

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 19TH DECEMBER 2013 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chairman)
Cllr. Miss. N. Bolton
Cllr. C. Clibbens
Cllr. T. Gilbert

Cllr. Mrs. P. Halse-Adamson
Cllr. R. Harris
Cllr. D. Hiles
Cllr. R. Jaques
Cllr. J. Kitchenham

Cllr. A. Sharpe
Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. Mrs. A. Watson
Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC) and three members of the public.

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

Apologies were tendered and accepted on behalf of Cllr. W. Rutherford (WDC) and PcsO Matt Boyle.

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

None. 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. Standley (ESCC) reported the following:-

A written report from Cllr. Standley was circulated prior to the meeting and the following key points were featured:-

- Day Centre Closures. Suitable alternative provision will be made before any closures take place.
- Concessionary bus passes. Start time for use will now be 0930, in line with much of the Country, rather than the current 0900.
- Palesgate Lane byway. He has raised surface issues with the ESCC Rights of Way team, an Officer has recently visited and a report is awaited.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT

The following report was delivered by the Clerk on behalf of PcsO Boyle:-

- Shed broken into in Mark Cross and some very expensive custom built road bicycles were stolen, This is still a problem over Wealden and the Police would urge everyone who has garden tools such as chainsaws, strimmers and mowers to get a shed alarm which can be purchased quite cheaply now and to report any suspicious activity to the Police.
- Some plant pots were taken from a property on North Street, they were of the “old tyre” style used for planting on their drive.
- Parking outside General Store
 - 02/12 11:30 All clear no cars parked there.
 - 12/12 15:30 cars coming and going.
 - 16/12 Morning checked cars coming and going.
 - 17/12 11:10 cars checked then gone later.
 - 18/12 checked around 1030.

5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28TH NOVEMBER 2013 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th November 2013, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, be confirmed as a true record. They were signed by the Chairman.

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

Cfwd from October.

7 b) Have had no success in getting a response from the Ashford based company who produce a Crowborough Guide, apparently entirely independently of the Town Council. Has now learnt that the company has ceased trading. Local Authority Publishing, based at Upper Dicker, has been contacted and they will send proposals to us.

7 g) Clerk will compile a draft "Emergency contact list" for circulation and comment.

November meeting

7 a) Landlord and Allotment Association contacted for possible dates.

7 e) Quotes and information obtained for signs, will add to January agenda.

7 i) Matter being pursued by Cllr. Standley, also added to SLR agenda for January.

7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:-

a) Adoption of Council's combined budget for 2014-15 and recommendation of the Finance and General Purpose Committee in respect of Precept request for submission to Wealden District Council.

Details of the Budget and Precept recommended by the Finance and General Purpose Committee were circulated prior to meeting and discussed. It was RESOLVED that these Budget and Precept figures be adopted unchanged; the Chairman and Clerk completed and signed the document for sending to Wealden District Council. The figures involved are contained in the supplement to these minutes. Cllr. Kitchenham is to prepare press release regarding reasons for precept increase.

b) Recommendation from FG&P Committee re: Clerk's hours and Clerk's holiday request for February.

Clerk has requested that consideration be given to increase hours from the 30 per week contracted to 33pw; over the past year has averaged just under 32 hours worked per week. Estimate that this will increase monthly pay cost by £151.65 and £20.92 in additional NI. For complete year assuming no changes to the various rates, the total figure for pay and employer NI is £22155.00. It was proposed from the Chair that the increase in hours be agreed in view of Clerk's efforts and it was RESOLVED to approve this. CLERK to update records and complete formal advice letter. Holiday dates of 20th and 21st February 2014 were also AGREED.

c) Recommendation from FG&P Committee for purchase of Alpha Software package for Council's accounts.

This Software package is used by many Parishes. RBS quote £627 for purchase and set up, of system, £107 pa thereafter for support and maintenance. This company are not associated in any way with the Royal Bank of Scotland. Clerk reported that the various spreadsheets used for financial reports involve duplicated effort to update; the quality of the information provided by them could also be improved. RESOLVED to purchase this accounts package, CLERK to organise.

d) WD/2013/2410/WEA Land at Steel Cross Crowborough TN6 2XB Construction of 103 Dwellings and associated works.

Land is within Crowborough Town Council area but is immediately adjacent to Rotherfield Parish. The Parish Council recommends that this application be REFUSED by Wealden District Council. It is within the High Weald AONB and not contained in the Local Plan. It is considered that the local Utilities and Highway infrastructure would be inadequate for this development and the subsequent increase in vehicle movements.

e) Briar House Farm, Dewlands Hill, Rotherfield – Comments to Planning Inspectorate in respect of appeal against enforcement notices issued by Wealden District Council reference.

RESOLVED to comment that the Parish Council fully support the enforcement action taken by Wealden District Council in relation to activity and developments at this site.

f) WD/2013/2404/F Sandhill Cottage, Sand Hill Lane, Eridge Green, Tunbridge Wells TN3 9LW.

Proposed demolition of the existing stables. re-locate within site to line through with main dwelling, reconstruction in architectural style to match the existing including basement excavation to include gym, swimming pool and associated rooms for private/family use.

The Parish Council recommends that this application be REFUSED by Wealden District Council as it is an overdevelopment of the site and inappropriate for the area.

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- g) **WD/2013/2480/OH** The Dairy House, Rocks Farm, Boars Head, Crowborough.
Refurbishment of existing high voltage overhead cabling.
The Parish Council recommends that this application be APPROVED by Wealden District Council and recommend that consideration is given to placing the cables underground as this will enhance the appearance of this area in the AONB and give resilience against weather damage.
- h) **Agreement and signature of agreement with Sutcliffe Play to provide and install new play equipment.**
It was RESOLVED that the document be signed by Chair and Vice Chair, CLERK to forward to company.
- i) **Rescission of resolution from item 7b) on the agenda of the 28th November Council meeting and to reconsider decision regarding amount of grant for payment to Wealden CAB.**
Written notice from three Councillors has been received under the terms of Standing Order 11 to request that the original grant level of £350 be reconsidered. It was RESOLVED that the grant be increased to £600 to reflect the valuable support that the CAB offer to the Community, CLERK to arrange issue of cheque at January meeting.
- j) **Payment to landowner for Cemetery water costs, estimated at £10 for year.**
Water supply now shut off for the winter season to prevent frost damage. Reading indicates that 6.13 cubic metres used since November 2012, which is just under £10 by SE Water tariff. RESOLVED that £20 be paid to landowner providing the supply to reflect usage and a contribution toward standing charge. CLERK to arrange cheque for January meeting.
- k) **Request for support from the Millennium Green Trust to purchase bag dispensers for the Green.**
Trust have had a quote of £269.70 plus Vat to provide 2 x dispensers, post, fixings and bag supply and seek financial support from the Council toward this. Cllr. Harris declared an interest at this point, as he is a Trustee of the Green. Meeting considered that fouling is an issue in this area and source of complaint despite there being two dog bins in place. RESOLVED that CLERK investigate if it is permissible for Council to purchase these items for the Trust and donate to them, reclaim Vat and for Trust to donate back half of cost.
- l) **Quote for replacement lantern unit for lamp column 17 High Cross B2101.**
RESOLVED to accept ESCC quote for a new style 16 LED 30w lantern at a cost of £494.13 plus Vat. Lamp is not to be "part night". CLERK to arrange.
- m) **"Leaflet Drop" to encourage participation in Snow Clearing Team and H & S Guidelines for Team Members.**
Leaflets as agreed have been printed for Cllr. Watson to distribute in Village Centre. Clerk has produced draft information and guidelines for volunteers, it was RESOLVED that these be approved after amendments agreed at the meeting. CLERK to print supply for use and a checklist to record volunteer names, contact details and signature to confirm that they have received the document.
8. **TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MATTERS ARISING.**
– 10th December Planning and Building Committee.
– 10th Finance and General Purpose Committee.
Draft minutes of the above meetings have been circulated to all Councillors. It was RESOLVED that they all be adopted by the Full Council.
9. **TO RECEIVE REPORTS**
- **Other committees and sub-committees.**
None.
 - **Councillor "Have Your Say" session.**
14th December Village Institute hosted by Cllrs. Thomas and Harris. Three villagers attended and the following issues were raised:-
 - i. Vehicles parked opposite the Institute are causing an obstruction to traffic and an extension to the yellow lines is needed here. CLERK to follow up with ESCC as it is hoped that this will be included in the amended consultation required in connection with the double yellow lines by the Schools at Mark Cross.
 - ii. Vehicles parked at the foot of Spout Hill in Town Row create a hazard. CLERK to add to agenda of next Highways Committee meeting.

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iii. There is a lack of visible Police presence in the Village. Suggestion has been made that Parish could seek to jointly fund a "Special Constable" with another Parish; the advantage being that this Constable would have power of arrest not currently available to a PcsO.

• **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council**

None.

• **Clerk's report and issues.**

None.

10. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation and review of expenditure against Budget to end of November 2013. It was RESOLVED that these be accepted and the Chairman signed them.
- Approval of Payments. It was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

PAYMENTS

| CHEQUE NO | PAYEE | DETAILS | AMOUNT |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 801695 | Trevor Thorpe | Clerk's salary for December | £1,287.96 |
| 801696 | H.M.R.C. | Tax and N.I. for December | £385.72 |
| 801697 | Trevor Thorpe | Clerk's expenses for December | £109.91 |
| 801698 | Rotherfield Village Hall | Hall hire for meetings - November | £33.00 |
| 801699 | Konica Minolta | Lease and usage charges for photocopier | £65.91 |
| 801700 | Nordis Signs | Sign for Court Meadow Green | £31.20 |
| 801701 | NALC | Copy of "Local Councils Explained" | £54.99 |
| 801702 | Festive Illuminations | Installation of Village Christmas Lighting | £410.00 |
| 801703 | Redgate Mill Fencing and Timber | Supply and installation of bus shelter in Station Road | £3,318.00 |
| 801704 | Norris and Fisher | Additional insurance premium for bus shelter, Rec. pitch drainage system and car park surface | £149.60 |
| 801705 | Information Commissioner | Renewal of Data Protection Registration | £35.00 |
| 801706 | PJI Contract Packers Ltd | Street sweeping and litter picking | £180.00 |
| Total | | | £6,061.29 |

CREDITS

| PAYMENT FROM | DETAILS | AMOUNT |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Santander Bank | Interest on 4711394 for November | £49.18 |
| Paul Bysouth Funeral Services | Ashes interment fee omitted in error from last month, cheque already banked | £55.00 |
| Burslem | Memorial inscription fee | £35.00 |
| A. Cowley | Fee for memorial plaque on Wall of Remembrance | £90.00 |
| Total | | £229.18 |

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11. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

GENERAL

- **CPRE** – Information regarding campaign against “Mayfield’s New Town” in mid Sussex and appeal for financial support.
- **WDC** – Information regarding “Streets Ahead” project for village and town businesses and notice of an event on Wednesday 14th March 2014 further details TBA.
- **WDC** – Information regarding dates, times and venues regarding planning training for Clerks and Councillors in 2014.

CIRCULARS AND MAGAZINES

- **NALC** – LCR Winter 2013 edition
- **Sussex Area Ramblers** – Now Open December 2013.
- **St Chéron-en-Bref** – No 302. Chairman is to circulate details of a recent “on line” newsletter from the Town featuring St Denys’ Church.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

- **WD/2011/1013/FR** The Old Cowshed, Bullfinches Farm, Eridge Green – Information from WDC regarding Planning Inspectorate decision regarding appeal against refusal of change of use.

12. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were signed by the Chairman, no health and safety issues had been identified by the reports. No comments or concerns have been raised by the public in connection with Parish owned land.

13. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 7th January - Planning and Building Committee.
- 14th January – Highways Lighting and Transport Committee.
- 22nd January – SLR Meeting with ESCC Highways 13:30.
- 28th January - Planning and Building Committee – **Memorial Institute.**
- 30th January – Monthly Council Meeting– **Memorial Institute.**

Meetings are in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall, and start at 19:30 other than where noted.

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

- **CLERK** to add following items to agenda of 7th January Planning and Building Committee meeting:-
 - Consider quotes from Tony Moaby for tidying work in and adjoining Court Meadow Green, and work associated with preparing lower field at Cemetery for use in the medium term.
 - Clerk to contact Will Clark regarding cutting of verges on Rotherfield Hill.
 - Village Hall has expressed concern at the high cost quoted for the new sign on the corner by the “Stores” giving directions to Rec and Hall. **CLERK** to add item to agenda of next Highways meeting to discuss options for this.
 - **CLERK** to investigate and obtain quotes from Tony Moaby for the following:-
 - Infilling between concrete base and kerb to reduce trip hazard at the Town Row and Station Road bus shelters.
 - Additional bollards at front of Hall to discourage vehicle damage to grass.
- **CLERK** to investigate build-up of leaf debris at New Road end of “Twitten” and liaise with street cleaner to remove.
- Chairman to provide spare key for Clerk for padlock to gate by side of Cemetery
- **CLERK** to chase progress with welding of shrouds over Rec. barrier locks and ensure work completed during Christmas break.
- Chairman has cleaned village sign by laybys and cut back overgrowing Heather in Cemetery.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 22:00 and invited those present to be his guest for light refreshments and drinks.

15. PUBLIC FORUM.

Clerk was thanked for his efforts for dealing with the actions generated by the 40 plus meetings held by the Council annually. It is considered that he is an asset to the Parish.

Confirmed as a true record at the 30th January 2014 meeting of the Council

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