

# ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

in Rotherfield, Town Row, Mark Cross, Eridge Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas

## MINUTES OF THE JUNE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 27<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2013 AT 19:30 IN MARK CROSS SCHOOL.

### COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike

Cllr. R. Harris

Cllr. D. Thomas

Cllr. Miss N. Bolton

Cllr. J. Kitchenham

Cllr. N. Wickenden

Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson

### ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.
- Four members of the public and four candidates for co-option.
- Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC) and Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC).

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

Apologies were tendered and accepted for Cllr. R. Jaques, Cllr A. Sharpe, Cllr. A. Watson, Cllr. C. Clibbens. and Cllr. W. Rutherford (WDC). and PcsO Boyle.

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

None declared. 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. Standley's report contained the following points:-

- The recent statement from the Chancellor confirmed a 10% reduction in Government funding with 1% assistance to those Councils who freeze their Council Tax.
- This will not affect infrastructure spending, the aim is to encourage outside investment to the County.
- He is now a member of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr. Merriman's report contained the following points:-

- Gave an apology for missing the last meeting due to misreading the date.
- Monthly report circulated – the new garden waste bins are in the process of being delivered in the District as part of the new waste collection process.
- A "Business Breakfast" is being held on July 16<sup>th</sup> at Boship Farm Hotel, this is supported by WDC and other local business groups.
- WDC and ESCC have earmarked £1m each to support an indemnity scheme for first time buyers, this should assist them by reducing the deposit they require for purchase from 25% to 5%.
- Briar House Farm.
  - A number of planning proposals have been put forward over the years for this site, the most recent in 2010 for a development of large detached properties. This application was refused by WDC and the matter went through the appeal process culminating in the Court of Appeal upholding the decision to dismiss landowner's appeal against the refusal.
  - WDC consider that there are currently activities and developments on the site in breach of planning laws.
  - Enforcement action is planned to address this and the matter will be considered at a forthcoming Planning Committee meeting to decide on the process.
- The issue raised regarding the sign on the erstwhile "George" pub in the village will be considered at a future planning meeting.
- "Gateway" condition for Town Row development. He construes this as meaning a facility part obstructing the highway and several of the residents share this view. He recognises the position taken by the Parish Council, ESCC and WDC regarding the definition; the matter is to go before a planning committee for a final decision.

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- He is pleased that the Parish Council has raised the profile of the houses available at this development. A high level of local interest has been shown and there is optimism that the properties can be occupied from within the Parish.

Cllr. Standley commented that the Highways Department loosely define a “gateway” any arrangement raising the profile of a change in speed limit; this may not necessarily involve a physical obstruction. There was insufficient width of verge on the Highways owned land available to build fencing on both verges in this location but ESCC are looking at whether there is space for a structure on one side of the road only.

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

**The Clerk presented this information on behalf of PcsO Boyle:**

- No crimes to report of in June in Rotherfield
- 3 sheds were broken into in Eridge
- If anybody would like a visit RE crime prevention, please contact PcsO Boyle.

Clerk reported that PcsO Boyle and PC Simmonds had attended yesterday’s Strengthening Local Relationships meeting and concerns were discussed at length. An item will feature on the agenda of the next Highways Committee meeting agenda to discuss various actions arising.

#### 5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2013 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, be confirmed as a true record and they were signed by the Chairman.

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

**Numbers relate to agenda of the 23<sup>rd</sup> May Council meeting:-**

- 7 The Short Wave radio has been located.
- 9 c) Surgery have been contacted re siting of a PAD outside their building and the matter is due to be discussed at a practice meeting on Friday.
- Other issues. WDC have been contacted regarding wheelie bins left obstructing the pavement after emptying. They have raised the issue with Kier and it is hoped that the crews will return the bins without causing an obstruction. The Chairman commented that matters had improved.

#### 7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

##### a) Co-option of candidates to fill the two vacancies currently existing on the Council.

Details of applicants were circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting, together with information regarding the voting process. After individually questioning the four candidates, separate votes were taken for each vacancy. Trevor Gilbert and David Hiles were chosen for co-option to the Council. The meeting was adjourned briefly to enable signature of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office documents. CLERK to liaise with WDC regarding documentation and update records.

##### b) Progress report regarding Mark Cross Hall.

Letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> May confirms that it is proposed to renew the insurance and continue to operate the Hall. Cllr. Thomas is to contact Mr. Stenhouse to discuss progress with establishing Title to the site.

##### c) Rescinding the decision made at the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2013 Recreation and Burial Committee regarding the extension of the parking area opposite Mark Cross School in response to a request by three Councillors under Section 11a of Standing Orders.

Three Councillors have submitted a signed request for this decision to be reconsidered. Clerk summarised the history of the project and after discussion it was RESOLVED that the decision made at the 9<sup>th</sup> June meeting be rescinded and that the project would continue. CLERK to liaise with all parties involved to progress matters.

##### d) Cost and support available for a Local Development Plan for the Parish and the benefits of a plan.

Tom Warder of AirS has been contacted and indicates that he is willing to visit and give a brief presentation at a meeting to summarise the value or benefit to the Parish in drawing up a Neighbourhood Plan. CLERK to contact him to arrange this as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> July Council Meeting.

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- e) **Report and recommendation from site visit to the Bowls Club in connection with creating new entrance and pathway.**  
Councillors revisited the site on June 18<sup>th</sup>; Chairman is to produce a plan so that quotes may be obtained from Coppards for the pathway involved and Tony Moaby for the groundwork, hedge and gateway.
- f) **Report, recommendations and further action arising from site meeting to discuss Fp31a.**  
After a recent site visit Coppards have agreed that they will surface the missing section at the King's Arms end of the path over the next few weeks when they are in the area with tarmac, this at the price originally quoted for the job. RESOLVED cheque to be signed and held pending completion of the work to the Council's satisfaction.
- g) **Review minimum levels of public liability insurance required to be held by contractors to the Council, and by those holding events on Council land.**  
Cllr. Gilbert withdrew from the meeting whilst this was discussed as he is currently undertaking work for the Council that was agreed prior to his co-option as a Councillor. It was RESOLVED that Councillors Thomas, Hiles, Harris and Wickenden would investigate costs and options for this to be decided on a "case by case" basis when awarding contracts for work. CLERK to provide information to them and add item to agenda of the July Council meeting for a decision.
- h) **Adoption of policy and risk assessment framework for those wishing to hold events on Parish Council land.**  
CLERK to carry forward to July agenda.
- i) **Arrangements for Parish representation at Summer Fayre on the 20<sup>th</sup> July.**  
Pitch has been booked for this event, 12:00 – 17:00. RESOLVED to write to Rotherfield St Martins stating that the Council did not feel that a charge of £20 was appropriate for the "pitch" and the item was removed from the list of payments scheduled. CLERK to action and circulate Councillors seeking volunteers to be present at the Fayre.
- j) **Donation for use of Reading Room at Mark Cross Church for Councillor drop in sessions.**  
RESOLVED that £10 donation be made for recent use and that a like sum be given for any future usage.
- k) **Purchase of latest edition of Local Council Administration book at a cost of £60.**  
RESOLVED to purchase this, CLERK to action.
- l) **Update to Committee Terms of Reference and Standing Orders to clarify that Chair and Vice Chair of Council are "ex officio" and voting members of all committees.**  
Clerk recommends that the following clause is added to section 15 Committees, and to all the Terms of Reference for Committees.  
"The Council Chair and Vice Chair are both "ex officio" voting members of all Council Committees."  
RESOLVED CLERK to update documents in question with this clause and publish the new versions.
- 8. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF JUNE COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MATTERS ARISING.**
- 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013 – Highways Lighting and Transport Committee
  - 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013 – Planning and Building Committee
- It was RESOLVED that these minutes both be adopted by Full Council. 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013 – Recreation and Burial Committee and 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013 Planning and Building Committee minutes have only just been circulated, CLERK to carry these forward to July agenda for adoption to be considered.
- 9. TO RECEIVE REPORTS**
- **Other committees and sub-committees.**  
None.
  - **Councillor "Have Your Say" session.**  
No members of the public attended the session held on June 8<sup>th</sup> in the Reading Room at St Mark's Church.

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## • Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Clerk reported that he and Cllr. Thomas had attended three site meetings at the Play Area to discuss options for new equipment with suppliers; two further meetings are planned for the beginning of July.
  - Cllr. Harris attended the recent meeting of the Sports Club where it was reported that mole(s) activity had taken place on the “tennis court” area.
  - Council Chairman with Cllrs Thomas and Wickenden had attended a Networking day at East Grinstead with the Minister for Planning giving a presentation. There was an interesting session regarding use of Social Media by Parish Council’s, CLERK to add to July agenda to discuss.
  - Cllr. Thomas discussed the issue of Amenity Land ownership at this event, it is understood that land of this nature can only be disposed of if land of the same or greater area is provided for recreation use elsewhere in the Parish.
  - Cllr. Kitchenham attended the recent meeting of the Village Hall Committee and reported the following:-
    - A “two boiler” system is now favoured for the Hall.
    - £6K had been received from loss adjusters in relation to vandalism damage to hall floor several years ago.
    - No grant funding would be forthcoming for a new PA system.
    - Agreement in principle to use of Hall exterior as a site for a Defibrillator, subject to clarification regarding cost of power to recharge the unit.
    - Issues persist with the new dishwasher.
    - The Players have suggested adjustments to the Hall roof level to improve audience view of the stage.
- ## • Clerk’s report and issues.
- Foliage obscuring “Give Way” sign at foot of Spout Hill has been cut; Cllr. Wickenden confirmed that ESCC had dealt with this.
  - Replacement sign now installed in Station Road for “twitten” to rear of Catt’s Inn. Unfortunately, ESCC have only dealt with one side of it, CLERK to chase.

## 10. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation and review of expenditure against Budget to end of May 2013. These items were explained to the Councillors and it was RESOLVED that they be adopted.
- **Approval of Payments.**  
Clerk reported that the works by Tony Moaby had been agreed by him under his urgent work and maintenance discretion. It was RESOLVED that the following payments be made:-

CHEQUE NO	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801596	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for June	£1,277.89
801597	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for June	£378.63
801598	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for June	£63.91
801599	Rotherfield Sports Club	June pitch grass cutting	£315.00
801600	Rotherfield Village Hall	Hall hire - May	£41.70
801601	Wealden District Association of Local Councils	Annual subscription	£30.00
801602	Sussex Association of Local Councils	Chair's Networking Day	£60.00
801603	ESCC	Replacement lamp unit for column 83 Court Meadow	£539.84

Parish Council Website: [www.rotherfieldparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.rotherfieldparishcouncil.co.uk)  
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801604	Graphics By Dave	Signs for Rec. & material for Cemetery plot measuring.	£90.00
801605	Cripps Harries Hall	Legal advice re Mark Cross Hall	£60.00
801606	PJI Contract Packagers	Street cleaning	£252.43
801607	Signs of Style	Signs for Annual Parish Meeting	£150.00
801608	L.J. Head and Son	Repair to Cemetery tap	£18.00
801609	Konica Minolta	Quarterly lease charge and usage	£71.28
801610	Vision ICT Ltd	Annual web site hosting and support	£156.00
801611	St Mark's Church PCC	Donation for use of Reading Room	£10.00
801613	Coppards	Surfacing work fp31a	£3,966.00
801614	Rotherfield and Mark Cross Bonfire Society	Hire of pitch at Carnival	£7.50
801615	Mark Cross School	Donation for use of Hall	£10.00
801616	Tollwood Garden Services	June grass cutting	£1,300.00
801617	A.C. Moaby	Signs and mending bench in Rec.	£50.00
801619	Wybone Ltd	Litter bins	£741.20
<b>Total</b>			<b>£9,589.38</b>

**Please note that cheques 801618 is spoiled and that it was resolved not to pay 801612**

## CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Santander	Bank interest - May	£52.24
Co-op Funeral Services	Inscription fee	£75.00
Dignity Funeral Services	Grant of burial right and interment fee	£235.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£362.24</b>

## 11. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING GENERAL AND PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE GENERAL

- 3VA – Invitation to Chair's Lunch on Social Media – 17<sup>th</sup> July Uckfield Civic Centre, 09:30 – 13:00 £10.00 cost. CLERK to arrange attendance of Cllrs. Thomas and Kitchenham at this event.

## CIRCULARS AND MAGAZINES

- WDC – Parish Bulletin for June
- Saint-Chéron en Bref – No 297
- CPRE Sussex Countryside Trust – Summer 2013 Review and notice of AGM.
- Sussex Area Ramblers – June 2013 edition.
- Local Council Review Summer 2013.

## 12. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were signed by the Chairman, no issues requiring action were noted.

No comments have been received from the public regarding any safety concerns noticed on the Council's land.

## 13. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- July 9<sup>th</sup> Highways Lighting and Transport Committee
- July 16<sup>th</sup> Planning and Building Committee

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- July 25<sup>th</sup> Monthly Full Council

All of these meetings start at 19:30 and will be held in the Parish Council Room at Rotherfield Village Hall

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

- Cllr. Thomas reported that he visited a resident who had raised concerns regarding trees and hedges overgrowing her garden from the St Denys' Burial Ground. CLERK to seek quote for reduction of hedge to level of wall and removal of limb from cherry tree for consideration at a future meeting, work to be undertaken in the autumn.
- Plaque at start of "1200" path in recreation ground requires refurbishment work, CLERK to contact David Peacock to see if he is able to quote for this.
- CLERK to enquire if there is a list of verges/hedges for which ESCC are responsible, the hedge by Bainen Close being a particular issue.

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

## 15. PUBLIC FORUM.

- Mark Cross resident expressed concerns that ESCC grass cutting contractors had disregarded the designated wildlife verges and cut them, despite them being marked. Previously, the parking of heavy plant had damaged them. CLERK is to raise this issue with ESCC.
- Rotherfield resident reported that the dishwasher in the Hall had been replaced and now seemed to perform as required.
- Rotherfield resident enquired progress with proposal for roadside footpath/cycle path from the Village to Jarvis Brook. Clerk reported that ESCC had not adopted the project and that Council had been unsuccessful in obtaining grant funding for an initial route survey at an estimated cost of £2K.
- Assets of Community Value. Enquiry made as to whether the Council intended to implement such a scheme. CLERK is to investigate process involved and add to future agenda for discussion.

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