

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 ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 26TH APRIL 2012 AT 19:30 IN ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chairman)	Cllr. C. Dennison	Cllr. C. Prince
Cllr. Miss N. Bolton (Vice Chair)	Cllr. M. Hall	Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson	Cllr. R. Harris	Cllr. A. Watson
Cllr. C. Clibbens	Cllr. R. Jaques	Cllr. N. Wickenden

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Cllr, R. Tidy (ESCC) and Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC).
- Seven members of the public.
- Jo Evans and Andy Miller from Rotherfield St. Martin.

Prior to the formal business of the meeting, a period of quiet reflection was held to remember the life and work for the community of Cllr. John Padfield.

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

Apologies for absence were tendered and accepted Cllr. F. Whetstone and Pcs0 Matt Boyle.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None. The Chair reminded Councillors that if at any point in the meeting they became aware that they had an interest in an item being discussed they should declare it.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC) reported the following:-

Copies of Cllr. Merriman's report were circulated and he highlighted the key points as follows:-

- A consultation was being undertaken on modifications to the WDC Core strategy, deadline for comment is May 25th.
- The Olympic Torch relay was passing through some Wealden Communities.
- The deadline was approaching to apply for closure notices in connection with Jubilee events; he is able to assist with the documentation for this if necessary. Wealden are also offering grants to support community events and he is willing to assist with these.
- Wealden is campaigning to highlight benefits available and is encouraging those eligible to claim them.
- They will be a by election to fill the vacancy in the Mark Cross and Withyham Ward and he is keen to encourage candidates from the community and happy to help with information if anyone wishes to stand.

Clerk posed a question relating to the Core Strategy Consultation. A Parishioner has raised a concern regarding an item relating to developments within 7km of the boundary of the Ashdown Forest. It appears they may be expected to contribute toward the Forest. CLERK is to pass details on to Cllr. Merriman relating to this query.

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Cllr R. Tidy (ESCC) reported the following:-

- Has recently visited Mark Cross with Cllr. Whetstone and the Assistant Director of Environment and Transport for ESCC to see at first hand the issues relating to the A267.
- The LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) is made up of the Kent, Essex and East Sussex County Councils to administer the “Growing Places” fund of £8m to develop economic regeneration. Two areas in Hastings had benefited from this and the resulting office spaces and industrial park is estimated to generate 4.5K jobs.
- County are trying to identify the many “unknown” carers in the community, it is recognised that the support they give is worth much in cash terms and it is wished to support them in their valuable work.
- Procurement, together with archaeological and environmental investigations are taking place in connection with the Bexhill – Hastings link road.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT.

The Clerk delivered the following report on behalf of PcsO Boyle.

Crimes April 2012

- 31/03 Heating oil stolen from property on Castle Hill between 29-30/03
- 04/04 Heating oil stolen from property on Castle Hill between 28/03-04/04
- 19/04 Two batteries stolen from Owlsbury Oast Allotments

Other

- There has been a rise in burglaries across Wealden with half of these involving properties left insecure with doors not locked or windows left open. Please do not give thieves a chance and always remember to lock up even if you are only going out for a short time.
- Currently a “when would you” campaign is running on Twitter with different scenarios asking when you would call us and how either 101 or 999. If you see something suspicious call us and let us judge whether it is important or not, we would rather go and check these things out then not be called at all.
- Local crime figures and statistics are available at police.uk by typing in the postcode or location name.

5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 29TH MARCH 2012 AND MATTERS ARISING.

It was RESOLVED that there were no matters arising and that the minutes be adopted. The Chairman signed the minutes.

6. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS.

a) Presentation from representatives of Rotherfield St Martin.

Jo Evans and Andy Miller gave a brief presentation highlighting the achievements of the Project since it was founded in 2005, the role of the Parish Council in supporting and encouraging the group was acknowledged.

Wealden District Council has demonstrated their confidence in the project by setting up a “Service Level Agreement” with them to enable the facilitating of similar groups in three Wealden Parishes (to be determined). This recognises the important role that the St Martin’s “model” can have in improving the health and wellbeing of senior citizens in the community by utilising the support of the “third sector”.

St Martin’s wish to involve the Parish Council in hosting an initial presentation to Wealden Parishes.

It was agreed to formally discuss the request to host this meeting at the forthcoming Finance and General Purposes Committee, CLERK to add to the agenda of this meeting. The Councillors gave an informal indication of support.

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b) Quote for provision of bus shelter at Town Row.

Quote is for £2515 (ex vat) to include extending the concrete base. WDC confirm that works of this nature are a “permitted development” for planning purposes, ESCC have granted a license and are providing a survey to show if there are any services beneath the site. £1500 in budget toward this shelter, £1300 held in accounts from insurance claim for Mark Cross shelter.

RESOLVED to accept this quote, CLERK to liaise with contractor to arrange for the installation of the shelter.

c) Progress report and quote for part night street lighting conversion work.

Over 100 letters were sent to the areas affected by this, 11 responses received all in favour. Two of the Catts’ Hill responses reiterated the wish that the speed limit be extended to Mark Cross. Details of the quote were circulated; cost is £2424.46 for the total works, which includes replacement of the concrete lamp column at the top of Catts’ Hill. 2012/13 budget has a total of £3500 allocated for street light works. RESOLVED to accept quote, CLERK to arrange works with ESCC. Conversion of bracket lamp 70 at Eridge end of Sham Farm Road is deferred; due to the antiquity of this, major modifications would be required.

d) Response to ESCC Library Services survey

Draft details of suggested response were discussed final wording agreed, RESOLVED to submit to ESCC, CLERK to arrange.

e) Siting of memorial bench, which is being donated by a village family.

RESOLVED to utilise this bench to replace the one currently in St Denys’ Old Burial Ground, CLERK to liaise with maker to arrange installation.

f) Request for use of “bouncy castle” in the recreation ground in connection with school leavers event.

This event is being organised by parents of Yr6 children at the school with the knowledge and assistance of the Sports Club who will be opening the Pavillion for refreshments. RESOLVED to allow event subject to usual indemnity and evidence of Public Liability insurance and risk assessment from the hirers of the bouncy castle.

g) Items for the agenda of the half-yearly meeting between SALC and the Chief Constable, Sussex Police.

Details circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. Only details that cannot be resolved locally may be raised, RESOLVED that CLERK forward the following issues for consideration at the meeting.

- Issues with unruly youths from outside of the Village attending and disrupting events.
- Recurring burglaries at a local farm, CCTV had been promised to monitor but nothing had appeared.
- Enhance powers for Pcsos to deal with obstructive parking in a more robust fashion.

h) Quote for tidying of winter debris from the Parish Cemetery and information regarding grass cutting.

£150 (ex vat) quoted by contractors for this. Clerk has been advised by contractors that cutting has commenced and that they invoice on a bi-monthly basis, next invoice due early June. CLERK to inspect main cut areas and raise any concerns with contractors. It has been noted that weed killer has been applied to paths in the Cemetery and St Denys’ Old Burial Ground although this is not specified on the cut schedule.

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- i) **Acceptance of quote for resurfacing driveway by Pre-School, extending path in Recreation Ground, extending parking area opposite Mark Cross Church and resurfacing fp31a New Road - Station Road.**
After discussion it was RESOLVED to accept the quote from Coppard's for these works at a total ex Vat cost of £16920, CLERK to liaise with them regarding this and obtain formal sanction from ESCC Highways for the Mark Cross works.
- j) **Request for grant support from the Argos Hill Windmill Trust Limited.**
Cllr. Watson declare an interest at this point as her husband is the Treasurer of the Trust. It was RESOLVED that £1K be granted to the Trust to support restoration of the mill using powers available under s144 (1) of the 1972 Local Government Act to encourage visitors to the Parish. CLERK to advise Trust and note to issue cheque at the May Council meeting.
- k) **Request for grant support from Eridge Village Hall.**
Details of request circulated prior to meeting. Main expenditure planned is in upgrading toilet facilities to include disabled/baby change and long-term replacement of septic tank with a modern alternative. RESOLVED not to make a grant to the Hall this year, CLERK to advise and also mention issues with acoustics in the Hall.
- l) **Quality Council – Progress with application.**
Progress was reviewed with the checklist of requirements for the submission, CLERK to deal with drafting new Contract of Employment to conform to the minimum terms of the NALC/SLCC model, also investigate any other areas requiring attention with a view to completing them for a submission during the summer months.
- m) **Suggestion for Jubilee Event.**
Suggestion has been made to Cllr. Halse Adamson that shop owners and householders in the Village be encouraged to adorn their properties with a prizes offered to the best decorated. Chairman suggested at this late stage it would be best to encourage decoration on an informal basis without a competitive element and that this could be publicised in the "Courier" via the village news section, the Bonfire Society will also offer local encouragement. They are arranging a fancy dress parade from the car park to the Recreation Ground on June 4th, with the Beacon lit and a firework display.
- n) **Information and further action regarding empty shops in Rotherfield.**
Cllr. Halse Adamson reported that a local vacant shop had been used for selling second hand goods for charitable purposes and that this had apparently raised issues with WDC regarding Business Rates. It was felt that this would discourage use of empty shops on a temporary basis; Cllr. Merriman has offered to take this up during an impending meeting with WDC. CLERK to follow up previously agreed action to liaise with WDC regarding possible use of empty shops for temporary displays.
- o) **Update regarding mole activity in the Cemetery and Recreation Ground, and suggested further action.**
 - Mole catcher reports two moles caught in the Rec., one either side of the pavillion. Cemetery and lower field showed no activity. He has requested that old molehills be raked over and bare patches reseeded.
- p) **Planning matters as below:-**
 - i. **WD/2012/0705/LB** Stile House, A267 Road, Mark Cross, TN6 3NS
Repair Clay tiled roof
The Parish Council RESOLVED to recommend that this application be APPROVED subject to consultation with the Conservation Officer as the work will maintain the fabric of the building.

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- ii. **WD/2012/0730/F** Barn at South View Farm, Hadlow Down Road, Crowborough, TN6 3SA
Agricultural barn and track.
The Parish Council RESOLVED to recommend that this application be APPROVED as it is vital for the proper operation of this local farm business.
- iii. **WD/2012/0744/FA** Cowford House, Blackdon Hill, Eridge Green, TN3 9HX
Minor material amendment to WD/2011/2581/F (repairs alterations and extensions – amendments to WD/2011/1584/F)
The Parish Council RESOLVED to recommend that this application be APPROVED subject to consultation with the Conservation Officer.
- iv. **WD/2012/0789/F** Kingsbury Lodge, Five Ashes Road, Castle Hill, Rotherfield, TN6 3RS
Change of access to Kingsbury Lodge, take down existing single garage and put up open timber frame two bay garage and adjustment of driveway to allow for easier turning.
The Parish Council RESOLVED to recommend that this application be APPROVED as it will enhance safe access and egress from the property and improve the facilities.
- v. **Report from visit to Rotherfield Property in the conservation area to discuss removed sign.**
Cllr. Wickenden has visited but there was no one present when he called, CLERK to carry forward to next Planning agenda.

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

- 27th March and 17th April - Planning and Building Committee.
It was RESOLVED that both these minutes be adopted and that there were no other matters arising.

8. TO RECEIVE REPORTS

- **Other committees and sub-committees.**
A meeting of the Tennis Court sub committee has taken place and CLERK is to add an agenda item for the forthcoming Recreation and Burial meeting to discuss progress and further action. Plan is now for two full size courts and a “flyer” is to be produced for possible inclusion in the Parish Newsletter and distribution at the Annual Parish Meeting.
- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.** None.
- **Clerk’s report and issues.**
 - Subscription renewal received from Wealden District Association of Local Councils that the PC rejoined last year. We have been erroneously omitted from their circulation list since rejoining and they have agreed that renewal will be deferred until next year. Minutes of their recent meeting have been received and it is hoped that the PC can take an active role with them in future.
 - Clerk attended the Localism Conference at East Grinstead that was organised by SALC. It was an interesting event, which revealed further information about the Localism Act, many details remain unknown but it is anticipated that all will be in place by July. Clerk hopes to compile a list of “bullet points” from the day.
 - It is understood that, as part of the Localism Act, a new code of conduct and declaration of interest document will be required. WDC are currently dealing with the revisions required that will require adoption by them prior to adoption by PC’s by June. A condition of the new Member’s Interest document is that these details will be published on the Parish and District Council websites.
 - ESCC report that they are not accepting deposits of records from Parish Council until relocation to their new facility at Hailsham, estimated that they would begin accepting items from early 2014. Clerk will endeavour to deal

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with items in the Village Hall basement in interim to ensure that no items are retained unnecessarily. The Hall has been in contact to say that some issues had arisen from the recent boiler service; the main issue is that stored items impede clear access. CLERK is to visit hall to inspect and tidy.

- ESCC Rights of Way team are arranging for the Capital Projects manager to inspect the surface condition of Tubwell Lane and will report.

9. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation at end of March 2012 and year end. The RFO presented the figures, and these were agreed and signed by the Chairman
- Review of Expenditure against Budget to end March 2012 and year-end. The RFO provided the summary figures to Councillors and relevant detailed figures to the Committee Chairmen.
- Approval of Payments. After explanation it was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

CHEQUE NO	CHEQUE PAYABLE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801399	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for April	£1,049.95
801400	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for April	£284.97
801401	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for April	£191.07
801403	Jim Gander	Street sweeping for April	£105.00
801403	Rotherfield Village Hall	Hall hire fees for March	£30.00
801402	Rotherfield Sports Club	Grass cutting for April	£315.00
801405	Rotherfield Sports Club	Contribution toward annual Spring pitch maintenance	£1,000.00
801406	ESCC	Replacement lantern unit column 16 on B2101	£562.02
801407	WDC	Waste and dog bin emptying	£495.12
801408	Teambase	Stationery	£30.76
		Total	£4,063.89

CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Santander	Bank interest	£60.66
Dignity Funerals Ltd	Memorial tablet fee	£80.00
HMRC	Vat reclaimed	£1,081.56
Burslem	Inscription fee	£70.00
	Total	£1,292.22

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10. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE GENERAL

- **ESCC** – Briefing sheet regarding Superfast Broadband
- **WDC** – Grant Scheme to support community celebrations to mark the Olympic Torch Relay – details have been circulated to Village organisations and Councillors, as there is a May 7th deadline for applications.
- **Post Office** – Consultation regarding relocation of Rotherfield Office to the premises of the Stores. This will be added to the May Agenda for a formal response, details have been circulated to other Village organisations to raise awareness of the consultation.
- **E-mail Parishioner** - Suggestion that the new housing development at Town Row be named in memory of Cllr. Padfield. An approach will be made at an appropriate time to discuss the family's wishes regarding this.
- **WDC** – Updated briefing from Planning Team regarding comments from Parish Councils on application consultations.

CIRCULARS AND MAGAZINES

- Sussex Area Ramblers – April 2012 bulletin.
- CPRE – Countryside Voice for Spring 2012 and members guide.
- Saint-Chéron en Bref – Issue 284.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE.

- **WD/2012/0471/F** Owlsbury Allotments, Hadlow Down Road, Crowborough, TN6 3RS. Installation of storage container and new hedge planting. Application approved by WDC, previously recommended for approval by Parish Council.
- **WD/2011/2147/F** Danefield Farm, Boar's Head, Crowborough, TN6 3HD Change of use of existing home office and garage to tourist accommodation. Notice of appeal against WDC refusal of this application that was previously recommended for approval by the Parish Council.
- **WD/2012/0494/F** Hamsell Lake Cottage, Eridge, TN3 9LH Hardwood and glass orangery on a brick dwarf wall. Application approved by WDC, previously recommended for approval by Parish Council.
- **WD/2012/0292/F** Ketches Farm, Burnt Oak Road, Crowborough, TN6 3SD Conversion of disused stables to living accommodation. Notification that this application was withdrawn on 24th April. The Parish Council had previously recommended it for approval.
- **WD/2012/0468/F** Woodlands Park Farm, Sheriff's Lane, Rotherfield, TN6 3JE Proposed replacement dwelling. Application approved by WDC, previously recommended for approval by Parish Council.
- **Timber tree house erected on land at Scaland Farm, Hadlow Down Road.** Copy of enforcement notice issued by WDC to remove structure and tidy site within 18 months. PC had recommended approval for a recent retrospective application for this structure, subject to a time limit. WDC refused the application.

11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

- These were passed to the Chair for inspection and signature.

12. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 8th May – Finance and General Purposes Committee 19:30 in Memorial Institute.
- 15th May – Recreation and Burial combined with Planning and Building Committee.
- 16th May – Annual Parish Meeting, 20:00 in Rotherfield Village Hall.
- 22nd May – Highways Lighting and Transport Committee.

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- 29th May – Planning and Building Committee.
- 31st May – May Council Meeting.

Other than where noted, the above meetings will be held in the Parish Council Room at Rotherfield Village Hall starting at 19:30.

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

- Clerk has reported to ESCC Highways local steward that Steep Road has many areas of surface requiring repair. Steward has visited and reports that six areas had been noted for urgent attention (24hr). Other areas were within the 100mm tolerance allowed for this class of road before intervention.
- Notices in respect of the vacancy on the Council will be displayed shortly, if the vacancy is to be filled by co-option this will be dealt with at the June meeting.
- There is a vacancy on the Finance and General Purposes Committee and Cllr. Harris has agreed to be a candidate for this, CLERK to ensure that agenda item added for the forthcoming meeting of this Committee.
- Clerk has contacted a local memorial masons to express concern that, after removal of a memorial for inscription work, a plot in St Denys' Old Burial Ground had been left in an unsafe and untidy state for several months. They have promised to tidy the site prior to the return of the memorial.
- Obstructive parking is continuing to cause issues in Station Road and in Church Road near the Lych Gate. Overgrowing hedges have also been noted in Church Road and New Road. CLERK to add agenda items for forthcoming Highways Committee meeting to discuss appropriate action.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:55

14. PUBLIC FORUM.

- Enquiry made regarding the outcome of the recent drains survey in Catts' Hill. Clerk understands that issues were identified and that ESCC hope to deal with the work required during this financial year. CLERK to enquire of ESCC for a progress report and timing of works.
- Concerns raised regarding access to the Argos Hill windmill. In the past there had been issues with access as part of the site was privately owned, this had led to a reluctance to offer financial support by a previous Council. PC now understands that these issues have been resolved to allow access for restoration and access for the public once the mill is in a suitable condition.

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