



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 THURSDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2017 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Cllr. D. Thomas (Chair) | Cllr. A. Hardy | Cllr. A. Martin |
| Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chair) | Cllr. L. Henrick | Cllr. J. Richardson |
| Cllr. J. Cahan | Cllr. D. Hiles | Cllr. N. Wickenden |
| Cllr. T. Gilbert | Cllr. J. Kitchenham | |

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe and Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC).

TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

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

Cllr. Watson-Smith has submitted an apology for absence.

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

None.

The Chair reminded Councillors that they should declare an interest if at any point in the meeting they became aware of one in connection with an agenda item.

c) District and County Councillor reports.

- The key points of Cllr. Dixon's report were as follows: -
- Steel Cross development at Crowborough – The recent High Court judgment on this was welcome, there is the possibility still of a revised application being submitted.
- The Draft Submission Wealden Local Plan is due to be presented to the Full Council on 22nd March, this prior to further consultation and presentation to the Planning Inspector.
- Wealden District Council is backing The Great British Spring Clean, a nationwide campaign to get half a million people out and about cleaning up their local communities over the weekend of 3-5 of March.

d) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 26th January 2017 and 1st February 2017 for approval as a true record.

- 26th January 2017 meeting – It was noted that Cllr. Hardy was shown as present at this meeting despite an apology for absence also being noted therein. **RESOLVED** that, after the deletion of Cllr. Hardy's name from the relevant section of the minutes that they be approved as a true record. The Chairman made and signed the deletion and signed the minutes.
- 1st January 2017 meeting to approve budget and precept. It was noted that in section 2 iii) of the minute's paragraph two, line one should read "Chair thanked Cllrs. Henrick and Harris..." **RESOLVED** that, after amending this line that the minutes be approved as a true record. The Chairman made and signed the amendment and signed the minutes.

CLERK to ensure that minutes published on Council website reflect these amendments.

- e) Update regarding matters arising & action items from previous meetings.

**ITEMS FROM THE 27TH OCTOBER 2016 COUNCIL MEETING
NUMBERS REFER TO THE AGENDA OF THAT MEETING SECTION 3**

vi. **Realignment of ashes memorial slabs in Parish Cemetery.**

Cllr. Harris reported that several of these required realigning to preserve the tidy appearance of this area.

RESOLVED ACTION for Cllr. Harris to provide list of slabs requiring action so that **CLERK** may contact owners to advise them of the proposed work and reasons for undertaking it.

Letters have been sent to the the owners of the four plots identified as requiring action detailing the work to be undertaken and seeking consent.

CLERK updated this meeting that three of the four owners have now replied giving approval for the work.

9 **REPORT DETAILS OF ITEMS AND ISSUES NOTIFIED TO CLERK IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING FOR INVESTIGATION, FURTHER ACTION OR FOR FUTURE AGENDA.**

Annual Tree Survey. CLERK to forward papers for this to Cllrs. Wickenden and Martin so that they may undertake this survey.

CLLR. Wickenden updated this meeting that he had now commenced the inspection.

Item from January 2017 Parish Council Meeting

iv) **Adoption of revised policies, terms of reference and other governance documents.**

No progress to report. **CLERK** to add all existing policies into "Dropbox", **ACTION** for Cllrs. Henrick and the Chairman to review and report progress at February Council Meeting.

CLERK to carry this forward to the Agenda of the March Council meeting.

2. COUNCIL FINANCES.

i. **Receive and approve bank reconciliations as at end of January 2017**

Clerk advised that a £10 discrepancy had been identified. This was due to the issue of a cheque for the sum of £100.17 which had been incorrectly entered into the Cashbook for the sum of £110.17. Clerk will pass entries necessary to correct.

It was **RESOLVED** that the reconciliations be approved.

ii. **Receive budget report and consider any actions required.**

Budgets have been scrutinised and Councillors are aware of the reasons for the various overspends noted. **CLERK** is to correct the Budget figure for total Precept for 2017/18 to reflect that this should be £99397.00, plus the Precept Support Grant from Wealden District Council of £753, total £100150 and not the figure of £100903 currently shown in the budget report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Budget report be approved.

iii. **Approve payments by the Parish Council.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments be made: -

| Date of cheques | Payee Name | Chq. No. | Amount | Details |
|-----------------|---------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|
| 23/02/2017 | Trevor Thorpe | 802277 | £1,535.02 | February salary |
| 23/02/2017 | H M R C | 802278 | £498.69 | Feb Tax and NI |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 23/02/2017 | Newton and Frost Fencing Ltd | 802279 | £2,346.00 | Mark X bus shelter |
| 23/02/2017 | Newton and Frost Fencing Ltd | 802280 | £3,720.00 | Rec. height barrier |
| 23/02/2017 | Cripps LLP | 802291 | £120.00 | Hall ownership advice |
| 23/02/2017 | Wealden District Council | 802282 | £20.00 | Training course |
| 23/02/2017 | Rotherfield Village Hall | 802283 | £48.00 | January hall hire |
| 23/02/2017 | Teambase | 802284 | £63.58 | Stationery |
| 23/02/2017 | A. Martin | 802285 | £365.40 | Various items |
| 23/02/2017 | Phil Ireland | 802286 | £182.70 | Feb sweeping and litter |
| 23/02/2017 | Glasdon U.K. Ltd | 802288 | £653.12 | Grit and Litter bins |
| 23/02/2017 | Trevor Thorpe | 802287 | £47.32 | February expenses |
| 23/02/2017 | William J Clark | 802289 | £588.00 | Roadside hedgcutting various |
| Total Payments | | | £10,187.83 | |

RECEIPTS

| Date paid in | Received from | Amount | Description |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------|------------------|
| 01/02/2017 | Tester and Jones Ltd | £400.78 | Gravedigging P26 |
| 07/02/2017 | Tester and Jones Ltd | £565.00 | P23 fees |
| 21/02/2017 | Tester and Jones Ltd | £445.00 | AP106 fees |
| Total Receipts | | | £1,410.78 |

iv. Receive report from the December 2017 Internal Audit and actions arising.

Report circulated to Councillors prior to meeting. **ACTION** for **CLERK** to query item 6 of the report regarding budget totals on next visit of Auditors, also to review and amend title of cost centre 4150 to reflect Auditor comment that not all Grants fall under the "General Power of Competence".

3. RECEIVE INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE AS REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS: -

i. Election of new officers to the following Committees: -

- Finance and General Purpose Committee.
- Recreation and Burial Committee.
- Highways Lighting and Transport Committee.

The Chairman explained the reason for rearrangement of Chair and Vice Chair responsibilities and confirmed that this had been discussed with the Councillors concerned in advance of this meeting. Votes were taken in respect of each of the roles involved and it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Committees would now be as follows: -

| Committee | Chair | Vice Chair |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Finance and General Purpose | Cllr. L. Henrick | Cllr. D. Thomas |
| Recreation and Burial | Cllr. T. Gilbert | Cllr. G. Watson-Smith |
| Highways, Lighting and Transport | Cllr. A. Martin | Cllr. J. Kitchenham |

Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Planning and Building, and Communications and Social

Media Committees remain unchanged. Chair advised that Cllr. Harris, in addition to his position as Vice Chair of Council, would undertake the role of “expert adviser” on Finance matters. Cllr. Martin queried whether rearrangement of roles was permitted “mid-term”, Clerk advised that he was unaware of anything to disallow this.

ACTION for **CLERK** to update and publish amended contact list reflecting these changes.

ii. **Receive report of the Wealden Parish Remuneration Panel on Town and Parish Councillor Allowances for 2017/2018 and consider further action.**

Report and other papers circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted. **ACTION** for **CLERK** to investigate if other Parishes have policies in place for payment of costs for carers whilst attending Council meetings.

iii. **Receive report of the Planning Committee Working Group and consider its recommendations.**

Report and other papers circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. After discussion of the report the following matters were **RESOLVED**: -

- a) Proposal for a working party to consider a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish – **REJECTED**
- b) Proposal that all Councillors should wear name badges when attending Planning and Building Committee meetings, and that name plates be obtained to place in front of Chair and Vice. **APPROVED** – **ACTION** for **CLERK** to obtain nameplates described and produce name badges for Cllrs. Hiles, Hardy and Richardson.
- c) Proposal that wording of reason for decision on a Planning Applications be agreed by the Committee prior to the vote on the resolution. **APPROVED.**
- d) Proposal that Planning Committee meeting minutes’ record how each Councillor votes on a resolution. **REJECTED** as it is considered that item 3 p) of the Council’s Standing Orders already provide that a Councillor may request a recorded vote should they wish.
- e) Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee should give consideration to changing venue of the meeting if a large public presence is anticipated in respect of an agenda item, and that such items should be dealt with at the end of the Agenda. **APPROVED, ACTION** for **CLERK** to produce sign to direct the Public to the alternative venue if required.
- f) After a member of the public has addressed a Planning meeting the Chair is to seek the view of those present as to whether all opinions and issues have been adequately expressed and, if not, what do they wish to add. This will avoid repetition and avoid a meeting of excessive length. **APPROVED.**
- g) Members of the public should be allowed to address Planning Meetings for a maximum of 3’ and that this should be timed via an “on screen” timer and alarm; the meeting Chair should manage speakers to ensure they do not exceed this limit. **APPROVED.**
- h) Site meetings in connection with Planning Applications. This was discussed in depth and it was **RESOLVED** to defer a decision and carry the matter forward to the agenda of the March Council meeting to discuss and agree the Council’s policy on these. In the meanwhile, site meetings will not take place.
- i) **RESOLVED** that at the next Planning and Building Committee three members of that Committee be appointed to produce draft scripts as follows: -
 1. Summarising the matters in in respect of points a) to h) above.
 2. Advising those present at Planning Committee meetings that the Parish Council is a consultee only on planning matters.
 3. Recommending that, in addition to expressing views at the meeting, those present should send them to Wealden District Council via mail or Wealden’s website.

These scripts to be to be considered for approval at the March Council meeting **CLERK** to add to agenda of that meeting. Chair thanked Cllr. Cahan for her work with this matter.

iv. **Consider arrangements for format, publicity and guest speakers for the Annual Parish Meeting.**

The following were **RESOLVED**: -

- a) There will no guest speakers for this year's meeting.
- b) Meeting will start at 19:30.
- c) Each Committee Chair is to make a presentation to the meeting, assisted by Power Point presentations prepared by Cllr. Cahan. Final presentation will be by the Highways Committee and will include a Parishioner Q & A session.
- d) St Denys' Church are to be approached to provide the refreshments for the meeting.
- e) **ACTION** for **CLERK** to arrange for the usual billboards to be supplied and installed at Milk Lodge, on the corner by "The Stores", at Town Row and Mark Cross. Posters to be in place at the end of March.

v. **Consider adoption of draft scale of fees, terms and conditions for the Parish Burial Grounds.**

meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that the document be adopted. **ACTION** for **CLERK** to publish and display, scale of fees to take effect from 1st April.

4. RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING.

- a) February 24th Communications and Social Media Committee.
- b) January 31st Planning and Building Committee.
- c) February 14th Recreation and Burial Committee.
- d) February 21st Planning and Building Committee.

Draft minutes of meetings b) and c) have been circulated in advance to the Councillors.

It was **RESOLVED** to note and approve the acts and proceedings of these Committee and confirm recommendations contained therein and, as far as requisite, the action taken by them.

Minutes for meetings a) and d) have yet to be circulated and will be carried forward to the agenda of the March meeting.

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

a) **Other committees and sub-committees.**

Cllr. Henrick reported that she had attended the recent meeting of the High Weald Councils Action Group. She has been made aware of a similar group specific to the Crowborough area which may be more appropriate and is to investigate and report on this.

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

- Cllr. Kitchenham had attended a recent training session in respect of Twitter and Facebook use – he considered that the course was of limited use.
- Cllr. Thomas had attended the recent meeting of the Village Hall Committee. Letter has been sent to the Village Hall Committee advising that legal advice has been sought regarding ownership of the Village Hall and that the legal opinion is that the Parish Council are the owners of the building and freehold of the Recreation Ground.

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

Had a helpful meeting with the Chair to discuss workload issues recently.

d) **Items for next Parish Magazine column.**

Chair and Cllr. Hardy are to draft an article in respect of the War Memorial project.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▪ CPRE Sussex | - Sussex Review Winter/Spring 2017 Edition |
| ▪ Kent, Sussex and Surrey Air Ambulance | - Letter requesting consideration for a donation. CLERK to add to March agenda for |

consideration.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

No urgent issues were identified in these, nor have any matters been raised by the public regarding safety issues relation to Parish land.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- Tuesday March 14th Planning and Building Committee
- Tuesday March 21st Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee
- Tuesday March 28th Communications and Social Media Committee.
- Thursday March 30th Monthly Full Council

All of the above meetings are to be held in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall, and will start at 19:30. Clerk is to investigate availability of the Scout and Youth Community Hall to host the 14th March Planning and Building Committee meeting.

9. REPORT DETAILS OF ITEMS AND ISSUES NOTIFIED TO CLERK IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING FOR INVESTIGATION, FURTHER ACTION OR FOR FUTURE AGENDA.

- i. Clerk reported that letter had been sent to Rupert Clubb at ESCC requesting information regarding cost and support for various speed and road safety measures in the Village to possibly be funded via County “match funding”.
- ii. Pre School reported increasing instances of dog walking in the Recreation Ground despite signs advising that dogs are not permitted. Additional signs are on order; Clerk suggests a Parish Magazine feature on this issue.
- iii. Cllr. Gilbert is to liaise with Clerk regarding replacement nuts and bolts for play equipment as those provided by Wicksteed are of the incorrect size.
- iv. Cllr. Martin reported the following: -
 - He has chased ESCC Highways re: progress with completion of outstanding works associated with the slip road closure at Mark Cross.
 - Will be installing concrete pad and litter bin on Mark Cross Millennium Green, grit bin has been obtained and installed by Mark Cross Church for use by the School on the paths that lead to it, also in Padfield Close at Town Row.
 - Height signs are shortly to be installed on the new barriers at the entrance to the Recreation Ground.
 - Contractor will shortly be installing bollards outside the Institute.
- v. Two grit bins have been obtained for installation at front and rear of the Recreation Ground car park.
- vi. Cllr. Harris has received the “FB” keys for the height barrier and these will be distributed shortly.
- vii. Council Chair is to attending the forthcoming meeting of Rotherfield Players to further discuss the “Raise the Roof” project for the Village Hall.
- viii. Cllr. Hardy suggests the creation of a documents retention policy for “Dropbox” items, Clerk suggested that this should be added to the agenda of the next Communication and Social Media Committee. Cllr. Hardy is also assisting Cllr. Wickenden to familiarise him with the uses and benefits of “Dropbox”

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 22.20

10. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Confirmed and adopted as a true record at the 30th March 2017 meeting of the Parish Council

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