

ROOTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND BURIAL COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT 19:30 ON TUESDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 2013 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas (Chairman)
Cllr. N. Bolton

Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson
Cllr. R. Harris

Cllr. L. Pike
Cllr. A. Watson
Cllr. N. Wickenden

ALSO ATTENDING. The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe. Five members of the public were present.

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

An apology was received and accepted on behalf of Cllr. C. Prince.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

- Cllr. Pike declared an interest in respect of item 7 iv) as he occasionally assists this contractor, and in respect of item 7 ix) as he is Chairman of the Society.
- Cllr. Thomas declared an interest in respect of item 7 v) as he has shooting rights over land owned by this Parishioner.
- Cllr. Wickenden declared an interest in respect of item 7 v) as he is related to this Parishioner.
- Cllr. Harris declared an interest in respect of item 7 v) as he farms land owned by this Parishioner.

The Committee Chairman reminded the Councillors present that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one at any point in the meeting.

3. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27TH NOVEMBER 2012 AS A TRUE RECORD.

It was RESOLVED to approve these minutes and the Chairman signed them.

4. UPDATE FROM CLERK REGARDING MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.

Numbers relate to agenda items of 27th November meeting:-

6i) Grass Cutting – final invoice breakdown now received from Barcombe. Invoice will be on list for payment at February meeting and will then give them notice regarding cessation of contract,

7i) Mole catcher has caught 10 moles in total in Recreation Ground and Cemetery, invoice to be submitted.

7v) Sports Club have fitted padlock and chain to the gates at the top of the bank, these will be unlocked during matches to allow ball retrieval. Club confirm that payments for grass cutting are to continue at previous level of £315 April – October inclusive.

7vi) Tony Moaby has completed hedge reduction on Rec. northern boundary. Once ground has dried out he will progress with removing grass debris from hedge line and construction of storage area for cuttings.

8 i) Inspection of St Denys' Graves for filling is still outstanding

8ii) Updated scale of fees for burial grounds has been circulated to local Funeral Directors.

9 i) Name slab at Cemetery has been reinstalled, cleaned and inscription repainted.

Cllr. Wickenden reported that he had inspected the bench offered to the Council and considered that it was unsuitable for purchase.

TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MATTERS

5. ALLOTMENT ISSUES

- Information and further action regarding on going management of the allotments and collection of rents. Water bill for allotment usage submitted by landlord.**

Landlords have echoed concerns expressed to them by plot holders regarding uncertainty of management of the site, Clerk has spoken to Secretary of RHAA regarding their withdrawal from the management and consider that the Association no longer wish to involve themselves with the allotments. Clerk noted that the recently signed agreement between the Council and Landlord states that the Council as tenant will be responsible for all rates and charges.

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RESOLVED CLERK to write letter to Association stating the following points:-

- Resolution of the management of the allotment is required with their involvement and that of the plot holders. It is desirable that a committee of the holders runs the site.
- It is considered that the Council have discharged their obligations under the 1908 Allotments and Smallholding Act to provide the allotment land.
- Failure to reach agreement no later than the March Council Meeting will risk that the Council will give the requisite 12 months' notice to the landlords that they wish to surrender the lease; the notice must expire prior to 6th April or after 29th September as per terms of agreement with the landlords.
- The Association are required to settle the water bill of £28.02 for the half year with the landlords; the water was arranged by the association with consultation with the Council.

Copies to be placed on Allotment notice board and sent to Landlord.

6. GENERAL RECREATION AND BURIAL ISSUES

i. Risk assessment format for events run on Council land.

Chairman to provide specimen of suggested format, CLERK to carry forward to agenda of next Committee meeting.

ii. Letter received regarding trees in the New Road – King's Arms "Twitten" Fp31a. Information and further action regarding trees bordering this footpath; quote from Coppards regarding tarmac surface.

Letter circulated, Council Chairman has met with author to discuss the issues raised, Clerk has requested land ownership map of route to clarify situation regarding the trees, once this is received discussion to be held with owner regarding those requiring trimming.

RESOLVED CLERK action the following:

- Contact Coppards accepting quote of £3625 plus Vat for widening and tarmac surface of path but asking to defer at same price for work to be undertaken in 2013/14 Financial Year.
- Approach ESCC Highways Rights of Way team seeking a contribution toward the work.
- Circulate land ownership map when received to enable discussion with owner regarding tree reductions of those on their land. Council may be prepared to fund replacement by new plantings subject to cost further back from path border.

7. RECREATION GROUND.

i. Issues and actions arising from monthly safety inspections and annual safety inspection of Play Area.

Play area latest inspection sheet dated 29th November 2012 shows moles as an issue. Mole catcher has reported moles caught both on the Rec and in the Cemetery.

Recreation Ground latest inspection sheet dated 29th November 2012 notes that hedge cutting remained to be done. Wicksteed have confirmed that they will shortly be undertaking annual inspection of play area. To ensure that inspections are undertaken on a timely basis it was RESOLVED that the offer of Cllrs. Thomas and Harris is accepted to undertake the weekly playground inspection and monthly recreation ground inspection. When next seasons hedge cutting takes place it is to be ensure that the Eridge Lane boundary hedge is to be a maximum of 1.5m high, CLERK to note.

ii. Update and further action regarding improvements to roundabout in play area and provision of new equipment.

Awaiting response from Cllr Merriman re: donation to Rotherfield Trust so that grant request may be made to them. Flyers have been circulated by Rotherfield School publicising the "Active Play" session and requesting input regarding enhancements to the play area. Quote has been received regarding modification to roundabout, as it is not as per work specified CLERK to contact company for new quote. Item to be carried forward to agenda of next Committee meeting.

iii. Response from WDC to request for charity clothes recycling bin to be place at Station Road car park and further action.

This item was dealt with first on the agenda as a representative of the Charity was present. WDC have declined request due to lack of space in this car park. RESOLVED CLERK to check availability of space in the Village Hall car park so that bin does not affect parking area, measurements of bin are to be provided by the Charity and site meeting to be arranged.

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iv. Quote and further action regarding the Sycamore tree overhanging the Village Hall and fence repairs to corner of bottom pitch.

£360 quoted by Tony Moaby in respect of tree, RESOLVED to accept this quote to cut back tree sensitively as agreed with the owner, CLERK to contact Hall seeking contribution toward cost of work. RESOLVED to accept quote of £160 to repair hedge by oak tree by bottom football pitch, CLERK to authorise work.

v. Approach to landowner regarding possible installation of padlocked gateway in boundary hedge of lower pitch to allow ball retrieval.

It is now considered that a post and rail fence would be a better solution to this issue as it would be climbable for ball retrieval yet would not imply a right of way, RESOLVED Cllrs. Harris, Wickenden and Thomas to arrange site visit to enabling a specification on which a quote may be based. Cllr. Harris is to source a suitable "beware of cattle" notice to warn those who may climb the fence for ball retrieval.

vi. Update from Scout Group regarding the Scout Hut and invitation for a member of the Council to appoint a member to the subcommittee considering improvement works.

Update from Group circulated to Councillors. It was RESOLVED to accept Cllr. Pike's offer to join the sub committee, CLERK to advise Scouts.

vii. Further action to progress plan to relocate entrance to the Bowls Club to face the pitches, and provide an access pathway. Update regarding plan for new changing room.

This item was dealt with 2nd on the Agenda as representatives of the Club were present. Information from Club was circulated to the Councillors. The papers for the planning application for the new changing room have been received from WDC and are on the agenda for consideration at the 19th February Planning Committee meeting. RESOLVED that Cllrs. Pike and Thomas arrange site visit with representatives of the Club to discuss specification so that quotes may be sought for the work required.

viii. Request for "Hearing Bus" to use the car park 10:30 – 15:30 8th April.

RESOLVED to agree to this request with the proviso that the bus does not depart until after 16:00 to allow school traffic to clear, CLERK to advise.

ix. Request for use of Recreation Ground for Bonfire Society Easter Egg Hunt.

This to be held on Good Friday 29th March, RESOLVED to agree to this request, CLERK to liaise with the Society regarding indemnity, Insurance and risk assessment requirements.

8. ST DENYS' BURIAL GROUND

i. Issues and actions arising from safety inspections.

Latest inspection 20th December 2012, no issues noted. Church have provided a copy for information of their quinquennial inspection report for the closed churchyard, they have been reminded that this area is dealt with by Wealden District Council and not the Parish Council. Shrubs have been noted overgrowing footpath 22c that runs through the Churchyard, Cllr. Wickenden has agreed to sympathetically cut these back for the Parish Council after discussion with nearby property owners.

ii. Offer from Rotherfield branch of the Royal British Legion to take over responsibility for maintenance of the War Graves in the Burial Ground.

This was dealt with as the second item on the agenda as a representative of the Rotherfield Branch of the Legion was present. It is wished to tidy the War Graves up in view of the pending centenary of the start of the Great War. Nine graves designated as "War Graves" by the CWGC, eight are of their design with one being a cross style. RESOLVED to accept this offer subject to receipt of plans for the work proposed, and agreement and advice from CWGC regarding possible consent requirements from the families concerned.

9. ROTHERFIELD PARISH CEMETERY

i. Issues and actions arising from safety inspections.

Latest inspection 29th November 2012, mole activity noted. It was RESOLVED to accept Cllr. Bolton's offer to undertake the monthly inspections of the Cemetery.

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ii. Action on drainage issues highlighted by gravedigger.

Waterlogging issues again occurring on plots located at the village side of the path. Whilst these may be excavated by machine they are quickly filling up. CLERK is to discuss details of this issue with the gravedigger and also possible issues with a band of rock on the northern side of the Burial Ground and add agenda item for next Committee meeting to report progress.

iii. Payment for supply of water to the Cemetery.

Clerk advised that 7.94m² had been used since installed in 2010 as at the last reading in November. RESOLVED to pay £100 to landowner supplying the water, it was noted that they had also extended their supply to the boundary of the leased land at no cost to the Council to enable water to be provided in the Cemetery.

iv. Quote and further action regarding height reduction to hedge on north boundary bordering existing area and suggestion and quote regarding hedge bordering lower field.

Cllr Pike declared an interest in this item as he occasionally assists this contractor. AGREED to accept quote from Tony Moaby of £380 to lay north boundary hedge to height of 5' and fill gaps. Other quotes provided by him for the boundaries of the extension field are to be held pending a site visit by Cllrs. Wickenden, Thomas and Pike to discuss the extension.

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

- Committee Chairman and Cllr. Pike are to arrange a site visit to the Recreation Ground with a member of a local family who wish to donate a memorial bench.
- CLERK to investigate and report following Highways issues:-
 - Pothole approx. 150m from Palesgate Lane on Rotherfield Hill.
 - Potholes in Catts' Hill, Station Road by Orchard Cottages and Sham Farm Road near Stile Bridge.
 - Bracket lamp with intermittent fault in Station Road opposite steps to Hornshurst Road.
 - Follow up for reinstallation of direction signs to RSM and Village Hall.
- CLERK to add item to February meeting to consider maps offered to the Council, Cllr. Wickenden now has these items.
- CLERK to contact Enterprise Inns who are owners of the Catts' Inn regarding soil pipe leaking into adjacent "twitten".
- Cllr. Watson is to speak to owner of van parked in village centre.
- Clerk reported that Highways are arranging for a replacement sign for the worn out one in Station Road by the Catts' Inn twitten.
- Pedestrians in road warning sign has now been installed on exit to village near pond, CLERK is to contact Highways as no corresponding sign has appeared at the Jarvis Brook end of this section of road.

11. TO RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE.

- Tuesday 9th April at 19:30 in the Parish Council Room, Clerk advised that he is on holiday for this meeting.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:25.

12. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Chairman _____ Date