

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 28TH APRIL 2016 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas (Chairman)	Cllr. K. Curtis	Cllr. A. Martin
Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chairman)	Cllr. T. Gilbert	Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. J. Cahan	Cllr. L. Henrick	Cllr. L. Watts
Cllr. C. Clibbens	Cllr. D. Hiles	Cllr. A. Watson-Smith

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe, Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) and Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC). No members of the public attended.

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING:-

a) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s 85).

An apology for absence was tendered, and accepted, on behalf of Cllr. J. Kitchenham. PcsO Pearce Martin was unable to attend as she was on early duty.

b) Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda, and updates to members' register of interests.

None. The Chairman reminded those present that they should declare an interest if at any point during the meeting they became aware of one relating to a matter being discussed.

c) District And County Councillor's reports.

Cllr. Standley (ESCC) reported the following:-

High Weald Lewes and Havens Clinical Commissioning Group (HWLHCCG)

HWLHCCG have taken the decision to leave the Better Together programme, which sought to bring together health and social services across the County. There were a number of reasons for the action they took but the CCG were particularly concerned that the Better Together programme was too influenced by the Eastbourne and Hastings Hospital Trust (ESHT). The majority of HWLHCCG residents do not use ESHT hospitals using Brighton, East Grinstead and T/Wells at Pembury.

ESHT also used to run services at Crowborough Hospital but the Sussex Community Trust and Tunbridge Wells Trust do not run these. I strongly supported moving these services from ESHT and services have improved under the new arrangements.

All CCG's, including HWLH, make regular reports to the Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee at county of which I am a member of that committee.

Devolution

The subject was debated at the recent full council meeting but there is little to add at this stage. There was a conference of all Leaders and Chief Officers at the beginning of the month and whilst some progress was made, it was not as much as I expected. There have been a number of deals announced across the country but all have agreed to a directly elected mayor, which has no current support across the 3SC area (East and West Sussex and Surrey).

Finance

At the 3rd quarter the net overspend was £0.3m which was a significant improvement on the 2nd qtr. which predicted an overspend of £5.1m. The agreed transfer of funds from the Better Together Fund contingency, which amounted to £4.6m, achieved this change. This may not be available in future years (see opening item on this report)

Parish Council Website: www.rotherfieldparishcouncil.co.uk
Clerk: Trevor Thorpe, 82, Fermor Way, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 3BJ
Telephone: 01892 664245

E-mail: rotherfieldpc@yahoo.co.uk Twitter [@RotherfieldPC](https://twitter.com/RotherfieldPC) and on Facebook

Potholes

Cllr. Standley reported that approximately £640K is to be paid to County from Central Government funds to assist with the cost of these repairs. This will help matters but will not solve the whole issue. So far this financial year 14865 potholes have been repaired across the County, around 2K in his County Council Division. The ESCC Highways Contract commences on May 1st - Costain CH2M will run this as a partnership. Around 300 "job tickets" remain outstanding from the previous operators of the contract who will fund the work involved, but the new contractor will undertake it.

Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESSC) reported the following.

- Cllr. Whetstone observed that the new Highways Contractors are the fourth since he became a County Councillor. He hoped that the new operators prove successful.
- The purpose of the current Governance Review of the Ashdown Forest by the Charity Commission was summarised; this aims to bring clarity to the relationship between the Ashdown Forest Trust, the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust and the Conservators and eliminate confusion and duplication of effort. The final objective of the Review is to create a new charitable organisation to own, run and manage the Ashdown Forest independent of East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council.

Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC) reported the following.

Steel Cross

- You might have seen in the press that there is a possibility of an appeal on this which would be a problem for the North as it could leave us open to additional development, given that we do not have a 5-year land supply. WDC are seeking a meeting with Greg Clark to discuss this and the land supply issue.

Treblers Road Nursery

- There was an exhibition at Millbrook Garden Centre on a proposal to build 15 houses on this site which attracted a good deal of opposition. I will be liaising with the objectors to ensure their concerns are heard but this is previously developed land and we do not have a 5-year supply.

Pub is the Hub

Wealden have launched the 'pub is the hub' initiative in East Sussex to encourage pubs to diversify to attract more custom. This is something that WDC support as we have lost many good pubs in recent years, which should be the 'heart and soul of the community'.

Pine Grove

After a recent planning decision, Crowborough Town Council have decided to go ahead with purchasing the site from WDC for use as a business hub.

My Alerts

WDC have launched a new service called 'My Alerts'. This gives local information relevant to your own postcode (bin collection days, planning applications etc.) and you can sign up online to receive weekly emails.

d) Police Community Support Officer's report.

Clerk submitted report on behalf of our PcsO. Only item to report was a theft of tools from a vehicle in Town Row. Reminder issued to everyone who does have tools not to leave them in their vehicle overnight, especially if it is a works van.

e) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on the 31st March 2016 for approval as a true record, and matters arising from these minutes.

It was RESOLVED that these be signed by the Chairman as a true record of this meeting.

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

Actions below were agreed at the March 2016 Council Meeting.

b) Budget Changes and reallocation of funds for Council Approval.

Adjustments made as agreed.

h) Electoral Review of East Sussex - Draft Recommendations re: County and District Councils

Response sent to the Boundary Commission.

Other action points remain outstanding.

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

a) Initiation of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for the Parish.

Clerk reported that there are already some schemes in the Village according to information on the Sussex Neighbourhood watch website although it is not clear if they are “live”. Cllr. Henrick advised that she is a member of a scheme. RESOLVED the following:-

ACTION FOR CLLR. HENRICK to provide information on the scheme at the 4th May meeting of the Communications and Media Committee.

ACTION FOR CLERK to research current situation with Neighbourhood Watch and other Sussex schemes such as “Farmwatch” and “Stablewatch” which may have been merged with other schemes.

b) Adoption of revised Governance Documents, Terms of References and Policies.

RESOLVED that the target date for completion of this was for the draft policies to be available for consideration at the 30th June meeting of the Council.

ACTION for CLERK to add to agenda of this meeting.

c) Final review of budgets for 2016/17.

Copy of budget and expenditure to date circulated in advance of the meeting.

RESOLVED that no further adjustments are required.

d) Agreement and sign of Annual Return for Internal Audit, and submission to External Auditors.

Insufficient time to prepare this, ACTION for CLERK to carry forward to May meeting agenda.

e) Purchase and installation of a noticeboard for the Parish Cemetery.

Details of quote circulated prior to meeting, 4 x A4 with posts is £730, 6 x A4 is £804 - header panels and lettering available at extra cost. RESOLVED that 4 x A4 board be ordered with header panel and “Parish Cemetery” lettering but that separate oak posts are to be used for mounting.

ACTION FOR CLERK to order board and posts, and arrange installation, which is to be by the hedge and to the left of the Cemetery Gates.

f) Report from Clerk regarding interest bearing accounts and short-term deposits for holding Council funds.

Clerk reported that Santander have advised a reduction in the current rate on the Council’s deposit account from 0.45% to 0.30% with effect from July 1st. Clerk has made enquiries, which have not brought forth suggestions of accounts better than we have at present. NatWest products have been investigated; however, their 30-day notice business account offers the same 0.30% rate as we will be getting from July but without instant access flexibility. Currently pay no bank charges and recommend no change to the present arrangements.

RESOLVED that no change be made to current banking arrangements.

g) Report from Clerk regarding risk assessment and safety measure requirements for those working in and on the public highway on behalf of the Council.

Risk assessment signed by our street sweeper was circulated prior to the meeting. RESOLVED the following:-

ACTION for CLERK to provide list of duties plus current Risk Assessment/H & S requirements document to Chairs of Highways, and Recreation and Burial Committees.

ACTION for CHAIRS OF HIGHWAYS, AND RECREATION AND BURIAL COMMITTEES to review and update these documents as necessary, prior to meeting with our Street Sweeper to agree the Council's requirements.

ACTION for CLLR. MARTIN to purchase 6 x BS EN 471 compliant "Hi Vis" sleeved tops, branded with Council name plus 2 x portable "Road Sweeping" highway warning signs for use when street sweeping or working in the Village Hall car park. Vat receipt to be obtained for reimbursement at May Council meeting.

h) Grant support for the Smith and Fermor Charity, which provides small grants within Rotherfield and Crowborough Parishes.

Latest report from this small local charity was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Charity's Trustees are Clerk and Anne Watson representing Rotherfield Parish, plus Philippa Hewes (Crowborough Town Clerk) and Philip Fermor (former Crowborough Mayor and Town Councillor) representing Crowborough civil Parish. Applications for modest grants within the Charity's objectives are made to individuals and groups in Crowborough and Rotherfield Civil Parishes in accord with the Charity's aims and objectives. Clerk advised that that any funds donated by Rotherfield PC to support this Charity could also benefit Crowborough residents, and recommended that clarification be sought on this point before paying a grant.

RESOLVED that, subject to confirmation that Council has power to grant funds for this purpose, a grant of £500 be paid to the Charity in support of its aims. Cllrs. Wickenden and Curtis wished it noted that they did not support this proposal.

3. TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING.

4. TO RECEIVE OTHER REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ARISING FROM THEM

Other committees and sub-committees.

- 5th April – Planning and Building Committee.
- 12th April – Recreation and Burial Committee.

The draft minutes of these meetings have been circulated and it was RESOLVED that they be adopted by the full Council.

The draft minutes of the following meetings have yet to be circulated:-

- 19th April – Finance and General Purpose Committee
- 26th April – Planning and Building Committee.

• Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Village Hall "Raise the Roof" project. Cllr. Martin had not attended their most recent meeting; he is to circulate the minutes to the Councillors.
- Cllr. Gilbert had attended the Village Hall Committee meeting and reported that their hire charges are to rise by 4%. There are also issues with the new waste contractor missing the weekly collection.
- Cllrs. Martin and Watts had a meeting scheduled with the ESCC officer responsible for the slip road closure project at Mark Cross. Unfortunately, due to his late arrival this had been missed. There is still a small area of grass remaining which it is considered requires replacing with Tarmac, also it is advised that an additional bollard is installed where the former slip road joined the A267 to reinforce that it is now closed off. These issues have been reported to ESCC. Damage was also reported to the verge outside the Garden Centre caused by vehicles driving over it when the temporary traffic lights were in operation.
- Cllr. Harris has met with a representative of Burslem in the old Burial Ground to discuss memorial safety. Quote is to be obtained for making safe a large leaning memorial, also for inspection of other large memorials and provision of a report on any deemed to require work to make them safe.

- **Clerk's updates and issues.**
Concerns raised by Clerk at backlog of work and uncertainty as whether or not he was expected to attend Planning Meetings. Agreed that he would not attend the 15th May meeting but that the situation was to be reviewed.
- **Items for next Parish Magazine column.**
 - Feature on North Wealden Community Transport Partnership, providers of the local bus service from Town Row/Rotherfield to Crowborough.
 - Item regarding "no dogs" policy for the Recreation Ground.
 - Report on Consultation re: the proposed ban on long HGV's through the Village.

5. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- **Bank Reconciliation as at end of March 2016 review of expenditure against Budget to date.**
These had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was RESOLVED that they be agreed.

- **Approval of Payments.**

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

Payments					
Date Paid	Payee Name	Cheque	Amount	Authorisation	Detail
28/03/2016	Rotherfield St Martin	802114	£500.00	April 2016 F&GP	Support Grant
28/03/2016	Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau	802115	£300.00	April 2016 F&GP	Support Grant
28/04/2016	Trevor Thorpe	802016	£1,522.80		April Salary
28/04/2016	H M R C	802017	£490.19		April Tax & NI
28/04/2016	Trevor Thorpe	802108	£70.87		April expenses
28/04/2016	East Sussex County Council	802109	**£672.00	January 2014 HL&T meeting	Street column structural tests
28/04/2016	1st Rotherfield Scout Group	802110	£27.50		Hire of hall
28/04/2016	A. Martin	802111	**£77.34		Weed killing
28/04/2016	Teambase	802112	**£17.94		Stationery
28/04/2016	William J Clark	802113	**£168.00		Hedge and verge cut
28/04/2016	Tunbridge Wells Samaritans	802116	£200.00	April 2016 F&GP	Support Grant
28/04/2016	Rotherfield Friendship Club	802118	£200.00	April 2016 F&GP	Support Grant
28/04/2016	North Wealden Community Transport	802119	£1,016.00	April 2016 F&FP	Support Grant
28/04/2016	Tollwood Garden Service	802120	£1,690.00		April groundworks
28/04/2016	A.C. Moaby	802121	£282.00		Various jobs
28/04/2016	Rotherfield Village Hall	802122	£23.20		Hall Hire February
Total Payments			<u>£7,257.84</u>		

Sums annotated ** include VAT which is reclaimed by the Council

Receipts			
Date	Received from	Amount	Description
19/04/2016	H M Revenue & Customs	£2,745.66	VAT Reclaim
22/04/2016	Rotherfield Millennium Green Trust	£98.48	Dog bin charge contribution
21/04/2016	Wealden District Council	<u>£44,992.50</u>	Precept first instalment
Total Receipts		<u>£47,836.64</u>	

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- CPRE "Countryside Voice" Magazine – Spring 2016 Edition.

Parish Council Website: www.rotherfieldparishcouncil.co.uk
 Clerk: Trevor Thorpe, 82, Fermor Way, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 3BJ
 Telephone: 01892 664245

E-mail: rotherfieldpc@yahoo.co.uk Twitter [@RotherfieldPC](https://twitter.com/RotherfieldPC) and on Facebook

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

The reports for the Old Burial Ground and the Cemetery were not available. No issues causing concern or requiring action were noted in the reports presented, or have been raised by Parishioners, and the reports were signed.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- i.** May 10th - Highways Lighting and Transport Committee
- ii.** May 17th - Planning and Building Committee
- iii.** May 18th - Annual Parish Meeting – Rotherfield Village Hall 20:00
- iv.** May 26th - Annual Council Meeting incorporating the May Council Meeting. 19:30 in the Rotherfield Scout and Community Youth Hall.

Meetings i and ii above start at 19:30 and are in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

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

- Clerk reported that litter had been picked by Kier/WDC on the verges of the A26 Eridge – Boar’s Head.
- Payment of retention for the Scout and Community Youth Hall is due on the May 4th for the sum of just over £5K. Next Wednesday’s Communication and Media Committee meeting has therefore been designated as a Full Council Meeting to allow this to be dealt with and the cheque issued.
- Our PcsO has visited Mark Cross and given words of advice to those parking on the “zig zag” markings outside the School. Clerk complimented the swift response, which had come the day after the matter had been reported to the Police via their website.
- Drainage work is taking place on Tuesday 3rd May on the upper pitches, Clerk will ensure that insurance and H&S paperwork is seen prior to this and that Pre-School are forewarned of this activity.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:10.

10. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Confirmed as a true record and signed at the 26th May 2016 meeting of the Council

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