

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 COMBINED WITH PLANNING MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION HELD AT 19:30 ON THURSDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER 2011 AT ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chair)

Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson

Cllr. C. Dennison

Cllr. M. Hall

Cllr. R. Harris

Cllr. R. Jaques

Cllr. D. Thomas

Cllr. Mrs. A. Watson

Cllr. N. Wickenden

ALSO PRESENT. The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe, Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC) and Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC). 7 members of the public attended the meeting.

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

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr. C. Clibbens, Cllr. Miss N. Bolton, Cllr. J. Padfield, Cllr. F. Whetstone, (ESCC) and PCSO Matt Boyle.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

The Chairman declared an interest in respect of item 6 j) as he occasionally assists this contractor.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

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

- He is on the Committee considering the District Council's response to the proposed reorganisation of Parliamentary Constituencies.
- Whilst most Constituencies in the area are unchanged, the proposal for the Wealden Constituency is for it to be replaced by a new "The Weald" Constituency which would incorporate areas of Kent.
- The aim of the reorganisation is to reduce the overall number of Constituencies in England whilst ensuring that those remaining have a broadly similar number of electors.
- The Planning Application for the affordable housing development at Town Row is imminent and he hopes that the concerns regarding traffic and pedestrian access will be addressed.

Cllr. Tidy (ESCC) reported the following:-

- There had been a recent operational reorganisation of Sussex Police, although the Wealden District Police area is still extant.
- For Wealden the CID and response teams are now based in hubs at Uckfield and Eastbourne.
- The number of Pcsos has declined through natural wastage and recruitment will restart shortly. There is currently a pool of 200 candidates waiting from when recruitment was stopped.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT

Clerk delivered the following report on behalf of Pcsos Boyle.

- 11/09 Garage broken into on Rotherfield Lane, tools and drills stolen.
- 11/09 Theft from mini bus, which was parked at Eridge train station, handbags stolen from inside vehicle.
- 13/09 Attempted shed break in on Stone Cross Road, padlock broken off nothing stolen from inside as was disturbed by home owner.
- 22/09 Shed broken into on Cottage Hill, rotavator stolen.
- 23/09 Unsecured trailer stolen from garden in Peeps Lane.
- Beware of another telephone scam, this time involving Personal Protection Insurance payouts where they say you are owed money following a loan but need to pay £250 for administrative fees before it can be released to you. If in doubt hang up the phone.

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Cllr Tidy (ESCC) reported that he had recently attended an NFU/Police forum regarding rural crime. The recorded incidents figures presented were felt to be understating the problem, this view was shared by Police representatives present. It is believed that many crimes were not reported as the perception is that no action would be taken. He stressed that, without figures to substantiate, it was difficult to argue for more resources to deal with the issue and that all incidents should be reported to the Police so that the true picture was recorded. He is attending a meeting on October 10th with the Assistant Chief Constable to discuss rural crime issues.

5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 25TH AUGUST 2011 & MATTERS ARISING.

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

6. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS

a) Information and further action regarding celebrating and commemorating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012 and the "Big Lunch".

- Quote received for extension of path to complete a circuit of the Recreation Ground at cost £60/m² which for the 115m involved would total £6900.
- Suggestion received from Pre School for a Skate Park.
- £2000 currently provisionally allocated from reserves toward the Jubilee.
- E-mail received via SALC regarding the "Big Lunch" scheduled this year for Sunday 3rd June, Sports' Club have also expressed an interest in involvement to organise any Village events. This was circulated to Councillor's prior to meeting.

It was RESOLVED to further consider the extension of the path in the Recreation Ground when budgets and precepts are being drawn up for 2012/13.

b) Further action regarding study into provision of a footpath/cycleway from Jarvis Brook to Rotherfield.

Cllr. Clibbens mentioned this project at a recent ESCC Conference and is to be contacted by the relevant department to arrange a site visit. CLERK to carry forward to October agenda to review progress.

c) Arrangements for Poppy Wreaths to lay at the Remembrance Service.

Wreaths cost the British Legion £17, RESOLVED to donate £50.00 to them under s137 LGA 1972 powers for charitable donations for the furtherance of charitable work in the United Kingdom. CLERK to arrange for two wreaths, and donation cheque to be issued at October meeting. Cllr. Halse – Adamson proposed that Cllr. Harris take over her wreath laying duty at the Remembrance Sunday service and this was AGREED.

d) Information and response to the Boundary Commission regarding proposed changes to the current Wealden Parliamentary Constituency.

A map of the proposed "The Weald" Constituency was displayed; consultation responses to the Commission's proposals must be received by December 5th. The proposal would include the Cranbrook, Hawkhurst and Paddock Wood areas in Kent, also Battle and the Rother Levels in East Sussex. It was considered that this area had been decided more to meet the requirements of the Commission than the practicalities of a Constituency split between two Counties and three District/Borough Councils. Cllr Merriman (WDC) offered to provide input to assist the Parish in deciding a formal response and this was accepted, CLERK to carry forward to October agenda and add details of consultation to Council website.

e) Information and further action to meet requirements for becoming a "Quality Council".

- Many of the "administrative" requirements either have been achieved or can be with little further work.
- Work needs to be done to demonstrate achievements and actions taken in the areas of Communication (particularly regular newsletter/annual report) and Community Engagement, Clerk suggested forming a sub - committee to discuss how this is best achieved.
- Clerk considers that we could be ready to apply for this status Spring/Early Summer 2012. Cost is £117.50 including Vat.

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RESOLVED that the Council Chairman, Cllr. Bolton, Cllr. Dennison and Cllr. Hall be members of this Sub Committee, CLERK to provide details of what has already been achieved.

f) Progress report regarding replacement bus shelter at Mark Cross.

Plans now received to enable issue of tenders and updated licence from ESCC. It was RESOLVED to include the following specifications:-

- i. Structure to be Oak framed.
- ii. Cladding is to be rough sawn feather edge boarding.
- iii. Roof covering is to be Chestnut shingles.
- iv. Windows are to be glazed with Lexan safety glazing.

CLERK to action issue of tenders so that these may be considered at October meeting.

g) Progress report regarding suggested winter closure to vehicles of the “country” section of Chant Lane.

Letters have been sent to the residents regarding surfacing, SatNav issues and possible winter closure of part. Rights of Way Team at ESCC have recommended experimental closure for 2011/12. The Local Access Forum are inspecting the various paths being considered for closure and a decision will be made mid October, CLERK to carry forward to October agenda for update.

h) Information and further action regarding area of verge opposite Mark Cross Church currently used as an “unofficial” parking area.

Clerk visited site with ESCC Highways officer to discuss. They would not recommend extending the area as it could affect sighting at the junction and they consider that the issue would soon return on the remaining area of verge. Recommendation from them is to obtain licence from ESCC to install wooden bollards, they can advise style, size and if reflectors would be a requirement. RESOLVED to enquire of ESCC whether an extended parking area, bordered with bollards, would be permitted. CLERK to contact ESCC and also ask them to clarify ownership of the area in question. Cllr. Padfield’s input is to be sought regarding this issue.

i) Information regarding recent RTC in Catts’ Hill and further action.

Information from Sussex Police regarding this is that driver was uninjured but attended hospital to be checked over, enquiries being made as to possible cause. Clerk has contacted Highways in the light of their comments in the July “Courier” article to see if the site has been checked for possible skid issues and their local officer is to make enquiries and report back. CLERK to carry forward to agenda of the November Highways Committee meeting..

j) Information and quote for work on Horse Chestnut tree at corner of Court Meadow.

Recommended that tree is reduced overall by 30% at a cost of £350. RESOLVED that quote be accepted, CLERK to advise contractor to proceed with work.

k) Letters and Consultations requesting a response.

- **AiRS** – Invitation to AGM, also SALC AGM on Friday November 4th.
- **James Grant Media Management** – Invitation to appear in an “observational documentary” on television. AGREED CLERK to circulate to local community groups suggested who may wish to be involved with this.
- **ClearlySo** – Information regarding Village SOS scheme to support local businesses. Details passed to Councillors.
- **Proposed merger of East and West Sussex Fire Services.**
Clerk has drafted a response as agreed at July Council Meeting, this was AGREED and CLERK is to send reply.

l) Planning matters as follows:-

- i. **WD/2011/0787/MAJ** Land at Court Farm, Rotherfield Road, Rotherfield
Erection of new agricultural dwelling, barn and stables building as an alternative to that approved under WD/2007/2984/F with associated access, driveway and land forming/landscape proposals.

The business of the meeting was adjourned to allow neighbours of the site to clarify how the changes from the previous application would affect them.

It was RESOLVED that the Councils recommendation to WDC regarding this application is to REFUSE it. The key reasons for this are:-

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- i. It will diminish the amenity and reduce the quality of life for those neighbouring the site as they will have building adjoining their properties instead of farmland.
- ii. The new design reduces the agricultural justification for the development.
- iii. The proposed equestrian use would lead to increased traffic movements to and from the B2100.

CLERK to investigate best wording for these objections and submit to WDC.

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

- Highways Lighting and Transport Committee 6th September 2011.
- Planning and Building Committee 20th September 2011.

It was RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted and that there were no matters arising. As the minutes of the Recreation and Burial Committee meeting of 27th September 2011 have yet to be circulated, CLERK carry forward to October agenda.

8. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING

- **Other committees and sub-committees.**
- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**
 - **Cllr. Clibbens** – ESCC Annual Parish and Town Meeting at Uckfield. A very worthwhile event and a brief summary will be circulated.
 - **Cllr. Hall.** Attended a forum at Sussex University at which details of the good work of Rotherfield St Martin was shared, he suggests that they are invited to give a presentation to the Council at a future meeting. He has also attended the annual Speedwatch forum at Uckfield and a report is to be circulated.
 - **Clerk.** Attended the annual WDC Parish Conference near Uckfield. Much useful information given of the Localism Bill that should be law by year-end. Report to be circulated.
 - **Chairman and Cllr. Harris.** Met with the new owners of the allotment land, see minutes of recent Recreation and Burial Committee meeting for information.
- **Clerk's report, issues and updates on work in progress.**
 - WDC have been contacted regarding a satellite dish in the conservation area that was subject to enforcement action over a year ago and they advise that they are currently getting quotes from contractors for taking direct action to remove the dish from the property.
 - Update received from ESCC regarding action being taken with hedges reported to them.

9. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation as at end of August 2011. The RFO presented the figures, which were agreed and signed by the Chairman. Clerk reported the following finance related matters:
 - Confirmation received from the Bank that he and Cllr. Clibbens had now been added to the accounts as signatories.
 - Balances and reserves will be reviewed once the September bank statements are received. CLERK to also investigate interest rates available on short-term cash deposits.
 - Second precept instalment has now been received.
 - Payment for repair to Millennium Green map board and removal of tree bough at Court Meadow have been authorised within Clerk's discretionary spending limit.
- Review of Expenditure against Budget to end August 2011. The RFO provided the summary figures to Councillors and relevant detailed figures to the Committee Chairmen.
- Approval of Payments. After explanation it was agreed that the following payments be made:-

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CHEQUE NO	CHEQUE PAYABLE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801310	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for September	£954.84
801311	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for September	£232.48
801312	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for September	£164.71
801313	Jim Gander	Street sweeping for September	£118.30
801314	Rotherfield Sports Club	Grass cutting of playing surfaces September	£300.00
801315	Tollwood Garden Services	Grass cutting for September	£1,369.20
801316	Konica Minolta	Photocopier lease and copying fees	£61.41
801317	Uckfield Line Parishes Committee	Support Contribution s143 LGA 1972	£25.00
801318	W.D.C.	Parish Conference fee	£50.00
801319	S.A.L.C	Training cost for Councillor's Courses	£942.00
801320	Crowborough First Responders Group/SECAMB	Grant toward set up costs s137 LGA 1972	£1,000.00
801321	Rotherfield Village Hall	August hall hire	£9.80
801322	A Moaby	Reset posts on Millennium Green map board and remove fallen limb from tree.	£80.00
801323	Rotherfield Pre School	Half yearly grant s137 LGA 1972	£250.00
801324	S. Ellis	Half yearly rent for allotments	£250.00
801325	Suffolk ACRE	Endorsement to insurance policy to cover gates and barriers	£19.24
Total			£5,826.98
CREDITS			
	PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
	Santander	Bank interest - August	£60.45
	Tester and Jones	Interment fee	£400.00
	Henry Paul Funeral Services	Ashes interment fee	£50.00
	Mrs. R.M. De Mallet-Morgan	Memorial fee	£70.00
	Tester and Jones	Ashes plot reservation fee	£90.00
	Wealden District Council	Second instalment of precept	£26,250.00
Total			£26,920.45

10. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE

General

- **CPRE/NALC** – “How to respond to planning applications” booklet - further copies have been requested. CLERK to circulate link to PDF on website.
- **Wealden DC** – Updated information regarding processes for Casual Vacancies on a Council.
- **Village Hall** – Advice that a £100 fine may be levied if the hall is not left secure by hirers after use.
- **SALC** – Annual Report and Accounts 2010/11.

Circulars and magazines

- **Sussex Police** – East Sussex Division September newsletter.

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- Wealden DC – Parish Bulletin issue 11.
- Clerks and Councils Direct – issue 77.
- Sussex Area Ramblers – September newsletter.
- Saint Chéron en Bref – No 277.
- Grey Matters – Volume 21.
- Rotherfield St Martin – Newsletter 6.
- The Clerk Magazine – September 2011.
- LCR – autumn 2011.

Planning

- **WD/2011/1518/LB** Coes Hall, Dewlands Hill, Rotherfield TN6 3RU.
To install a new section of flooring, thereby extending the useable space on the first floor. To remove one internal wall. To build a walk-in wardrobe at first floor level.
Application approved by WDC, previously recommended for approval by the Parish Council.
- **WD/2011/1685/F Drumsell**, Town Row Green, Rotherfield TN6 3QU
Change of use from holiday let to single storey domestic dwelling with garage.
Application refused by WDC, previously recommended for refusal by the Parish Council. CLERK to circulate copy of decision and background to Councillors.

11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

- These were presented to the Chair for signature.

12. DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

Tuesday October 18th – Planning and Building Committee in Rotherfield Village Hall, starting at 19:30.

- Thursday October 27th – October Council Meeting to be held in Eridge Village Hall.

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

- E-mail received expressing concerns that lorries are ignoring the 7.5t weight limit and using the route Cottage Hill – Butchers Cross instead of A267, the issue has also been mentioned to Cllr. Harris. CLERK enquiring as to how limit may be better enforced.
- A Parishioner has reported that the listed phone kiosk by the Post Office has been vandalised and also requires repainting. CLERK to investigate and report to BT.
- CLERK to investigate source and cost of wooden bollards to replace rotten ones bordering the car park and Rec. It is understood that one supplier is offering these with a 25yr guarantee against rot.
- CLERK to circulate contact list for members of the Tennis Court sub-committee.
- Cllr. Wickenden reported that ESCC have confirmed that the verge near Baiden Close at the foot of Spout Hill has now been returned to their cut list.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:40.

14. PUBLIC FORUM.

A Catts' Hill resident raised the following issues:-

- Although the path bordering Jameah had been cut it had rapidly regrown and there was Knot Weed present. CLERK to raise this with ESCC Rights of Way team and mention the statutory obligation for landowners to deal with this invasive plant.
- He had used the B2100 for many years and considered that, if vehicle speed was appropriate, there was no problem with the road. Suggested that a 40mph limit throughout the Town Row – Mark Cross section should be considered. CLERK to add to agenda of forthcoming Highways meeting to discuss.
- Considered that it would be of benefit if parking area opposite Mark Cross church were extended.

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

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