

# 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 29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2012 AT 19:30 IN MARK CROSS VILLAGE HALL.

### COUNCILLORS PRESENT

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

### ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC), Cllr, R. Tidy (ESCC) and Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC).
- 39 members of the public.

Before the formal business of the meeting commenced the Chairman allowed the organiser of the recent petition to ESCC regarding speeding issues to address the meeting. The following points were made:-

- Many of those who signed the petition had not been aware that the Council's Highways Committee of March 20<sup>th</sup> had been held in Mark Cross.
  - Cllr. Whetstone (ESCC) was thanked for presenting the petition and Cllr. Padfield for his continuing support with the matter.
  - There had been many attempts in the past to get the limit through the village reduced to 30mph.
  - Cllr. Whetstone advised that the villager's petition was presented to the Chair of ESCC prior to the 27<sup>th</sup> March Council Meeting and the organiser would be receiving acknowledgment in due course. The petition would then be passed to a Highways Officer for them to compile a report for the Lead Member for Highways, once received he would hold a meeting with the organiser of the petition. Timescale for this estimated to be in the order of 6 – 8 weeks.
  - A similar petition had been presented to ESCC in 2005 to no avail.
  - Those present described details of numerous "damage only" accidents and near misses.
  - Cllr. Clibbens enquired as to how many of those present had volunteered to assist the "Speedwatch" group and urged any interested to give him their contact details.
  - Chairman agreed to a further public meeting in the village hall regarding speeding and highways issues in the village and that the local MP and representatives of ESCC Highways, police and County Councillors would be invited to attend. CLERK is to arrange this and liaise with petition organiser regarding details.
- 1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s 85).**  
Apologies for absence were tendered and accepted on behalf of Cllr. A. Watson, Cllr.C. Prince and PcsO Matt Boyle.
  - 2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**
    - Cllr. Halse Adamson declared an interest in respect of item 6 a) on the agenda as she is Chair of the Hall Committee.
  - 3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.**  
Cllr. Padfield (WDC) reported the following:-
    - He has spoken with a Planning Enforcement officer regarding the Fairfield Farm site.
    - The "weighbridge" noted there is actually a wheel washer
    - The planning consent permits for 40 lorry movements each way during weekdays and Saturday mornings.

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- The original consent had stated that the work would take an estimated 3 months to complete. If the work finishes late spring, as has been stated by the developer, it will have taken 8 months from commencement.
- The spoil being delivered is not landfill but is being used to build up the pond surrounds.

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

- The recent Core Strategy consultation resulted in a good public response. The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that housing is only built where areas have been identified as suitable for the purpose.
- A “Wealden Mile” event had recently been held in Crowborough and raised £2K for Sports Relief.
- Half price water butts are being offered for sale by WDC.
- The Olympic Torch Route will pass through Crowborough.
- The recent application to expand an existing campsite off Hadlow Down Road had been recommended for refusal by the Planning Officer although recommended for approval by Cllr. Merriman and the Parish Council. The application will now be considered at a forthcoming Wealden Planning Committee meeting. He has also been involved with an application in Ashley Road and one for the village store.
- He is now Chair of the Wealden Conservative Association and may be enlisted to help on local issues if the constituency MP is unavailable.

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

- As previously noted he had presented the petition from Mark Cross regarding speeding issues to the ESCC Chairman. He apologised for the confusion that had led to the delay in presenting it.
- There are currently three high speed broadband projects undergoing in the County:-
  - A BT scheme mainly in the coastal area
  - A DEFRA scheme mainly targeted at farming communities and centred on Hartfield.
  - A County scheme with £20m earmarked to support which aims to connect up to 95% of the County by 2015. Response from the public is invited to persuade possible suppliers of the scheme to participate and this may best be done via the ESCC website at <http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/consultation/2011/broadband/consultations2011.htm>. Paper copies of the consultation may be obtained by calling 01273 481476.

#### **Cllr R. Tidy (ESCC) had no report to present.**

#### **4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT.**

The following information was presented by the Clerk on behalf of PcsO Boyle.  
**Crimes March 2012**

- 12/03 Serial 1638 Tools stolen from tool shed in Boars Head
- 21/03 Serial 0994 Lawnmower stolen from allotments on Hadlow Down Road
- 26/03 Serial 1111 Tack stolen from field in Eridge Green

#### **Other**

Parking outside General Store

- 15/03 at 1040hours cars gone by 1100
- 20/03 at 1600hours all clear

With the warmer weather please remember not to leave windows open when you leave your house; do not give thieves any opportunity. There were a number of car crimes in Hailsham the other month please remember to lock your doors and do not leave anything on display like mobile phones or SatNav.

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## 5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 23<sup>RD</sup> 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 AGENDA ITEMS.

### a) Information regarding research into governance and title status of Mark Cross Village Hall.

Clerk is researching this and has received helpful information from WDC legal department who recommend a Land Registry search be obtained by the Hall Committee as a first step. Reply is awaited from the Charity Commission request from them for any information that they hold regarding a Charitable Trust. Solicitor's advice is to budget in the region of £1K for work involved toward obtaining Possessory Title; this assumes that the Committee does much of the "groundwork" such as obtaining declarations from long-standing village residents regarding the status of the site. After ten years have elapsed, the Possessory Title may then become an absolute title.

### b) Information and further action on request for closure of "one way" slip road by Mark Cross Church and provision of signage indicating that is for local traffic only.

Response from ESCC circulated, together with letters from School and Church in support of the suggestion. Issues are also arising with parking on the pavement in the slip road and the School have written to parents asking that they park with consideration and do not cause unnecessary obstruction; PcsO Boyle is visiting the school to discuss. It was considered that the ESCC response declining the work was inadequate RESOLVED to add to agenda of the proposed meeting in Mark Cross regarding highways matter to agree further action, options suggested included making the whole section of road from the church to the Wadhurst turning "one way" and a 20mph limit on that section. Villagers have indicated that they are willing to fund cost of closure.

### c) Information regarding improvement work undertaken by new owners of the allotment land, adoption of updated agreement between Council and site owners and arrangements for next rent payment due at end of March.

Draft agreement circulated in advance of the meeting. Clerk recommended that solicitor examine the agreement. In return for taking over increased areas of maintenance, the property owners propose an increase annual rent of £1k. It was RESOLVED to get the draft agreement reviewed by the Council's solicitor at the Council's cost to ensure that it protected the interests of both landowner and Council as tenants.

### d) Approval of Agenda for Annual Parish Meeting.

Highways have been contacted but are currently unable to commit a speaker; they are making enquiries regarding availability of a representative of the road safety team. The County Councillors present are to try to encourage ESCC Highways representation at the meeting and CLERK is to review progress with attaining Quality Council status to report at the meeting. RESOLVED to accept wording of the agenda, CLERK to arrange for signwriter to produce and install the 3 notices of the meeting as resolved at the January Council Meeting.

### e) Arrangements during Clerk's forthcoming leave.

Clerk to allocate 2 grave spaces to each local funeral directors as a contingency, e-mail and phone will direct those enquiring to contact Chairman regarding any urgent matters. Arrangement has already been made for the agenda of the 17<sup>th</sup> April planning committee meeting and Chairman has a key for the Eridge, Mark Cross and Boar's Head noticeboards.

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**f) Acceptance of quote from invitations to tender for various groundwork and resurfacing projects in the Parish.**

4 tenders invited 3 responses received by the deadline advised. CLERK is to list the quotes to enable comparison and add to April Council meeting agenda to choose contractor. Two of the responses include a discount if all of the work is undertaken; CLERK to contact the third to see if they will also offer a discount on this basis.

**g) Adoption of Community Engagement Statement of intent.**

Draft policy was circulated prior to the meeting. It was RESOLVED to adopt the policy, CLERK to publish on website and ensure that all Councillors are sent a copy.

**h) Request from Sports Club for an increase in monthly payment for summer cutting of the Recreation Ground playing surfaces and a contribution toward the cost of end of season maintenance of the pitches.**

Club advise that end of season maintenance will be undertaken costing around £5K and have requested a contribution toward this, PC gave £1K last year. They have also requested increase of payment for grass cutting to £315p.m. RESOLVED to contribute £1K toward the annual maintenance work and increase April – October inclusive payments to £315p.m., CLERK to arrange, liaise with Club regarding the annual agreement for them to sign, set up reminders for monthly payments and note to pay £1K at April meeting. Power for the payments is contained in the Public Health Act 1875 s164.

**i) Update from Rotherfield Bowls Club regarding clubhouse and decision regarding basis of financial support offered by the Council toward this.**

Copy of letter was circulated to the Councillors. The Council have funded the purchase of the strip of land behind the clubhouse and two planning applications on the basis that the Club would be building a new clubhouse. It was therefore RESOLVED that as a full rebuild of the clubhouse is not taking place the offer of £5K support will be withdrawn.

**j) Arrangement of Future “Active Play” from Freedom Leisure sessions in Parish.**

Cost in the region of £85 including hall hire. February half term session was well attended with 13 new registrations. RESOLVED CLERK to investigate booking a session during autumn half term week and report back to Council regarding availability.

**k) Quote for removal of saplings on graves in St Denys’ Old Burial Ground, tidying of top batter above lower pitch in Recreation Ground and tidying hedge and trees adjacent to Pre School.**

Chairman declared a personal interest as he occasionally assists this contractor. RESOLVED to accept these quotes and the quote for £700 relating to the tidying of the hedge on the North border of the Recreation Ground behind the Bowls Club. CLERK to advise contractor, it is noted that the work will take place late summer/autumn after the nesting season.

**l) Concerns raised by a parishioner regarding condition of the pavement in Station Road Rotherfield.**

Hedge overgrowing the pavement is making it difficult to negotiate and recent increase in cars parking near steps from Hornshurst Road are adding to the problem. Cllr. Clibbens is to raise issue of parking with PcsO at next week’s Speedwatch session. Chairman has offered to organise volunteer effort to tidy the footpath and clear gutters, CLERK to investigate, maintenance matters that required reporting to ESCC.

**m) Response to ESCC “Working with us to deliver library services” survey.**

RESOLVED CLERK to draft response and carry forward to April agenda.

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- n) **Information and further action regarding litter in Rotherfield village centre.**  
Chairman reported that the situation had greatly improved since the installation of a bin outside the premises in question, RESOLVED CLERK to write a letter of thanks to the proprietor.
- o) **Provision of decorations for Rotherfield Village centre for Christmas 2012.**  
Cllr. Clibbens, Harris and Hall have offered to form a Sub Committee to investigate this.

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

- 6<sup>th</sup> March – Planning and Building Committee.
- 21<sup>st</sup> February – Recreation and Burial Committee.
- It was RESOLVED that both these minutes be adopted and that there were no other matters arising.
- 20<sup>th</sup> March – Highways Lighting and Transport Committee.  
It was requested that these minutes clarify that the bus stop pole that the PC have offered to install is at the top end of New Road; also the comments made that the restriction of access to Yew Tree Lane during the Catt's Hill closure was believed to have been requested by a small number of residents.

## 8. TO RECEIVE REPORTS

- **Other committees and sub-committees.**  
The Councillor's who are part of the group investigating provision of tennis courts in the recreation ground are to investigate progress and report at next meeting.
- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.** None.
- **Clerk's report and issues.** None.

## 9. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation at end of February 2012. The RFO presented the figures, and these were agreed and signed by the Chairman. Clerk advised that non-domestic rates bill for the Cemetery and Burial Ground had been received totalling £364.74 but, as in the previous few years, a 100% rate of Small Business Rate Relief has been applied to eliminate the sum owed. Also reported that annual energy spend in cash terms for streetlighting has decreased as the impact of "part night" lighting on usage takes effect.
- Review of Expenditure against Budget to end of February 2012. The RFO provided the summary figures to Councillors and relevant detailed figures to the Committee Chairmen.
- Approval of Payments. After explanation it was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

CHEQUE NO	CHEQUE PAYABLE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801386	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for March	£1,045.91
801387	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for March	£293.83
801388	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for March	£64.33
801389	Jim Gander	Street sweeping for March	£78.75
801390	Rotherfield Village Hall	Hall hire fees for March	£49.80
801391	East Sussex County Council	Streetlighting energy and maintenance costs for year to 31 March 2012	£5,039.66
801392	English Woodlands	Two "Jubilee Oaks" for Rotherfield and Mark Cross	£123.24

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801393	Mr and Mrs Sweeney	Allotment rental for half year	£250.00
801394	Rotherfield Pre School	Half yearly grant	£250.00
801395	A.C. Moaby	Canopy reduction Horse Chestnut at Court Meadow	£350.00
801396	SALC	Localism Conference, Annual Subscription and LCR subscription	£970.15
801397	Konica Minolta	Copier fees and lease charge	£66.66
801398	Teambase	Stationery	£17.94
<b>Total</b>			£8,600.27

## CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Santander	Bank interest	£56.70
Rotherfield Primary School	Contribution toward Rec.	£500.00
A Burslem	Inscription fee	£30.00
Zurich Municipal	Balance of insurance claim for bus shelter	£100.00
Dignity Funerals Ltd	Inscription fee	£30.00
Paul Bysouth	Interment fee	£400.00
<b>Total</b>		£1,116.70

### 10. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE GENERAL

- South East Water update on water situation
- Rotherfield St Martin notice of Summer Fayre July 8<sup>th</sup>
- Rotherfield Primary School – Diamond Jubilee “Street Party” in School Grounds 26<sup>th</sup> May.
- WDC – details of “Walk Wealden” project.
- Sussex Heritage Trust – Awards 2012.
- WDC – notice that the North Planning Committee will deal with WD/2012/0200/F Owlsbury Park Campsite on April 5<sup>th</sup> at Pine Grove.

### CIRCULARS AND MAGAZINES

- Clerk Magazine March 2012.
- LCR Spring 2012.
- CPRE Sussex Newsletter – March 2012
- SALC Spring Newsletter 2012
- Clerks and Council Direct March 2012
- Sussex Area Ramblers March 2012
- WDC Parish Bulletin March 2012

### 11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

These were passed to the Vice Chair for inspection and signature.

### 12. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- Planning and Building Committee – Tuesday 17th April.
- April Council Meeting combined with a Planning and Building Committee meeting – Thursday 26th April.

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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 has contacted donor of bench for the Parish and will have further details for the agenda of the May recreation and burial committee meeting so that a site may be considered.
- Clerk has spoken to Gary Humble of ESCC regarding Catt's Hill drainage survey. Whilst full details of work required are awaited, it is hoped that this may be dealt with in the 2012/13 financial year subject to other priorities. He is to arrange a meeting prior to any works to discuss issues arising from road closures that may be required.
- The Bonfire Society's Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held on the Rec. on Good Friday starting at 11:00.
- Cllr. Wickenden has spoken to the owner of a hedge in Church Road that was intruding onto the Highway and they will be cutting it back.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:50.

## 14. PUBLIC FORUM.

- In response to an enquiry, Clerk advised that he hoped to have a quote for the proposed "part night" street lighting work available for the agenda of the April meeting.
- Comment made that it was rumoured that some changes to the 251/252 bus service through the village were proposed.

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