

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 19TH JULY 2012 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

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

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC), Cllr. J Howell (WDC), Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC), Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC) and Pc Ruth Hammerton (Sussex Police).
- Six members of the public.

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

Apologies for absence were tendered and accepted on behalf of Cllr. C. Prince and Pcs Boyle (Sussex Police).

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr. Watson declared an interest in respect of items 5 g) and 5h) on the agenda. The Chairman reminded Councillors that, if at any point in the meeting they became aware that they had an interest in an item under discussion, they should declare it.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

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

- He is still involved with discussions regarding the “7km Zone” surrounding the Ashdown Forest and the impact on planning applications within.
- £50K had been secured from budget to enable Wealden to research a mitigation policy for applications made within the zone.
- The recent North Planning Committee meeting of WDC had been cancelled due to a lack of applications to consider, this was believed to be because they are not being submitted until the implications of the zone are clearer.
- He hopes to organise a “Hustings” event in the Parish in respect of the forthcoming election for the new Police and Crime Commissioner. This will enable the candidates from all political groups to put forward their proposals in the event that they are elected.

Cllr. J. Howell (WDC) reported the following:-

- The Olympic Torch had passed through Pevensy and Crowborough.
- Crime reported in Sussex had fallen by 3.5% for the 12 months to the end of June.
- A publicity campaign has been started to raise awareness of the forthcoming election for a Police and Crime Commissioner in Sussex.
- Two “Safety in Action” events had been held at Hestmonceux and the Bowles Centre, Eridge. Around a 1000 Wealden schoolchildren had participated.
- The “Vision 2015” project has been set up by Wealden DC to plan the future direction.

Cllr. Kitchenham withdrew from the meeting at this point due to illness.

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

- ESCC is now more involved with health issues and the impact that matters such as housing, employment and road safety may influence them.
- There is now a dedicated Health Team at County Hall who have transferred from the NHS.

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- Issues surrounding “Dementia and challenging needs” are being reviewed. The aim is to support those affected to stay in their own homes as much as possible and to encourage “Dementia Friendly” attitudes in communities throughout East Sussex.
- The East Sussex Health Improvement Partnership has funds available for grants of up to £2K for projects to encourage increased personal activity, reduce smoking or drinking.
- The Police reported that around 600K people are estimated to have attended events in the County associated with the Olympic Torch procession. This was 25% more than original estimates and events all passed off without significant incidents.
- Some Sussex Police will be based at Weymouth to assist with Olympic Sailing events; 30 Police motorcyclists from the County are travelling to London each day to assist with events there, this is cheaper than arranging for them to stay.
- Clerk raised the issue of County treatment policy for Japanese Knotweed, an infestation had been cut back on Fp37 off Catt’s Hill but it was considered that without chemical treatment the problem would only continue and get worse. Issues were also raised regard Ragwort control by County. CLERK is to send further details to the Cllr. Tidy.
- CLERK is to details of persistent water leak problems to Cllr. Tidy, South East Water now consider this a Highways issue.

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

- Advised that Ragwort had been an issue in one of his local parishes, unless it is a major infestation County tend not to deal with it.
- ESCC has one of the highest school exclusion rates in England, reasons will be investigated with a view to addressing the issue.
- In response to a query raised regarding recording of minutes of ESCC meetings it was confirmed that these only recorded decisions made and not the discussions surrounding them.
- It is understood that the Safer Speed Partnership have invested in 2 average speed cameras, one has been deployed in West Sussex, it is not known where the other will be installed.
- High Speed Broadband installation had been delayed by an EU intervention regarding funding.
- The “7km zone” surrounding the Ashdown Forest had led to plans for expansion of the Ashdown Forest Visitor Centre being postponed.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT AND INFORMATION REGARDING ACTION RELATING TO OBSTRUCTIVE PARKING IN THE VILLAGE

In the absence of PcsO Boyle the Clerk presented the following report for the month:-

Crimes July 2012

- 09/07 Lightning conductor stolen from St Denys church between 02-07 July
- 10/07 Battery for electric fence stolen from yard at Eridge Lane, Rotherfield

Other

- Wealden play days will be at Goldsmith recreation ground, Eridge Road, Crowborough on the 1st of August from 10an until 2pm. For more info check www.playday.org.uk
- You can check out crime figures and statistics at police.uk then type in the postcode or town or village

Parking outside general store

- 19th at 1100 no cars parked there.

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- 17th at 1030 no cars parked there.
- 03rd at 1630 no cars parked there.

Sgt. Hammerton summarised the legal position regarding parking on the pavement and the remedies available:-

- Except in London, parking on a pavement is not an offence per se.
- The actual offence that may be committed is that of “wilful obstruction of the highway”, the definition of “highway” also includes any pavements adjoining.
- Officers and Pcsos are empowered to issue tickets if appropriate but must make a judgement as to whether a pedestrian would actually be obstructed, generally a gap of minimum 1m would be expected to allow buggies and wheelchairs to pass.
- Local Police prefer to work with the community to address problems such as this and view ticketing as a last resort.

Problems specific to Station Road were discussed.

- It has been noted that one of the cars that regularly parks there has a disabled badge it was considered that further enquiries be made to see if a dedicated disabled parking space in Hornshurst Road would solve this issue.
- Although ESCC are reviewing parking here to see if restrictions are appropriate the Council would prefer to see bollards installed to discourage parking rather than yellow lines.
- RESOLVED to review situation at September Highways Committee meeting and consider installing bollards then, CLERK to note. In the meanwhile, anyone who considers that they are being obstructed by vehicles on the pavement are recommended to report the issue via the Police 101 number.

Parking issues have also been raised in Mark Cross, particularly on the slip road by the school and on the A267, particularly at school times. Recommendation from Police is that details of vehicles creating this issue should be recorded and passed to the Police via the 101 number.

5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28TH JUNE 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 ITEMS.

a) Quote for wood treatment for benches and map boards owned by the Council.

Quote received in March to stain 16 benches in the Parish and the Mark Cross picnic table at a cost of £850, and the 8 Parish footpath map boards at a cost of £250. It was RESOLVED to accept the quote, CLERK to advise contractor and request that the bench in Eridge Lane near the top of Chant Lane also be treated.

b) Arrangements during Clerk's forthcoming holiday.

As with previous years the following arrangements will be made:-

- Laptop and planning paperwork to Planning Vice Chair, CLERK to advise WDC to redirect planning e-mails to Vice Chair during holiday period.
- Grave spaces allocated to local funeral directors during Clerk's holiday.
- Burial records to be passed to Chairman.
- Phone and e-mail messages will direct any urgent matters to the Chairman.

c) Clerk's holiday date requests for 2013.

RESOLVED that the following dates be agreed for 2013

- Week commencing Monday 8th April.

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- Fortnight commencing August 3rd.
- d) **Information regarding fund raising event on Amenity Land and update of policy for events on Council land to quantify requirements for public liability insurance cover and risk assessments.**

Clerk advised that an event proposed on the Amenity Land would require consideration of insurance and risk assessment matters as per the recently adopted policy for events held on Parish Council land. RESOLVED that CLERK is to investigate levels of cover required by other councils for events on their land, with a view to incorporating this detail into the current policy. CLERK to add an item to agenda of 31st July Planning Committee meeting to agree an insurance figure for the event proposed, Cllr. Hall has offered to assist the organisers in drawing up a risk assessment. CLERK also to enquire of insurers if it is possible to add cover for events to the Council's insurance policy for an additional premium for recharge to the organisers; also to investigate the extent of Councillors liability should a claim be made that was not covered by our insurance.
- e) **Recommendations of the remuneration Committee regarding Clerk's salary.**

RESOLVED to increase salary to Scale point 26 on the National LC1 pay scale, this be backdated to April and to take effect when the Quality Council status has been achieved.
- f) **Implementation of Community Engagement strategy, bi monthly "Surgeries", and progress with Quality Council submission.**

Most of the outstanding points have now been resolved and CLERK is to address the outstanding items. RESOLVED to start operating a regular "surgery" process for Parishioners to call and discuss issues with Councillors. First surgery, subject to availability of room, will be in the Institute on Saturday 1st September and Cllr. Bolton has offered to host this. CLERK to check room availability with Institute and book, also arrange publicity.
- g) **Request from Rotherfield St Martin regarding possible site for a permanent Centre.**

A site in the Village for a permanent centre is being sought and the area of "Amenity Land" has been suggested for investigation. Cllr. Wickenden declared an interest at this point as the access route is owned by a relative. A representative of the Charity was permitted to address the meeting by the Chairman and outlined the Charity's plans for a permanent home. It was RESOLVED that Rotherfield St Martin would further investigate the feasibility of this site and report back to the Council with their findings. Clerk recommended that the Wealden District Council Planning and Conservation department be consulted as a first step in the process to gain their views on the suggestion.
- h) **Agreement of date and time for Parish Council/Rotherfield St Martin joint event.**

Late September weekday evening 19:30 - 21:30 suggested, main hall fully booked in the evenings and have enquired of the School for assistance. RESOLVED to investigate the use of the Institute for the event, as it would have the benefit of allowing those who attended to see the Centre at first hand. CLERK to investigate availability and add to agenda of August meeting for agreement of final details.
- i) **Offer from a Parish family to donate a bench for the Recreation Ground.**

RESOLVED to accept this offer and to suggest that the seat be located on the track overlooking the lower pitch. CLERK to liaise with donor family regarding style of bench and will investigate options for a recycled plastic style one as used by Crowborough Town Council in various locations.

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j) Update from Crowborough Chamber of Commerce regarding high-speed broadband in the Parish.

The Chamber has provided hard copies of the petition form and these were distributed to the Councillors who will seek signatures. CLERK will seek a digital version from the Chamber to add to the Council website and distribute to Village groups.

k) Response to NHS Sussex “Shaping Our Future” consultation that ends on September 28th.

CLERK to add to August Agenda to consider a response.

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

- 10th July - Planning and Building Committee.
It was RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted and that there were no matters arising.

8. TO RECEIVE REPORTS

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

None

- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**

Cllr. Thomas attended the AGM of the Wealden District Association of Local Councils to which he is the representative for the Council. He has joined their SALC executive committee that had recently received feedback from the half-yearly meeting held with the Sussex Chief Constable. Information was given regarding manning levels in Wealden. At any one time, this consists of the following:-

- A response team of a Sergeant and 7 officers based at Uckfield
- Neighbourhood policing team based at Heathfield consisting of 20 officers and 35 Pcsos.
- Traffic team base at Polegate with a Sergeant and 7 officers.
- In addition there are CID and other investigating officers who can be deployed if necessary.
- In East and West Sussex there is a full time equivalent of 2575 officers and 450 Pcsos, the latter being 60 short of strength for which a recruiting campaign is being run.
- SALC had also held a meeting with Dan Steadman Deputy Chief Executive of the Sussex Police Authority. He expressed concern at the apparent lack of interests and awareness of the election in November of a Police and Crime Commissioner and requested co-operation from local Councils in raising the profile of this important change in the way that Policing will be managed. CLERK to circulate details to Councillors, display posters in Parish noticeboards and on website.
- **Clerk’s report and issues.**

None.

9. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation at end of June 2012.
The RFO presented the figures, which were agreed and signed by the Chairman.
- Review of Expenditure against Budget to end of June 2012.
The RFO presented the figures, which were agreed and signed by the Chairman.
- Approval of Payments. Clerk had authorised payment for the traffic cones for the Royal Visit under his delegated limit for urgent expenditure. After explanation it was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

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CHEQUE NO	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801438	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for July	£1,060.35
801449	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for July	£274.57
801440	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for July	£90.41
801441	Jim Gander	Street sweeping for July	£135.65
801442	Rotherfield Village Hall	Hall hire fees for June	£30.20
801443	Rotherfield Sports Club	Grass cutting for July	£315.00
801444	Wealden District Council	Dog bin emptying April to June	£299.52
801445	Pureprint Group	Printing and mailing cost for Annual Report and Newsletter	£860.69
801446	Rotherfield Memorial Institute	Hall hire May 8th	£12.00
801447	Coppard Plant Hire Ltd	Traffic cone hire for Royal Visit	£28.80
801448	C.P.R.E.	Annual subscription	£29.00
Total			£3,136.19

Please note that cheque 801439 was spoiled

CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Santander	Bank interest - June	£58.85
Tester and Jones	Ashes interment fee	£50.00
ESCC	Annual Ground rent for Pre School	£750.00
Total		£858.85

10. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE Letters and Circulars

- **Mrs. Hobbs** – complimentary letter re: Newsletter and Report.
- **South East Water** – Confirmation that hosepipe restrictions are now lifted.
- **ESCC** – Focus on East Sussex 2012 annual monitor
- **Southern Water** – Information regarding work planned at Redgate Mill Wastewater Treatment Works September 2012 – March 2013. CLERK to remind Southern Water that heavy vehicle access is from the A26 direction only.
- **ESCC** – email regarding extension of 30mph limit at Town Row. Trying to arrange site meeting for this CLERK give contact details for Chair and HLT Chair.
- **Bowls Club** – Request for extension of Rec path to the entrance to the Green. Estimate path length would be 45m and based on £67/m cost in order of £3K. CLERK to add this item to the Agenda of the 31st July Planning meeting for formal consideration. It was stated that when the original path was created in the Recreation Ground the suggestion to build a new entrance to the Bowls Green with a shorter path was declined.

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- **WDC** – Invitation to Community Infrastructure Levy briefing 15th August. Cllr. Thomas and Clerk will attend this meeting.

Magazines and Newsletters

- **Saint-Chéron en Bref** – no 287
- **Sussex Area Ramblers** – July newsletter.
- Clerks and Councils Direct – edition 82
- **The Clerk** – July 2012 edition.

11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were presented to the Chairman for signature.

12. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 31st July - Planning and Building Committee.
- 21st August - Planning and Building Committee.
- 30th August – Monthly Council Meeting

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

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

Clerk gave an update regarding Mark Cross

- Road roundels will not be on red background as this can increase road noise, cost and maintenance requirements.
- Two sites possible sites have been identified for an additional vehicle activated sign; further investigation is taking place regarding power supply availability.
- Groundwork contractor has passed on request from a resident of Court Meadow regarding the bushes adjoining her property in the Amenity Land. CLERK to investigate condition and report back.

Forthcoming Closure of Catt's Hill

- Gary Humble of ESCC has provided information of proposed signage. Specific concerns raised by Councillors were as follows:-
 - Original advance warning signs erected a month ago should have carried information that businesses would remain open.
 - Sign at A267 end of Yew Tree Lane should advise that access was still available to Cuckoo Line Stores.
 - Barriers at Kings Arms would deter people from using Station Road; they would not trouble to stop for advice by a gateman that the route was open for access to Town Row.

The Chairman permitted the proprietor of Cuckoo Line Stores to address the meeting. It was stated that this closure would be the sixth in 4 1/2 years. It would have a devastating effect on the business, it would probably not be worth opening the store whilst the road was closed. CLERK is to raise concerns above with ESCC and arrange a site meeting with contractors prior to closure to discuss "gateway". The Chairman closed the formal business of the meeting at 22:10.

14. PUBLIC FORUM.

- A Parishioner advised that, in his recent experience, those providing seats "in memory" were expected to maintain them by the Council concerned.

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

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