

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 24th MAY 2011 AT 19:30 IN ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS ATTENDING

Cllr. L. Pike
Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson
Cllr. Miss. N. Bolton
Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. R. Harris
Cllr C. Prince
Cllr. N. Wickenden

One member of the public attended the meeting.

1. TO ELECT A CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR THIS COMMITTEE.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr. C. Prince continue as Chair and that Cllr. D. Thomas would be Vice-Chair.

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

None.

3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr. Wickenden declared a personal interest in respect of item 8 iv) as he is a member of the Trust.

4. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15TH FEBRUARY 2011 AS A TRUE RECORD.

It was RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted and the Chairman signed them.

5. TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.

There were no matters arising.

6. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.

7. Allotments

i. Draft agreement between Council and Horticultural Association for operation of the allotments and related issues.

A formal agreement is in place between the Parish Council and the landowner, plot holders of allotments sign an agreement with the Horticultural Association regarding the day to day running of their of the plots. The need for a formal agreement between the Council and Associations has been identified and a copy of a draft of this was circulated prior to the meeting. The meeting was adjourned whilst John Richardson, who manages the plots for the Association, addressed the meetings to detail various issues and concerns. The key points were as follows:-

- Allotment established for around 12 years, there are 20 plots, 24 plot holders (some plots have been divided) and a waiting list.
- There are issues with deer entering the site, however the cost of a fence to stop this has been estimated at £2000 and is unaffordable. An electric fence has been suggested as a cheaper alternative.
- There are on going issues with the water company billing and meter readings.

The Council RESOLVED the following regarding the allotments:-

- a) To grant permission to the Association for an electric fence at their expense to deter deer provided that Landowner is prepared to consent to this, the Association will approach him.
- b) CLERK to redraft and circulate agreement form to incorporate items from the Association's agreement with their tenants.
- c) CLERK to investigate and report regarding provision of disabled access to the allotments and also risk assessment of the allotments.

The Association's offer to submit an annual report regarding the allotments was accepted.

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8. Recreation ground.

i. Issues and action required identified by risk assessments and arrangements for future checks.

As David Clark has stood down as a Councillor there is a vacancy for someone to undertake the weekly safety checks in the Play area. Clerk recommends that a simple gauge be constructed to ensure that ground clearance of the roundabout is within recommended range of between 60mm – 110mm. Cllr. Harris has volunteered to undertake the weekly safety checks and updated forms have been provided for him. Cllr. Prince is to replace the broken wooden bollard at the car park entrance.

ii. Information regarding outstanding works relating to the Pre School building and request from Pre School for improving the surface of the access drive on a shared cost basis.

Clerk has contacted contractors raising concerns regarding the grading of the banks, driveway and service trench, and reseeding but has yet to receive a response. It is understood that a post construction meeting is to be held, have contacted ESCC for details. Pre school have requested that consideration be given to improve surface of the driveway on a “50/50” costs basis with the Council. RESOLVED to investigate cost of a “spray on” surface for this once regrading issues have been addressed by the contractors.

iii. Any grass & hedge cutting issues in the recreation ground, St Denys’ and the Parish Cemetery.

Cllr. Pike is to trim the new hedge bordering Cemetery and the parking area. CLERK to monitor hedge in front of the Village Hall and weed killing of pathways in Burial Ground and Cemetery.

iv. Information supporting a request from the Sussex Wildlife Trust to run a Forest School on behalf of the Pre School in the lower recreation ground.

A site specific risk assessment has been provided and confirmation of £10m public liability cover. RESOLVED to allow this to proceed, any fires to be on a metal surface to protect ground. Trust to be advised that there is some barbed wire in the bottom hedge/fence.

v. Request from School for permission to hold a “Camp Out” in the Recreation Ground during weekend of 17th – 19th June.

Further information provided but it is still not known whether the event will take place. Will be using toilets in scout hut and concerns expressed that these may prove insufficient. CLERK to add to agenda of 7th June Planning Meeting for further consideration if more information has been provided.

vi. Quote for painting barriers in the Recreation Ground and seats at top of New Road and Hornshurst Road.

£350 to include provision of increased public liability cover to £5m. RESOLVED to accept the quote, CLERK to arrange with contractor.

vii. Consider contribution to Sports Club toward fencing work.

Fence now complete along top of bank, cost was £960 reflecting that labour was provided from within the Club and hence the only cost was materials. RESOLVED not to contribute to cost of this. Cllrs. Pike and Prince are to inspect trees on bank above bottom pitch to see which ones are suitable for trimming or other work with a view to Council arrange for this to be done by their contractor.

9. St Denys’ Burial Ground

i. Issues and action required identified by risk assessments and arrangements for future checks.

As David Clark has stood down as a Councillor, there is a vacancy for someone to undertake the monthly safety checks. No significant outstanding issues, “no dogs” sign has been installed and the Knotweed has so far not reappeared. Cllr. Harris has volunteered to undertake monthly check and updated forms provided for him. It is understood that a parishioner is to donate a replacement bench as the current one is in poor condition.

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ii. Information regarding Wealden District Council's forthcoming consultation meeting regarding best policy for maintenance of closed churchyards and the Parish Council's response.

Earlier in the year Wealden DC considered the levy of a "Special Expense" on the eight Parishes from whom they have taken on the maintenance responsibility of their closed burial grounds. For the care of the St Denys' Churchyard £6.73 p.a. per household was planned, based on 1280 properties in the Parish this would collect £8614. A decision was made at WDC Full Council meeting that this charge should not be levied. However a meeting is to be held on June 27th with the Clerk's of the 8 Parishes involved to consult on ways of formulating the best policy to deliver maintenance of burial grounds. CLERK to raise issue of obligations toward the wall in Moons' Yard and also enquire of the PCC if they make a contribution toward the grass cutting undertaken by WDC.

iii. Information from Wealden District Council regarding the retaining wall and bank between St Denys' Churchyard and Moon's Yard.

No update on this has been received from WDC.

iv. Any further works required to the Burial Ground.

Clerk to check if clearance of brambles in the hedges and on some of the graves included in cut specification and investigator removal of elders growing on the right hand side of the footpath.

10. Rotherfield Parish Cemetery

i. Issues and action required identified by risk assessments and arrangements for future checks.

Local plumber has provided quote for replacement of damaged tap that CLERK will arrange under his delegated repairs limit. Plumber points out that tap should have been installed with a drain cock and suggested that original installer should be approached to rectify this omission, however it is understood that they have ceased trading and he is to be requested to quote for this work.

ii. Arrangements for introducing dedicated ashes interment plots to the Cemetery and memorial plaques to the Remembrance Wall.

Draft plan has been drawn up to show the proposed ashes plots by the hedge and Wall and this was examined at the meeting.

RESOLVED the following:-

- a) Plot sizes are to be 18" x 18", plaques to be 6" x 4" (or metric equivalent) of previously agreed design.
- b) Area bordering the Eridge Lane hedge is to be utilised for ashes interments as per plan provided, area fronting the Wall of Remembrance will not be used for ashes interments.
- c) Only the side panels of the wall are to be used for plaques with a spacing of 2" between each one and layout as per draft plan.
- d) Ashes may be interred in an urn or directly into plots. Scattering of ashes is not permitted.
- e) Ashes do not need to be in the Cemetery for a plaque to be installed on the Wall.
- f) All future new ashes interments are to be in ashes plots unless they are in to a grave space for which the rights are already held.
- g) Floral tributes for ashes interments may be placed by the relevant plot for a period not exceeding one calendar month after interment and must be removed or Council will remove.

CLERK to arrange this and production of final plans together with update and circulation of new fees and guidelines to local funeral directors.

CLERK to arrange for cut of lower field by Cemetery. Templates will be required for plaques and ashes plots.

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11. **TO RECEIVE URGENT ISSUES FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA**
 - CLERK to arrange for Amenity Lane grass cut before August Bank Holiday weekend to allow “Coffee morning” to be held by Friends of the Surgery.
12. **TO RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE.**
 - September 27th 19:30 in the Village Hall.
13. **PUBLIC FORUM.** None.

The meeting closed at 21:30.

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

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