

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 24TH JULY 2014 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas (Chairman)	Cllr. Mrs. P. Halse-Adamson	Cllr. J. Kitchenham
Cllr. P. Dixon	Cllr. L. Pike	Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. T. Gilbert	Cllr. R. Jaques	

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

Cllr. D. Hiles

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), Cllr. Whetstone (ESCC), Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC) and PcsO Pearce-Martin.

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

Apologies have been received, and were accepted, on behalf of Cllrs. A. Sharpe, Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chairman) and Cllr. Clibbens.

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

None declared. The Chairman reminded the councillors that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one at any point in the meeting.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

Cllr. R. Standley's (ESCC) report was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Key points are as follows:-

ALTERATIONS TO SUBSIDY ON BUS SERVICES.

- County's Cabinet approved a consultation on changes to the subsidy paid to bus operators to keep non-commercial services operating. The transport budget has to make significant savings. The consultation runs for 12 weeks and full details may be viewed on the ESCC website.
- The proposals, if implemented, will save £1.79m a year.
- 91% of all current passengers will be unaffected by the changes and 95% will still have a service 6 days a week.
- To balance the budget ESCC has to make some difficult decisions and changes to bus subsidy comes into that category. Removal of the subsidy does not automatically mean the service will be withdrawn as the bus companies could decide to contribute directly but that is less likely to occur in Rotherfield where the bus use is relatively low and many off peak bus services run with very few passengers.

PRINCIPLE OF THE REVIEW

- Supported peak time services would be largely unchanged.
- Supported off peak currently hourly or better will generally be reduced to 2 hourly and operate Mon-Sat.
- Supported off peak daytime services currently less than hourly will generally reduce to 2 days a week on a 2 hourly service.
- Support for 13 evening and Sunday services withdrawn.
- No immediate changes for pupils attending their nearest school.
- Some evening and Sunday services will be withdrawn unless operators decide to operate them on a commercial basis.

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ESCC PERFORMANCE REPORT

- Council monitoring for Qtr. 4 showed 78% of targets on or above target, which is a good performance. The targets set are stretching targets and whilst it would be easy to set targets that are easily attainable, it would be a pointless exercise.
- As with the Wealden District Council's report, there is concern at the relatively high levels of those killed or seriously injured (KSI) on our roads. It should be noted that speed is not the main factor in accidents but driver error and lack of attention.

STATE OF THE COUNTY REPORT

- This report went to County on Tuesday.
- Whilst the County had a surplus on the revenue account in the last financial year, the challenges in the future are still significant.
- In addition to the £70m to be saved over the period 13/14 to 15/16, it is likely that a further £70m will need to be found in the period 16/17 to 18/19.
- With the national deficit not likely to be eradicated to 18/19 or 19/20, local and national finances are likely to be under pressure.
- Central Government continues to reduce the funding to local government whilst adding to its responsibilities.
- There is scope for savings and the County working closely with the NHS is an area that could produce efficiencies but traditional an area where achieving common ground has been difficult. The increased co-operation between County and NHS is the subject of a report to this week's ESCC Cabinet.

AIRCRAFT NOISE

- Recommends that any concerns relating to this be directed to Charles Hendry, our MP, as he is collating local concerns.

Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) reported the following:-

- Irrespective of the outcome of the 2015 General Election, it is considered that Councils will still be facing budget reductions.
- Community Self Serve "match funding". He has made lead member aware that the scheme will not be of benefit to Councils requiring large schemes funded. He considered that careful thought should be given as to the standard of work required for such projects – could a lower specification reduce the cost?
- CLERK to send details to Cllr. Whetstone of the Parish Council's application for support for the slip road closure at Mark Cross.

Cllr. Merriman (WDC) reported the following:-

- An appeal has been submitted in respect of the refusal of planning consent to extend "Churchsettle" in Church Road.
- He is now part of the WDC "Streets Ahead" initiative, which seeks to identify best practice and ideas for local businesses and share these across the District via local "Champions". The Autumn Parish Conference will share information about this.
- Is investigating issues raised by Parishioners regarding the reduction in frequency of the mobile library visits and proposed reduction in the service frequency of the 226 bus service. Is liaising with Rotherfield St Martin to see if they may be able to become in ways of mitigating the impact of these changes.

Cllr. Pike advised that his recent 70 mile cycle ride had raised £2200 for various local charities and the meeting applauded his success.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT

Pcso Pearce Martin reported the following:-

- Recent issues with cones and parked vans in the Village Centre had been dealt with by the co-operation of the builders concerned.

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- Has reported directly to ESCC her concerns regarding the poor state of the road markings in the village; some yellow lines are indistinct to the point where they may be unenforceable. 30mph roundel in Mayfield Road has been reported as nearly vanished and needing repainting.
- Has attended assembly at Rotherfield School and the Pre School "Tigers" group; tries to be "out and about" at school run time to raise familiarity with local youngsters.
- Has successfully obtained a £200 grant from Police Property Act funds for the Pre School to take some anti - vandalism measures.
- Has undertaken some speed checks in Mayfield and is to be trained on use of the speed camera. Is trying to locate a safe spot to undertake this activity in Station Road.

The Councillors thanked PcsO Pearce-Martin for the pro-active approach she has shown since her appointment to serve the Parish.

- 5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26TH JUNE 2014 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.**
The name of Councillor Clibbens, who was erroneously omitted from the list of Councillors present, was added to the minutes. It was then RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th June 2014, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, be confirmed as a true record and the Chairman signed them.

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

Clerk reported that all issues and actions have been dealt with or are ongoing.

- 7. TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS IF REQUIRED REGARDING ACTION FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:-**

- a) Response to Wealden District Council in respect of the following Consultations.**

- i. Review of Polling Places.**

WDC have asked to be made aware of any issues with the three Parish polling stations shown, and any suggestions of alternative venues:-

- Rotherfield Village Hall
- Eridge Village Hall
- Mark Cross Village Hall

RESOLVED to respond that Mark Cross Village Hall was not an ideal location due to the lack of safe parking and the need to cross the A267 to access it for many of the Parishioners in the village. The Community Room at the Church was identified as a possible alternative, subject to WDC investigation, CLERK to report to WDC.

- ii. Re-appraisal of existing Conservation Areas.**

This was

A working group of Councillors recently discussed this and their recommendations have just been circulated to the Councillors. RESOLVED CLERK to add item to agenda of 5th August Planning and Building Committee meeting so that a response may be agreed to this consultation, deadline for which is 18th August.

- iii. Consultation re: Draft Housing Strategy 2014-16.**

Circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. In view of short timescale to consider a response RESOLVE that CLERK carry forward to the agenda of the August Council meeting to agree a response to WDC.

- b) Further actions arising from recent SLR meeting with ESCC Highways Officers.**

Minutes of this meeting circulated prior to the meeting. Concerns remain with the lack of progress for the following:-

- Reissue of Traffic Order consultation to enable the "zig zag" no parking markings by the Parish Schools to be made legally enforceable, together with the sealing of the Order to make the lines by St Denys' Church and Eridge Station enforceable.
- Repainting of yellow lines in centre of Rotherfield.

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- Clearance of blocked drains and gullies, particularly in the Village Centre, Mayfield Road and North Street.
CLERK to chase/monitor.

With regard to the campaign to discourage the use of Catt's Hill/Station Road by large vehicles it has been suggested that a petition be drawn up, sponsored by the Parish Council, so that the depth of feeling on this issue may be demonstrated to ESCC. CLERK to draw up document for circulation to Councillors.

c) Oil Spill on Recreation Ground – update and further action.

Loss assessor for third party's insurers has contacted Solicitor. Whilst still disputing scale of damage and cost of repair they have made an initial offer of just over £3K. Based on Solicitor's recommendations it was RESOLVED that CLERK take the following actions:-

- Instruct solicitors to enquire of third party's loss assessor of their precise requirements for the number, scale and depth of Core Sample tests they feel necessary to substantiate the scale of damage.
- Present this information to Testing Company so that the cost of sampling and testing, which will ultimately be met by the third party, may be established.

d) Update and actions arising from recent meeting to discuss plans for the Scout Hut.

Site meeting held recently, key points discussed were as follows:-

- Refurbishment work proposed would leave hut with external appearance similar to the Pre School.
- Rotherfield Trust has indicated that grant funding may be available toward cost of work subject to 20% contribution toward cost (estimated in region of £100K) being made by the Scouts.
- Option to transfer ownership of building to Council, and lease/licence back to Scouts. This may enable Vat element of refurbishment to be reclaimed.
- Current licence restricts use of hut; Scouts would like more flexibility to hire out hut for other "young persons" activities.
- Council suggest that local businesses be approached for contributions toward the work, grant funding from the Council may be available but would require consideration for inclusion in next year's budget.

It is understood that the Scouts are to provide written summary to the Council of their aspirations for the hut, CLERK to add item to agenda of forthcoming Recreation and Burial Committee meeting to discuss further.

e) Report and recommendations from working group arising from recent meeting with Mayfield Parish Council concerning the former "Cuckoo Line" land in both Parishes.

Clerk is awaiting further information from Mayfield PC regarding possible dates and location and will add to agenda of forthcoming Highways Committee meeting on 9th September.

f) Arrangements for issues arising during Clerk's Holiday and custody of Burial Records.

RESOLVED the following arrangements:-

Burial Records –

To be retained by the Chairman of the Recreation and Burial Committee, two unused ashes/burial plots will be allocated provisionally and advised to the two main local Funeral Directors.

Agenda/papers.

Clerk will publish and circulate notes for the 5th August Planning and Building Committee meeting. Clerk will liaise with Chair of Recreation and Burial Committee meeting scheduled for August 19th, agenda will need to be circulated and added to noticeboards no later than Thursday 14th August.

Live issues

Clerk to provide Chairman with summary of these and relevant contact details.
Phone/email - These will be set to direct urgent enquiries only to the Chairman.

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g) ESCC Consultation regarding proposed changes to subsidised bus services in the Parish.

Clerk has publicised issue locally via email, website, Twitter, added notices to several Parish bus stops and contacted several known users and Rotherfield St Martin. Feature is to appear in the August and September editions of the "Magazine". Major change proposed is to reduce service 226 so that it runs only on a Wednesday and Saturday rather than Monday to Saturday. Cllr. Standley (ESCC) urged that all those who may be affected should make their views known to ESCC; the outcome of the consultation should not be viewed as being already decided. Clerk advised that there is also a Wadhurst – Mayfield – Crowborough "Beacon link" service 224 that runs on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Wadhurst, Mayfield and Crowborough Councils support this in the region of £2.5K each per annum. Service passes through Rotherfield but does not call; Parish Council had not taken up offer of a few years ago to assist financially as the service timings largely duplicate that of the 226. It is considered that cost saving could be achieved by looking at ways of combining these two services. Item has been added to agenda of September 9th Highways Committee meeting to discuss Council's formal response to the Consultation.

h) Invitation for Tree Wardens to attend the Southern Tree Warden Forum in September, cost £15 per candidate.

RESOLVED that our tree wardens, Cllrs. Gilbert and Wickenden. CLERK to arrange booking and issue of cheque at August meeting. Clerk advised that he is drawing a document relating to delegate powers for consideration by the Council and that ways of "streamlining" course bookings such as this will be featured.

i) Quote for printing and mailing additional Annual Newsletters.

The address file for Eridge/Mark Cross Ward was erroneously omitted from the submission to the printers, hence the reduce cost of the print run. Quote for additional copies (320) is £242 plus £121 for postage, total £363 plus Vat. Reminder set up for future years to ensure both files submitted. RESOLVED to proceed with production and dispatch of additional Newsletters, CLERK to action.

j) Quote from Wicksteed leisure for replacement swing seats.

Identified as a low risk item at recent inspection, Wicksteed have quoted £304.84 plus Vat if this job is done at the same time as the medium risk work to the climbing frame of £399 plus Vat agreed at recent R & B Committee meeting. RESOLVED to proceed with this work, CLERK to action.

**k) Update and further action to progress recommendations of the Land Acquisition Advisory Group
During consideration of this item the public are to be excluded from the meeting under s1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the commercial sensitivity of the matter being discussed.**

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

- 1st July – Highways Lighting and Transport Committee.
- 15th July – Planning and Building Committee.

CLERK to recirculate the Highways Committee minutes to Councillors. Concerns expressed that the Planning minutes did not reflect that the responsibility for confirming that planning consent was not required for the replacement storage unit by the Clubhouse in the Recreation Ground rests with the Sports Club. Clerk advised that this should be considered when the minutes are presented for confirmation as a true record at the 5th August Planning and Building Committee.

Minutes of both the above Committee meetings to be carried forward to August meeting so that adoption may be considered.

9. TO RECEIVE REPORTS

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

- Working Group of Councillor's is to present recommendations re: Conservation Area consultation at the 5th August Planning and Building Committee meeting.

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- **Councillor “Have Your Say” session and arrangements for the next session.**
 - No August session – next session is on Saturday September 13th 10:30 – 11:30 in the Memorial Institute, Cllrs. Thomas and Harris are hosting.
 - Councillors attended the “Fiesta” and received comments from Parishioners regarding matters including traffic in the village, proposed uses for redundant “Cuckoo Line” land for a right of way and aircraft noise.
- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**
 - Cllrs. Wickenden and Thomas attended the Sussex Resilience Conference at Herstmonceux. Subjects covered included defibrillator provision and use, and the importance of having emergency plans in place.
 - Cllr. Thomas was appointed a Vice President of the Wealden District Association of Local Councils at their recent meeting.
 - Cllr. Gilbert attended the recent Village Hall meeting. Hall wish to put gravel on the length of path behind the hall not currently covered; also enquired if Council wished for a new sound-deadening panel for the serving hatch into the Parish Council Room. CLERK to confirm to Hall that they agree with both suggestions.
 - Site meeting held at St Denys’ with representative of the Church and WDC who are responsible for maintaining this closed churchyard. Various works to trees in the churchyard are proposed by WDC, CLERK to add item to forthcoming Recreation and Burial Committee meeting agenda to feedback the WDC report on this.
- **Clerk’s report and issues**
None.

10. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- **Bank Reconciliation as at end of June 2014 and review of expenditure against Budget to date. Reports.**

These were circulated to the Councillors in advance of the meeting. There were no matters arising and it was RESOLVED that these be signed by the Chairman.

- **Approval of Payments.**

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

Payee Name	Cheque	Amount	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
Rotherfield Sports Club	001793	£315.00		Grass cutting for July
The LoF of Rotherfield Surgery	001794	£75.00	November PCM 2013	Insce. costs contribution
C.P.R.E.	001795	£36.00	Dec 13 F&GP meeting	Annual subscription
Rotherfield Village Hall	001796	£42.45		June Hall Hire
Direct365Online Ltd	001797	£207.48	June 14 R&B meeting	Annual fee Hall bin
Rotherfield St Martin	001798	£30.00	June 2014 PCM	Stall at Fiesta - contribution
Tollwood Garden Service	001799	£2,100.00		July grass and hedge cutting
Trevor Thorpe	001800	£1,478.40		July salary
H M R C	001801	£491.75		July Tax and NI
Trevor Thorpe	001802	£107.38		July expenses/reimbursements
A.C. Moaby	001803	£319.00		Work in CMG and Rec.
		Total Payments	£5,202.46	

11. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

General Correspondence

- St Denys’ Church – Thanks for allowing use of Court Meadow Green for Church social event
- Parishioner – Complaint re: non-receipt of Annual Newsletter in Eridge (see 7i above), size of precept increase and cost of surfacing Chant Lane. Details and response (compiled by Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair) circulated prior to meeting.

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- Friends of Crowborough CAB – Invitation to AGM on July 23rd. Circulated prior to meeting.
- WDC – Invitation to Parish Planning Conference 27th November Hailsham. Circulated prior to meeting. CLERK to put forward Cllrs. Dixon and Wickenden to attend this meeting.
- Withyham Parish Council – Gatwick Flight Paths - Information re proposal for group of Sussex Parishes to be formed to discuss/take action regarding this issue. CLERK to respond stating as this issue does not appear to affect the village we will not be participating.
- Wealden CAB – invitation to AGM 2nd December in Uckfield. Council will send a representative, CLERK to respond and note reminder for nearer the date.

Magazines and Circulars

- Clerks and Council Direct – July 2014.
- WDC Parish Bulletin – July 2014.
- Sussex Area Ramblers – “Now Open” July 2014.
- The Clerk Magazine – July 2014.

12. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were signed by the Chairman. No issues or incidents relating to Council owned land have been reported by the Public.

13. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- August 5th - Planning and Building Committee
- August 19th - Recreational and Burial Committee
- August 26th - Planning and Building Committee
- August 28th - Monthly Council Meeting

All of these meetings are to be held in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall, starting at 19:30.

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

- Clerk has posted notices advising of vacancy of the Council to be filled by co-option and decided at the August meeting. Two application forms returned so far, these are to be forwarded to the Councillors.
- Parish Guide – Clerk is putting final touches to this, anticipated that the guide will be dispatched by Royal Mail in September as delivery space needs to be booked in advance. Around 100 guides cannot be dispatched by this method as their addresses are outside the “TN6 3” category although still within the Parish boundary.
- CLERK to purchase 2 “no parking” cones for Council use, initially to mark uncleared gully in North Street so that it is not blocked by parked cars, thus enabling ESCC contractor to clear.
- CLERK to chase ESCC re: previously reported “day burning” bracket street lamp opposite Orchard Cottages in Station Road.
- CLERK to chase Kier regarding quote for signs in Rec. so that Tony Moaby can install them.
- CLERK to ask Tony Moaby for quote to supply/plant bulbs as part of tidying work around Lime Trees in the Square.
- Holly Tree at foot of twitten by Catt’s Inn is overgrowing path, CLERK to investigate/request owner to cut.
- CLERK to enquire of ESCC whether ESC Highways have undertaken spraying alongside roads. Station Road does not appear to have been dealt with.
- CLERK to enquire of ESCC regarding progress with insurance claim for damage caused earlier in the year by a lorry stuck under Town Row Bridge.
- Chairman is liaising with plant specialist regarding provision of specimens for the triangle by the parking area opposite Mark Cross Church. Tony Moaby will be asked to quote for planting.
- Cllr. Kitchenham was advised that bollards at Town Row reported by him as damaged are on private land and not the responsibility of ESCC.
- Concern raised regarding the agenda item on land; due to the length of discussions on this item the excluded public left and thus did not have the opportunity to comment in the Public Forums. It is suggested that future items justifying public exclusion be put at the end of the meeting and the public forum held immediately before, thus allowing public comment on items discussed in the meeting.

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ROOTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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15. PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR THE CLERK IN THE MONTH AHEAD.

Clerk will endeavour to finalise and circulate draft Standing Orders and Code of Conduct for consideration at the August meeting. Next to be dealt with are the financial regulations and delegated powers.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 22:15.

16. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Confirmed as a true record at the 28th August 2014 meeting of the Council

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