

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 HELD ON THURSDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2013 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chairman)
Cllr. Miss. N. Bolton
Cllr. C. Clibbens
Cllr. T. Gilbert

Cllr. R. Harris
Cllr. D. Hiles
Cllr. J. Kitchenham

Cllr. A. Sharpe
Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. Mrs. A. Watson
Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Seven members of the public.

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

Apologies were tendered and accepted on behalf of Cllr. R. Jaques, Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson, Cllr. W. Rutherford (WDC), Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) and PcsO Matt Boyle.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR SIGNIFICANT OTHER INTERESTS.

None. The Chairman reminded the councillors that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one at any point in the meeting.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

Cllr. Merriman (WDC) reported the following:-

– Briar House Farm.

The landowner has appealed against the two enforcement notices issued by WDC. This could take 6 months before being heard by the Planning Inspectorate and may well progress to Court.

- **Fairfield Farm.** Concerns had been raised by nearby residents and Cllr. Watson regarding material imported to this site as a base for Carp ponds. Wealden DC enforcement team and Environment Agency had been active in pursuing the issue and as a result, the owners are removing contaminated material (mainly iron and other metal). The Chairman observed that the Parish Council had raised concerns several times during the construction regarding the volume of material entering the site.

– Sign at the former “George Inn”.

Has prepared a submission regarding this for consideration at the next WDC Planning Committee (North) meeting.

– “Primary” for selection of Conservative Candidate for 2015 General Election.

Four Candidates have put their names forward for consideration at this event on December 5th.

– Padfield Close, Town Row.

Has again contacted the developers to get a firm date for the planting at this site, response awaited.

Cllr. Standley (ESCC) reported the following:-

- Preparations well advanced for the coming winter and whilst we all hope for a mild one this would be particularly welcomed by the County Council given the additional financial pressure of additional resources being allocated to repairing winter damaged highways.
- Over the last 4 years £42m (£10.50m per year) has been allocated to highways repair (previously £8m a year). This has allowed repair of 280 miles of road to which is 14% of the network.
- B2101 Speed Limit. The sites for the speed assessment monitoring have been proposed and agreed with the petitioner. The report should be complete by the end of the year or early 2014.
- No Waiting Restrictions in Church Street (B2100). Objections had been received in relation to formalising the white lines with yellow lines. At the recent planning meeting the objections were considered but not accepted. The TRO scheme will therefore proceed.
- Broadband. Delighted that that Rotherfield is in the first tranche of the ESCC e-Sussex project.

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- To clarify the discussion last month the scheme will deliver Superfast broadband to 96% of East Sussex households with an additional 3% getting a connection to fibre with an improved service (not superfast) and a final 1% getting the minimum 2mbp. This minimum service will apply to individual or small clusters of households. Unlike other authorities ESCC are upgrading all cabinets. The programme should be complete by the end of 2015 or early 2016.
- Troubled Families Programme. 163 families were part of the programme at Quarter 1. The Government has announced an extension to the programme for a further five years from 2015/16. The Government sees this programme as a key vehicle for funding future support of vulnerable families.
- Domestic waste sites. Locally ESCC propose closure of the sites at Forest Row and Wadhurst. Cllr. Standley has raised an objection to closure of the latter; it is considered that closure increase traffic volumes through Rotherfield, particularly at weekends, as those with waste will probably use the Crowborough site. The Wadhurst site has better opening hours, particularly at weekends and Bank Holidays; it is understood that the Crowborough site has shorter hours as a planning condition.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT

The following report was submitted by PcsO Boyle:-

- Four incidents of burglary from sheds, garages, barns, and outbuildings from the rural parts of Rotherfield down isolated country lanes. Garden equipment and power tools have been taken,
- It is recommended that property is marked and a note made of any serial numbers for these items as it may help in returning any recovered items.
- Several reports of suspicious vehicles have been reported; this helps to build up a picture of who is in the area and may link in with other incidents.
- Parking. Have been down checking Eridge Station, commuters who have largely been taking notice of the new double yellow lines. Awaiting ESCC to finish yellow lines around Forge Road. Still keeping an eye on the bay outside the General Store.

5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 31ST OCTOBER 2013 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 31st October 2013, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, be confirmed as a true record. They were signed by the Chairman.

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

Numbers relate to the agenda of the October meeting.

7 b) Publishers of the Crowborough Town Guide have been contacted and chased for a response to our request for information.

7 g) Emergency Contact list. Clerk requested suggestions from Councillors for items to be included, none received so far.

7 i) Report from Southern Water regarding site visit to Town Row requested by the Parish Council.

CLERK to follow up requesting further visit with Councillors present and highlight health concerns.

7 j) ESCC advise that gully clearing has now taken place. It is considered that many remain blocked or partly blocked particularly in the Village Centre, CLERK to raise with ESCC.

11. Visit to view 6/6a High Street – Clerk is to contact owners and suggest next Saturday morning, 7th.

14. Clerk has reported “churned” verge outside Padfield Way; suspect that this is caused by delivery vehicles who cannot be bothered to drive into site. It was reported that the surface damage had been repaired this week and kerbing installed; the bus laybys have been resurfaced.

7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:-

a) Information and further action regarding area of land covered by agreement between landowner and Parish Council for the Allotments off Chant Lane.

Site plans and details of agreement between Parish Council and Landowner circulated prior to the meeting. RESOLVED CLERK to arrange meeting between Landlord, Council and Allotment Society.

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b) Request for Grant Support from Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau and offer for a representative to attend a Council meeting to outline their work.

£2K grant budget currently unspent although £1K is committed toward replacement porch at the Memorial Institute. Chairman advised that the old porch is to be removed shortly. RESOLVED grant of £350 be made to CAB, Clerk to arrange cheque issue for December meeting.

c) Decision regarding further action on Rotherfield – Jarvis Brook footpath/cycleway and budgeting for survey of route in 2014/15.

It has not been possible to attract grant funding toward the cost of drawing up a detailed plan for this to allow a realistic estimate of cost of project. Quoted £1550 last year by a Consultancy in Hove suggested by ESCC. A detailed plan would enable an idea of cost to be obtained and would ensure that the PC would be prepared should an external funding source become available. RESOLVED £2K to be included in 2014/15 Budget for this purpose.

d) Information and further action regarding purchase of new Play Equipment for Recreation Ground.

Rotherfield Trust have confirmed that they will be able to provide the full £10k funding for this project and would appreciate some modest publicity to raise the profile of their work. RESOLVED CLERK to progress this project with target completion date of Easter 2014. Clerk and Cllr. Merriman were thanked for their support with the project.

e) Decision regarding quotes and design for signs to advertise the presence of the Council at “drop in” and other events.

£30 per sign quoted for 16” x 21” x 5mm thick in plastic material. RESOLVED CLERK to obtain quote from company suggested by Cllr. Clibbens for hanging signs for Institute and an “A” board for use at other venues and events.

f) Agenda items for SLR meeting with ESCC Highways Representatives on January 22nd 2014.

Clerk is compiling this; many items are carried forward from the June meeting. Please pass any further suggestions to him.

g) Purchase of “Local Councils Explained” publication from SLCC.

RESOLVED that this be purchased from NALC at a cost of £49.99.

h) Request from Friends of Rotherfield and Brook Surgeries to hold a fund raising event on the Amenity Land and donation toward cost of public liability insurance for the event.

Fund raising “Coffee Morning” on August Bank Holiday, this is an annual event. RESOLVED Council to make donation of up to £75 to cover cost of insurance for the event as this is raising funds for the benefit of the Community. CLERK to liaise with the group regarding formalities.

i) Concerns raised by Parishioner regarding condition of BW53 Palesgate Lane-Limekiln Forest Road.

Details and photos circulated to Councillors prior to meeting. The Chairman agreed that this item be dealt with first at the meeting, as the Parishioners concerned were present. Standing Orders were temporarily suspended to allow them to address the meeting and the following issues were raised:-

- They have lived in a property approximately half way up the route for 16 years.
- The Byway was formerly maintained by ESCC Highways but is now under the jurisdiction of the ESCC Rights of Way team
- Since they took over the condition of the surface has deteriorated such that it is only suitable for 4x4 access.
- Attempts at patching have not worked with the “Type 1” material used swiftly washing away down toward Palesgate Lane railway bridge.
- 4x4 and motor bikes frequently use the byway for “sport” which exacerbates the condition, the sleeper barrier at the junction of BW53 and Limekiln Forest Road have been vandalised and is no longer effective; Limekiln Forest Road has been prohibited for use by motor vehicles since 2008 and there is no lawful reason to access it via BW53.
- Whilst they did not expect BW53 to be maintained to the same standard as a public highway they hoped that ESCC would bring it back up to a standard for use by normal vehicles. RESOLVED to add to agenda of January SLR meeting with ESCC Highways to discuss, it was

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commented that it was unfortunate that the planings from the recent resurfacing work on Palesgate Lane were not used to improve the surface.

j) Quote for sign for Amenity Land and suggestion that future title of area be “Court Meadow Green”.

RESOLVED to order sign from May Gurney at a cost of £37 and arrange for Tony Moaby to install at location to be decided by site visit. Cllr. Bolton was thanked for coming up with the idea for the new name.

k) Approval of updated terms of reference; adoption of report and recommendations from the Land Acquisition Advisory Group.

The Group has now held two meetings and the following potential uses have been determined for any land acquired by the Parish Council subject to funding and planning consent:-

- Allotments.
- Additional parking for the Parish.
- Affordable housing.
- Sports facilities.
- Permanent base for Rotherfield St Martin.

It was RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference for the Group be approved and the above potential uses adopted. The next meeting of the Group is in the New Year and the view of the Parishioners will be sought on the potential uses by way of an article in the “Magazine”.

l) “Leaflet drop” to encourage volunteers and raise awareness of snow clearing team. Purchase of wheelbarrow and any additional equipment needed for this work.

£939 left in Reserves earmarked as “adverse weather fund”. Cllr. Watson has requested purchase of a wheelbarrow for use by the team for transporting grit, plastic pan suggested as this will not corrode. Also requested that a mail drop in the Village centre and Hornshurst Road, Court Meadow and New Road to highlight the existence of the Team and encourage others to participate. RESOLVED CLERK to arrange wheelbarrow purchase and production of mailshot flyers.

8. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MATTERS ARISING.

- 22nd October Highways Lighting and Transport Committee
- 12th November Recreation and Burials Committee
- 19th November Planning and Building Committee

Draft minutes of the above meetings have been circulated to all Councillors. It was RESOLVED that they all be adopted by the Full Council.

9. TO RECEIVE REPORTS

• **Other committees and sub-committees.**

- Clerk to send reminder to Councillors who had volunteered to form a sub committee to review the Parish Plan progress since it was created in 2006.
- Cllr. Kitchenham was complimented on the recent Speedwatch report that had appeared in the “Magazine”.

• **Councillor “Have Your Say” session.**

A group of Parishioners had attended the November session to air concerns at the persistent water problems in Church Road near Johnsons Pond. Activity has been noted from ESCC in this area, the problem appears to have reduced, and it is hoped that a permanent solution will be found.

• **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council**

- Cllr. Kitchenham attended the recent Village Hall Committee meeting. He reported that a new PA system had been purchased and improvements made to the fire doors. Problems persist with the dishwasher, but bookings and income are up. There are plans to rearrange the photos in the Parish Council Room.
- Chairman had attended recent Sports Club Committee meeting. He was pleased to report that the football team are doing well in the County Cup competition having recently beaten a team several divisions above to progress to the next round.
- Chairman had attended meeting with Chairs of other Parish Councils, this had been arranged by the Mayor of Crowborough to informally discuss matters of common interest. This had been a useful exercise and another meeting will be held in the New Year.

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- **Clerk's report and issues.**

Had attended WDC Clerks meeting at Polegate with Rupert Clubb, Director of Communities Economy and Transport at ESCC, 15 other Wealden Councils were represented. The various financial challenges being faced were discussed along with Highways issues that appear common to many. He will compile "bullet points" from the session and circulate to the Council.

10. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation and review of expenditure against Budget to end of October 2013. It was RESOLVED that these be accepted and the Chairman signed them.
- Approval of Payments. It was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

PAYMENTS

Payments are made using the General Power of Competence as contained in the Localism Act 2011. The Power was adopted by Rotherfield Parish Council at their monthly meeting held on 29th November 2012

CHEQUE NO	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801683	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for November	£1,287.96
801684	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for November	£385.72
801685	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for November	£157.71
801686	Rotherfield Village Hall	Hall hire for meetings - October	£44.00
801687	JAKK	Fingerpost refurbishment B2101 - Sheriff's Lane junction	£614.16
801688	Wealden District Council	Dog bin emptying July - September	£297.00
801689	D. Harman	Christmas trees for Village Centre	£200.00
801690	Tollwood Garden Services	Grass and hedge cutting October and November	£1,590.00
801691	Gwen Pritchitt	Internal Audit visit November	£203.00
801692	PJI Contract Packers Ltd	Street sweeping for October	£246.00
801693	L. Pike	Additional items and material in connection with Christmas decorations in Village	£62.21
801694	A C Moaby	Various works Rec. and Highways works	£614.42
Total			£5,702.18

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CREDITS		
PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Santander Bank	Interest on 4711394 for October	£50.78
Tester and Jones	Right of Burial, Ashes interment and memorial plaque fees	£155.00
ESCC	Contribution toward fingerpost repairs	317.85
Rotherfield Millennium Green	Contribution toward dog bin emptying	30.93
	Total	£554.56

11. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

GENERAL

- Veolia – Information regarding Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility.

CIRCULARS AND MAGAZINES

- CPRE Sussex Review – Autumn/Winter 2013
- Saint-Chéron en Bref – Editions numbered 300 and 301.
- Sussex Area Ramblers – Now Open November 2013
- War Memorials Trust – Bulletin 59
- Clerks and Councils Direct – Issue 90
- CPRE – Field Work Winter 2013
- SLLC – The Clerk November 2013

12. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were signed by the Chairman, no health and safety issues had been identified by the reports. No comments or concerns have been raised by the public in connection with Parish owned land.

13. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 10th December - Planning and Building Committee
- 17th December - Finance and General Purpose Committee
- 19th December - Monthly Full Council Meeting to included consideration of planning applications received and associated planning matters.

All of these meetings are in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall, and start at 19:30.

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

- Dewlands Hill/Castle Hill triangle. Tony Moaby installed posts yesterday and has “landscaped” the triangle to the correct “footprint” – unfortunately one post has already been dislodged.
- CLERK to investigate arrangements made with Will Clark for regular cuts to the verge on Rotherfield Hill, and request that he cut it.
- Bowls Club changing room building is to be erected shortly.
- Chairman reported that installation and testing of Christmas Lights in the Village would be completed tomorrow in readiness for “lighting up” on Sunday at 19:30. Mulled wine will be served and it is hoped that there will be some music.
- Chairman invited those present to drinks and “nibbles” after the December meeting.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:45.

15. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Confirmed as a true record at the 19th December 2013 meeting of the Council

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

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