



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

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 27th MARCH 2018 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. R. Harris (Chair)
Cllr. L. Henrick
Cllr. J. Cahan
Cllr. G. Farmer

Cllr. T. Gilbert
Cllr. A. Hardy
Cllr. D. Hiles
Cllr. J. Kitchenham

Cllr. A. Martin
Cllr. J. Richardson
Cllr. G. Watson-Smith
Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

T. Thorpe, Parish Clerk. Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC)
and one member of the public.

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

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

- Cllr. N. Glynn submitted an apology for absence via email which unfortunately was treated as "Spam" by the Council's PC and not noted until the morning after the meeting.
- Cllr. Standley submitted an apology on behalf of Cllr. Whetstone.

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

- Cllr. Gilbert declared an interest in respect of item 3f) as he undertakes work for the Surgery.
- Cllr. Wickenden declared an interest in respect of item 3f) as a relative owns land forming part of the site.
- Cllr. Hardy declared an interest in item 3h) as he is the Lay Reader at St. Mark's Church.

c) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr. Standley's report contained the following key points: -

- Potholes. Acknowledged that these are a hazard and a real issue. Last year there were 12 2-man teams dedicated to dealing with them, this year there are 23 2-man teams deployed; The recently announced £1.4m contribution toward the problem from Central Government was welcomed.
- A "stand up for East Sussex" campaign has been run to lobby for fairer funding, particularly for education. Schools in East Sussex, at both Primary and Secondary level, receive less per head compared to other areas of the Country. It is hoped that that the "funding cake" can be shared with greater fairness.
- Will update the Council when he receives news regarding the resurfacing work on the B2100 from the Village to Jarvis Brook. This appears on East Sussex Highway's published programme of works for 2017-18.

Cllr. Dixon's report contained the following key points.

- Expressed concerns at the way the recent water issue was dealt with by South East Water (SEW).
- Rotherfield appeared to have suffered more than other local areas affected.

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- Lack of communication from SEW to their customers and their staff on the ground was criticised.
- Councillors raised concerns that, although compensation was to be paid to households and schools affected, there was no information regarding businesses. Cllr. Dixon will follow this up.
- Councillors from the agricultural community also expressed concern at SEW's lack of knowledge as to the impact on farmers and their stock. The local fire brigade had to be deployed to provide supplies to farms.
- SEW are to review "what went wrong" and Cllr. Dixon will feedback information on this when it appears.
- Wealden Local Plan. It is hoped that this will be available for July, discussions still ongoing with Natural England regarding this.

d) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 22nd February 2018 for approval as a true record.

Clerk advised that an issue had been raised by a Parishioner member of the Friends of the Surgery present at this meeting regarding minute of item 3i). Wished it clarified that "...they may need to set up a separate charity..." should have read "... a separate Charity would need to be set up.." This was noted by the meeting.

Draft minutes of this meeting have been circulated to Councillors. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be adopted as a true record and they were signed by the Chair.

e) Update regarding matters arising & action items from previous meetings. February 22nd Council Meeting

• **Damp issues in undercroft area of the Pre- School.**

Parish Council are in the process of agreeing a date during the Easter Holiday for a site meeting with ESCC representative, the original contractor and Pre-School to view and discuss this issue. Clerk and Cllr. Martin will press ESCC for a firm date.

2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT END OF FEBRUARY 2018, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND APPROVE PAYMENTS.

i. Budget, other financial reports and actions arising.

These have been available to the Councillors prior to the meeting, unfortunately due to problems with link between Pc and projector it was not possible to display them on screen for the meeting. Clerk reported that overall budgets were in order. Invoice for £5060.64 plus VAT has been received from East Sussex Highways for street lighting and energy costs. Due to delays at ESCC the invoice for 2016/17 was not received and paid until the current financial year. Clerk recommends deferring payment until April Council Meeting to avoid distorting this year's figures and has advised Highways accordingly.

ii. Approval of payments.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments be made. Details of funds received are also shown for information.

Date Paid	Payee Name	Ref.	Amount	Transaction Detail
15/03/2018	Unity Trust Bank Current A/c	Correction	£234.00	Bank Tfr to GA Human Resources
27/03/2018	Trevor Thorpe	802477	£1,545.10	March salary
27/03/2018	H M R C	802478	£494.11	March Tax & NI
27/03/2018	Trevor Thorpe	802479	£45.61	Expenses & reimbursements
27/03/2018	Teambase	802480	£91.16	Ink cartridges
27/03/2018	Wealden District Council	802481	£288.00	Dog bins Jan - March 2018
27/03/2018	James and Liz Sweeney	802482	£500.00	Allotment 1/2 yearly rental

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27/03/2018	Tollwood Garden Service	802483	£550.80	March invoice
27/03/2018	Rotherfield Village Hall	802484	£50.40	February hall hire
27/03/2018	Phil Ireland	802485	£456.75	Street sweeping & litter pick
27/03/2018	Stiles Harold Williams partner	802486	£1,050.00	Surgery valuation

Total Payments £5,305.93

Receipts

Date	Received from	Amount	Transaction Detail
10/03/2018	Burslem	£200.00	2 x £100 tablet fees
13/03/2018	H M Revenue & Customs	£1,705.81	Vat reclaim 31/10/17-31/01/18
24/02/2018	Parishioner Donations	£570.00	War Memorial Project donations
05/03/2018	Parishioner Donations	£295.00	War Memorial project donations
07/03/2018	Parishioner Donations	£380.00	War Memorial project donations
09/03/2018	Parishioner Donations	£560.00	War Memorial project donations
13/03/2018	Parishioner Donations	£410.00	War Memorial project donations
17/03/2018	Parishioner Donations	£540.00	War Memorial project donations
20/03/2018	Parishioner Donations	£180.00	War Memorial project donations
27/03/2018	Parishioner Donations	£90.00	War Memorial project donations
28/03/2018	Parishioner Donations	£1,040.00	War Memorial project donations
13/03/2018	Rotherfield Primary School	£500.00	Pitch maintenance contribution
05/03/2018	Tester and Jones Ltd	£708.00	Burial and Gravedigging N22
27/03/2018	Tester and Jones Ltd	£650.00	Ashes plots and interment
15/03/2018	Unity Trust Bank Current A/c	£468.00	Tfr wrongly processed
Total Receipts			<u>£8,296.81</u>

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

a) War Memorial project.

i. Progress report regarding fundraising, and final decision regarding authorising project to proceed to the build stage.

Clerk reported that to date £12724 has been received and banked from 173 donors. Cheques for two further donations, each of £500, were handed to the Clerk at the meeting and a cake sale organised by Mark Cross School has also raised more than £100 toward the fund. Cllr. Hardy reported the following key points: -

- The Rotherfield Trust had kindly offered to grant £3K toward the project. They are to be thanked for this and advised that, due to the generosity of the public, these funds will not now be required.
- War Memorial Working Party are to meet shortly to confirm the definite list of names for inscribing onto the memorial. They will also discuss arrangements for the dedication to take place on the 100th Anniversary of the Armistice on Sunday 11th November and will seek to involve the Bonfire Society and St Denys' Church.
- The project has been chosen for the Waitrose "Green Token" scheme in May and has applied to be chosen for the similar Tesco scheme.
- It was **RESOLVED** that the order be placed with Burslem for the memorial as per their quote from February of £8765 plus VAT – **CLERK** to action.

ii. Recommendation that the Council's expenditure on "start-up" costs for the project be considered as a grant, and not recovered in whole or part from the funds donated.

Total of Council's expenditure during 2016-17 and 2017-18 for "start-up" costs such as Planning Application, Planning Consultant fees and drawings for the application was

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£1097.50. The intention was that this sum would be reimbursed to the Council from the funds collected. It was **RESOLVED** that this sum be reimbursed to the Council who would hold it in earmarked reserve toward the cost of tidying and clearance work in the Churchyard on the boundary with Court Meadow Green so that there will be a neat backdrop to the memorial. A meeting will be arranged with the Church to discuss this, and it is anticipated that Councillors will provide the labour for this project as they have already done with the Old Burial Ground. **CLERK** to arrange funds transfer.

iii. Process for dealing with public donations toward this project.

The working party will discuss and agree uses for any surplus funds over those required for the memorial itself. Initial suggestions are as follows: -

- Provision of a pathway and signage to the memorial across Court Meadow Green.
- Gateway to the Churchyard and Old Burial Ground so that the Commonwealth War Graves located there may accessed easier.
- Set up of an “on line” database recording those named on the memorial.
- Holding a surplus for further cleaning and maintenance.

The Working Party will report its recommendations for consideration by the Council at the May or June Council meeting, **CLLR. HARDY** to please liaise with **CLERK** regarding this.

b) Funds transfer from Santander Bank to Unity Trust Bank for online payments to year end and arrangements for future precept receipts.

- Clerk reported that the precept instalments for this financial year will be received on April 30th and September 24th, each will be of £59765.
- Clerk recommends the following arrangements so payments of invoices from April onward can be made from the Unity account by direct “on-line” transfers:
 - i. Transfer £20000 from Santander current account to business savings account.
 - ii. Transfer £20000 from Santander current account to Unity Current account.
 - iii. Instruct Wealden that all future precept payments be made to our Unity account.
 - iv. These transfers assist our balances in remaining below the £85K deposit protection scheme guarantee from each bank.

RESOLVE that this arrangement be approved, **ACTION** for **CLERK** to prepare letters for signature at the forthcoming Planning and Building meeting authorising these transfers and change to precept destination.

c) Final arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting on May 16th.

Clerk confirmed that the cost of large posters remains the same at £45 each, plus £12 for set up/remove. Usual locations are on the corner by the Stores, Mark Cross and Town Row. Cllr. Hardy advised that the Church will be happy to manage the refreshment arrangements.

RESOLVED the following: -

- **CLERK** to arrange large posters for the event and print smaller A4 notices for display in our bus shelters and other locations.
- Meeting to be advertised as 19:00 for 19:30 start – **CLERK** to update schedule on website and share on Social Media.
- Item regarding the Surgery to be added to the agenda.

Cllr. Cahan offered to assist with producing “PowerPoint” slides for Councillors requiring them and will appreciate details of requirements by early/mid-April to allow time for production.

d) Appointment of Cllr. G. Farmer to the Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Farmer be appointed, **CLERK** to update records.

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- e) **Policy regarding planning issues and concerns relating to Parish businesses.**
Cllr. Cahan suggested that a more considered approach be adopted when raising possible planning issues concerning Parish businesses. These could be managed better by approaching the businesses concerned before escalating matters with Wealden D.C. as it could allow them to remedy any minor planning issues before they reached the “enforcement” level. Whilst the meeting did not consider that this warranted a specific policy the suggestion would be noted for application in future cases.
- f) **Surgery Project update and further actions.**
- Cllr. Henrick reported that there has been little contact with the Doctors since the last meeting, weather/water issues had not helped matters and holidays had meant that all three doctors had not been available simultaneously for discussions.
 - Some issues regarding fire exits and locking of internal doors at the Surgery were being resolved for inclusion in the “heads of terms” document for the lease.
 - All surveys and valuations on behalf of the Parish Council have been completed.
 - The Practice have approached the local Care Commissioning Group to determine what rent they pay for the reduce area occupied in the Surgery building if purchased by the Council.
 - Council are mindful of offers of public donations toward the Project. £100 has already been received from one donor and is being held in an earmarked reserve by the Council.
 - The benefits of setting up a separate charity to receive any donations, or the Council directly receiving the donations, are to be investigated. These could include “Gift Aid” and grant funding. Relationship issues between any Charitable organisation and the Parish Council are also to be considered.
 - Cllr. Richardson reported that she is to attend a one-day free ESCC course regarding fundraising and charities.
 - The Annual Parish Meeting will give an opportunity to share the project’s progress with the Parishioners.
- g) **Request from Rotherfield Sports Club for contribution toward pitch maintenance work.**
This work is scheduled to take place during w/c April 30th and the cost will be £7K plus vat. Club have asked that the Council consider a contribution toward this. **RESOLVED** that the Council will provide £3K toward this work from the earmarked “Recreation Ground Facility” arising from grant funded work undertaken by the Council around 10 years ago.
CLERK to advise the Club and arrange payment.
- h) **Mark Cross Community Centre. Progress update.**
Cllr. Kitchenham reported the following: -
- Work is still in progress regarding the lease between the Diocese and the Community Association. The Solicitor involve has raised issues regarding the plan provided of the area concerned.
 - It is hoped to start the work required on the building in the Summer holidays, this may be optimistic.
 - The premises are already available for use by the public and the Council are to consider holding either the July or August monthly meeting there although it is not anticipated that WiFi will be available by then.

i) **Review planning for Council's co-ordinated responses to future emergencies in the Parish.**

Cllr. Farmer raised this matter due to concerns regarding this. **RESOLVED** to carry this item over to the April meeting, **CLERK** investigate the following: -

- What powers do the Council possess to agree emergency expenditure on behalf of the Community without the need to call a meeting?
- What emergency plans do other Councils have?
- Advice/information from the Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils.

j) **Arrangements during Clerk's forthcoming holiday absence.**

- Answerphone message will advise that the Chair should be contacted regarding any urgent matters.
- Cllr. Hardy will set up e-mail redirect to Chair and Vice Chair, also an "out of office" e-mail response.
- **CLERK** to advise local funeral director of his absence and provide details of two available burial plots to the Chair in case of need.

4. **NOTE ACTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES AT THEIR RECENT MEETINGS.**

- March 6th Planning & Building, and Receptions and Burial Committee (combined due to bad weather leading to cancellation of the 27th February Recreation and Burial Committee meeting).
- March 13th Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee

Draft minutes have been circulated to the Councillors and it was **RESOLVED** that the acts and proceedings of these minutes be noted.

5. **TO RECEIVE OTHER REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ARISING FROM THEM.**

a) **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**

- **Cllr. Gilbert** had attended the recent meeting of the Sports Club at which the request detailed in item 3f) was made. He has also attended the recent meeting of the Hall Committee at which concern was raised that the combination code for the height barrier lock was not available and had led to delay in accessing the car park to deliver water supplies during the recent issue. Clerk has checked email records and can confirm that the Hall was advised of the code for the barrier in January. Comments were also noted of noise complaints caused by a fitness group using the rear car park, together with general noise from the Rec.
- **Cllr. Richardson** had attended the recent meeting of the Twinning Association. Nothing to report relating to the Council.
- **Cllrs. Harris, Gilbert, Watson-Smith and Martin** had attended a site meeting at St Denys' Old Burial Ground with the Council's grass cutting contractor to discuss arrangements for the forthcoming cutting "season". It was agreed with the contractor that Rec. cutting work could commence at 0600 in the Summer months, also that contractor will remove the moss from the paths in the Old Burial Ground.
- **Cllrs. Kitchenham and Watson Smith** have investigated the verges opposite Mark Cross Millennium Green and by the Millennium Oaks. Brambles are to be trimmed to allow the orchids on the verge to thrive.

b) **Clerk's updates and issues.**

- Attended Clerk's meeting at Crowborough Town Council. Interesting presentation from East Sussex Highways re the "challenges" they face, details have been circulated.
- Is to attend an ESCC course in April at Eastbourne regarding SharePoint.

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- Will be attending a time management course at Lewes in May organised by SSALC.
- Cllr. Martin raised question regarding internal audits. Acknowledged at auditors should be changed at intervals and advised that current auditors are retiring after their April visit. **CLERK** will enquire of SSALC regarding their advice re: internal audit process and a new auditor for this Council.

c) Items for next Parish Magazine column.

Annual Parish Meeting, Mark Cross School May Fayre and a request from our MP for any memories of the Suffragette movement in the district for an exhibition in Uckfield.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- “Flyer” giving details of a political discussion evening hosted by Wealden Constituency Conservative Association on “Homes for All” – 11th April 19:30 at the King’s Arms Rotherfield.
- Samaritans – Tunbridge Wells and District. Request for grant assistance.
- St Chéron-en-Bref edition 338.
- The Clerk Magazine – March 2018.
- Clerks and Councils Direct – March 2018.
- UK Parliament – Information regarding UK Parliament Week.
- Nus Ghani MP. Request for information and reminiscences regarding the Suffragette movement in the area, this for an exhibition being organised in Uckfield on this subject at the end of May.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

No issues of immediate concern and requiring action were noted, and the reports were signed by the Chair. **CLERK** to provide Cllr. Gilbert with a supply of report blanks for the Parish Cemetery.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

Due to Clerk’s forthcoming holiday the 10th April F & G P Committee meeting will be rescheduled to the 17th April to start immediately after the Planning and Building on that date.

March	29 th	Planning & Building Committee
April	17 th	Planning & Building Committee
	17 th	Finance & General - Purpose Committee - End of Year Figures
	24 th	Communications & Social Media Committee
	26 th	Monthly Council Meeting

All the above meetings are to be held in the Parish Council Room at Rotherfield Village Hall starting at 19:30.

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 Wealden had sent Business Rates bills totalling in the region of £400 in respect of the Parish Cemetery and Old Burial Ground. As in previous years they have applied 100% relief to these, hence no payment is due from the Parish Council.
- **CLERK** is to ask our grass cutting contractor to cut and tidy the grass area alongside the St Denys boundary wall in Church Road, also to add to the cutting list for regular attention.
- Councillors will be attending the Easter Egg Hunt in the Rec. between 11:00 and 13:00 on Good Friday.
- Cllr. Kitchenham requested Clerk to report the potholes on Church Road. **CLERK** to investigate and report to ESCC. Clerk requests that Councillors familiarise themselves with

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the East Sussex Highways report process on their website and, if possible, submit reports themselves using the Council's general email address so that Clerk receives notifications and updates. If practical to do so please provide photos of Highways issues.

Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:30.

10. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

..... Chair.....Date

Draft minutes subject to confirmation and adoption as a true record

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