, Councillors Thomas and Henrick, and the Vice Chair of the Council, Councillor Harris,

met recently to review this with the intention of scrutinising underspends which could allow a reduction in the Precept requirement.

The following was **RESOLVED**: -

- a) The adoption of the budget and signature of the Precept document be deferred pending a further meeting of the Chair and Vice Chair of Council, and the Chair of the Finance and General Purpose Committee on the 30<sup>th</sup> January at which the draft budget and precept for 2017/18 is to be reviewed.
- b) A special meeting of the Full Council is to be arranged to review and agree these revised figures so that the Precept document may be signed and submitted to Wealden DC to meet their deadline of 8<sup>th</sup> February.
- c) Any Councillors who are unable to attend this special meeting please review the revised budget and pass their comments to Clerk to read to the meeting.

**ACTION** for **CLERK** to check and confirm meeting room availability, publish agenda and circulate revised draft budget

ii. **Recommendations from sub-committee formed to consider scope, activities and responsibilities of the Clerk**

Notes from the October 2016 meeting that considered the above items were circulated. Many of the changes suggested have already been implemented, Clerk had not noticed any drop in workload pressures and noted that for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 he had worked just over 61 hours, or just under two weeks, in excess of contracted hours. Clerk summarised the actions that had been taken and completed from the above and indicated that maintenance and updating of the website could be done by Councillors.

**RESOLVED** that item be added to the agenda of the next Communications and Social Media Committee meeting to consider items such as website and Facebook updates that may be transferred to this Committee for action, rather than them being undertaken by the Clerk.

**ACTION** for **CLERK** to review suggestions made as a result of the October 2016 meeting and respond.

Concern was expressed at the Clerk's extra hours worked, and it was considered that time off in lieu be considered. **CLERK** to investigate and report if current contract allows for this, also if other training and software would assist. Reported that accounts software provider has been contacted requiring end of year closedown support as was provided for 2015/16.

iii. **Planning Committee meetings. Policy and guidelines for site visits.**

Clerk circulated local Councils regarding this and it is apparent from the few responses received that site visits by Councillors are common, although none of the responders' have policies to cover planning visits. Key points were as follows:

- One Council sends a standard letter to the applicants outlining the planning process and inviting them to attend planning meetings, copy of this circulated.
- Clerk also reported that two emails of complaint had been received in respect of the 10<sup>th</sup> January Planning and Building Committee meeting, one subsequently withdrawn. Parts of each complaint related to possible Councillor Code of Conduct matters, Clerk had responded by sending copies of the Code and details of the Complaints Process as per the public notices displayed in our noticeboards. At the request of the Chair of the Planning Committee the Clerk read out the messages of complaint to the meeting.
- Chair reported that nearly 500 site visits had been in the previous five complete years and that to his knowledge only three complaints had been received specific to planning visits. All of these had been received in the past nine months and related to contentious applications.

The Council is a Statutory Consultee and by law receive copies of all Planning Applications

in the Parish and invited to comment. However, these comments have no higher standing or weight than those of a member of the public.

**RESOLVED** the following: -

**ACTION** for Chair, Vice Chair of Committee and Cllr. Cahan to meet, discuss and agree suggestions for the future running of Planning and Building Committee meetings and site visits in connection applications received; item to appear on agenda of the 21<sup>st</sup> February Planning and Building Committee meeting to consider and agree proposals. **CLERK** to note

**ACTIONS** for Clerk:

Make enquiries of SSALC/SSLCC regarding the following:

- Code of Conduct complaints. As these relate to individual Councillors should details be circulated to all the Councillors? Updated Complaints Policy is to take account of the findings when published.
- "Counter Proposals". Clerk can find no mention of the process surrounding these and will seek advice on this matter. Details to be included in the updated Standing Orders when published.
- Add to agenda of forthcoming Recreation and Burial Committee Meeting item to consider provision /funding of projection screen and broadband as the Rotherfield Scout and Youth Community Hall is a more suitable venue for meetings for which a high public attendance is anticipated.

**iv. Adoption of revised policies, terms of reference and other governance documents.**

No progress to report. **CLERK** to add all existing policies into "Dropbox", **ACTION** for Cllrs. Henrick and the Chairman to review and report progress at February Council Meeting.

**4. RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING.**

- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> Planning and Building Committee
- Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> Highways Lighting and Transport Committee
- Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> Communications and Social Media

Draft minutes of these meetings have been circulated in advance to the Councillors, with the exception of the 24<sup>th</sup> January meeting which will be carried forward to the February Council meeting. It was **RESOLVED** to note and approve the acts and proceedings of these Committee and confirm recommendations contained therein and, as far as requisite, the action taken by them, also that the final wording of the 10<sup>th</sup> January meeting will be agreed at the forthcoming meeting of the Planning and Building Committee.

**5. TO RECEIVE OTHER REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ARISING FROM THEM**

**a) Other committees and sub-committees.**

None.

**b) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**

- Cllr. Gilbert reported that the Village Hall Committee meeting had been cancelled due to snow.
- Cllr. Gilbert attended the Sports Club meeting. Key points were as follows:
  - i. Missing wooden posts on boundary of pitch increase risk of unauthorised vehicle access and damage to pitch, Cllr. Harris will raise priority of repair/replacing these as a matter of urgency.
  - ii. Club are to repair fencing on the batter.
  - iii. Grass bin needs emptying, Cllr. Harris will request Cllr. Martin or Will Clark to deal with this.
  - iv. **CLERK** to add item to agenda of forthcoming Recreation and Burial Committee to

agree terms of contract with Sports Club for grass cutting.

- v. **CLERK** to send details of "...at own risk..." sign at car park entrance to the Club as they believe that the car park does not have one.

Cllr. Harris to please advise estimated cost of items **i** and **iii** so that agreement may be given under section 4.1 of Financial Regulations, **CLERK** to advise Sports Club of these actions.

- Cllr. Henrick attended a meeting of the Millennium Green Trust and reported that they have submitted papers to HMLR for registration of the land to the East of the Station Road car park into the name of the Trust.

**c) Clerk's updates and issues.**

Covered under item 3ii of this agenda.

**d) Items for next Parish Magazine column.**

Suggestions were for features on the Precept and SID.

**6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.**

- **Clerks and Councils Direct** - January 2017 edition
- **SLCC** - Clerk Magazine January 2017
- **St Chéron-en-Bref** - Janvier/Février 2017
- **St Chéron** - Invitation
- **Glasdon** - Park furniture brochure
- **Greenbarnes** - Notice board catalogue
- **St Denys' Church** - Letter of thanks to Cllr. Harris for reading at the Carol service
- **Spa Valley Railway** - "Starter" magazine issue 60

- In addition to the items above, and as noted under item 3iii, two emails have been received from Parishioners with issues and complaints surrounding the 10<sup>th</sup> January Planning and Building Committee meeting. Clerk has forwarded copy of the Code of Conduct, and details of how to raise complaints with the Monitoring Officer at Wealden DC. One of the complainants has subsequently advised that they will not be taking the matter further.
- Cllr Richardson volunteered to be the Council's representative to the Twinning Association, **CLERK** to advise association of this.

**7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS**

- Recreation Ground – at least four pitch side posts require replacing.
- St Denys' Old Burial Ground – various issues raised here, details passed to Chair of Committee who is to arrange weed killing work for the paths.

**8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.**

- **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup>** **Recreation and Burial Committee**
- **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup>** **Planning and Building Committee**
- **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup>** **Monthly Full Council**

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

**9. REPORT DETAILS OF ITEMS AND ISSUES NOTIFIED TO CLERK IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING FOR INVESTIGATION, FURTHER ACTION OR FOR FUTURE AGENDA.**

- Cllr. Gilbert – trees to be cut in the Recreation Ground on the 30th/31st January,

- access to site will be via the batter. **CLERK** to advise Pre School of proposed work.
- Cllr. Martin to arrange site meeting on BW29 at High Cross with Cllrs. Martin, Wickenden and Parishioner to view issues to discuss surface improvements.
- Request from Parishioner to allow access via the car park height barrier (when installed) to park his caravan for one night. **CLERK** to add to agenda of forthcoming Recreation and Burial Committee meeting to discuss whether we wish to grant permission.
- Rotherfield St Martin have approached Cllr. Henrick to present a talk to their members. Subject has yet to be determined.
- Cllr. Watson-Smith reported that two pairs of Raven have been sighted near Saxonbury.
- Clerk reported that the signs on the A26 opposite the Sham Farm junction had now been repaired/restored to good order. Damaged "Rotherfield/40mph" sign on Catts' Hill near Jameah was noted as being in the process of repair when passing by this morning. He has reported both to ESCC Highways via their online reporting system.
- Message of thanks sent by local walkers in respect of the bus shelter at Eridge Forstal under which they had recently sat.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:52

**10. PUBLIC FORUM.**

None.

**Confirmed as a true record at the 23rd February 2017 meeting of the Parish Council with amendments as noted**

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