

# 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 30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

### COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas

Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chairman)

Cllr. C. Clibbens

Cllr. P. Dixon

Cllr. T. Gilbert

Cllr. Mrs. P. Halse-Adamson

Cllr. J. Kitchenham

Cllr. L. Pike

Cllr. A. Sharpe

Cllr. F. Whittington

Cllr. N. Wickenden

### COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

### ALSO PRESENT.

- The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe and Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) and Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC). No members of the public attended

Prior to commencement of the meeting, the Chairman advised that, due to a cold, his voice may not last for the duration of the meeting and, if this proved to be the case, the Vice Chair would take over from him. It was RESOLVED to accept this.

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

Apologies have been received, and were accepted, on behalf of Cllr. D. Hiles and Cllr. R. Jaques.

#### 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. R. Standley (ESCC):-**

##### **Limekiln Forest**

- This is becoming a regular item on the list and given the continued incidents here, has e-mailed again to the County By-Ways team. Whilst it is understood there has to be evidence before any proposals to limit access, it seems that that evidence is now available. A site visit is planned with interested parties, including the police, County and Parish. CLERK is to investigate and report on the locations of the electoral boundaries in this area that falls within the Forest Row, Wadhurst and Crowborough divisions.

##### **County Finances**

- Last month it was mentioned that the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter was £10m over budget and that steps were being taken to narrow the gap between budget and actual.

Last week the budget process for 2015/16 started. The background is that the County Council will have to find £90m savings on top of those already identified. This saving will have to be

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made over the next 3 years and will certainly be challenging. There is little room for manoeuvre and most of the easy gains have been made.

## **Bus consultation**

- There were just under 2600 responses. These are being analysed and a report will come back to Cabinet in December; given the amount of debate across the County, this will be discussed at the next Full Council meeting. With reference to the finance item any, reduction in the savings target on buses will need to be found elsewhere in the budget.

## **Road Safety**

- Road Safety and KSI figures have been highlighted to ESCC attention by a recent report from Wealden. The County are concerned at the Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) figures and it was discussed after the last Full Council meeting when the Chief Fire officer addressed the Council and took questions.
- National Road Safety week that has run since 1997 and aims to bring the safety of others to the forefront of all drivers.

## **Cuckoo Line land.**

ESCC are due to undertake a survey of this, particularly the bridges, in the near future.

The Chairman raised a query with Cllr. Standley regarding the Precept Report grant. Comments had been made at the recent SALC AGM that this was to cease. Speaking in his WDC capacity Cllr. Standley stated that, although the grant would eventually cease, this would be because of it reducing gradually by an annual 15% of the original sum paid to Council's for 2013/14.

## **Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC)**

- These are challenging times financially, considered that there were virtually no more efficiency savings to be made.
- Query raised regarding comments made the recent SALC conference that it was believed that County wished for Towns and Parishes to become more involved in supporting the vulnerable and lonely in the community as this could affect Precept requirements. Cllr. Whetstone advise that some of these matters were best dealt with locally, particularly in rural communities, by the voluntary sector and it was not the intention for local councils to run them.

## **Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC).**

- The “Streets Ahead” initiative to re-energise shops and businesses in the District has a shopper and business survey on the Wealden website; survey runs until the end of November. Please complete this and raise the profile with others. The surveys will be found on the WDC website.

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- Tribute was paid to Cllr. Pike and the Bonfire Society for once again organising and running an excellent Carnival.
- Court Farm. This application has been approved by Wealden but with conditions in place to acknowledge that the original consent was based on agricultural use and retain this protection. He considered that the nearby residents concerned about the site had been generally satisfied with the outcome/
- Churchsettle. He shares the frustration of neighbour of this site that the Planning Inspectorate upheld the appeal against refusal but that the residents had no opportunity to present further submissions to reflect local views. He is to make his concerns on this known to the next Wealden Full Council meeting and our local M.P.

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

- PcsO appeared apologised for her late arrival as she had been dealing with an incident in Horeleigh Green Road and had been waiting for her Traffic Police colleagues to arrive.
- Key points of report were:-
- Efforts to monitor speeding continue, has been doing checks at the foot of Rotherfield Hill.
  - Various additional sites for "Speedwatch" are being investigated. There is a new Officer responsible for checking and approving new sites.
  - Carnival was impressive; has some suggestions for next year's policing, particularly stationing an officer on the Rec. for the duration to discourage anti-social activity there.
  - Recent street meetings had received no attendees but the opportunity was taken to "knock on doors" to make herself known to residents. More meeting dates to be arranged, Clerk has offered to raise profile via Twitter.
  - Has undertaken further visits to Parish schools and Pre School.
  - Is hopeful of progress with the various issues in the Limekiln Forest area.

An issue was raised concerning youths departing the Village after the Carnival and heading toward Jarvis Brook. Some were acting in an intimidating manner toward motorists and walking down the centre of the road. This was noted and will be taken into consideration when organising policing for next year's event.

#### 5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2014 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.

Copies of the draft minutes had been previously circulated to Members. It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of this Meeting be confirmed as a true record and the Chairman signed them.

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

Numbers refer to agenda of September meeting:-

**8d) Drinking fountain.** Church not aware of turning on and off arrangements for this, suggest this fountain is checked to see if it works and merely requires organising responsibility for turning on/off. Fountain needs a clean and possible refurbishment of inscription.

**8f) Eridge Village Hall.** They have thanked us for the offer of a letter of support for their application to WDC for grant funding to assist with refurbishment of hall toilets and provision of disabled toilet. The work is now due to take place in May 2015 and they will advise us when they would like our letter. They confirm that the quote selected was the lowest of three sought.

**8i) Aircraft noise.** Clerk has identified main users of Airbus 320 series planes for which "engine whine" is a problem. EasyJet is by far the main user, with BA, Aer Lingus and Monarch also flying this model; letters have been sent to them requesting action to install "vortex generators" to mitigate this. Responses awaited.

**8j) Replacement sign in playground** has been installed.

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**8l) Diesel spill.** Site visit undertaken with Coppards who are to provide the quotes requested by the Solicitors acting in this claim.

**8m) Gully clearing issues.** Item on agenda of Tuesday's Highways Committee meeting to discuss response from ESCC and further action. Lox hairdressers confirm that the gully outside their shop had been cleared and the "pond" issue did not occur during recent heavy rain; they thanked us for our efforts with this matter.

## 7. TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS IF REQUIRED REGARDING ACTION FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:-

### a) Adoption of the following managing documents:

#### i. Updated Standing Orders based on NALC/SLCC model document.

Carried forward to November meeting. Please forward comments to the Clerk by the 18<sup>th</sup> so a list may be compiled for consideration at the meeting.

#### ii. New Co-option policy and guidelines.

RESOLVED to adopt these subject to clarification of voting process for more than one candidate and the need for the successful one to acquire an overall majority of votes. CLERK to publish and circulate.

#### iii. Financial Regulations based on NALC model document.

Carried forward to November meeting. Any comment to be forwarded to Clerk by the 18<sup>th</sup> so a list may be compiled for consideration at the meeting.

#### iv. New Clerk's delegated powers document.

RESOLVED to adopt these subject to clarification of limit for discretionary expenditure. CLERK to publish and circulate.

### b) Strategic policing matters to be considered at the six monthly meeting between SALC and the Chief Constable.

SALC will be holding a meeting with the Sussex Chief Constable in November. RESOLVED that following topics be passed to SALC for the meeting.

- Speedwatch. More resources must be dedicated to support and encourage this. Traffic officers should attend monitoring sessions more frequently to provide enforcement capability and the site approval process should be reviewed.
- Feedback on the results of various targeted campaigns and operations should be more readily and easily available.
- 30mph Speed Limit repeater roundels. The support of the Police would be welcomed to lobby for modification to Section 82 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 defining "restricted roads" (those with street lighting at no greater than 200yd/183m intervals) to allow 30mph repeaters on such routes. This section currently precludes this and hinders efforts to raise limit awareness in rural areas where the street lighting is more for the benefit of pedestrians than vehicles.

### c) Arrangements for installation and training for use of the Public Access Defibrillator acquired by the Council.

Defibrillator received and currently in store by Clerk. RESOLVED the following:-

- Order a Physio Control enclosure to hold this device at a cost of £378 (Plus Vat), this model being suggested by Crowborough First Responders.
- Liaise with Hall regarding suitable site in entrance area and contractor to install and connect to power supply required for alarm and cabinet heater.
- Provide sign indicating that the device is provided by the Parish Council for the community and that action will be taken if it is abused.
- Add to Council's insurance policy, value advised at £1200.
- Add to Play Area checklist so that item is checked on a weekly basis.
- Organise and publicise training session for the public regarding using the device.
- Donation to be considered to Crowborough First Responders for their help and advice on this matter.

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- d) **Ashdown Forest Tourist Association. Invitation to become a member at cost of £130 pa.**  
Clerk reported that Association had approached to see if we wished to become members. Enquiries revealed that Maresfield, Hartfield, and Crowborough Councils are not members; Forest Row were but had recently left. RESOLVED CLERK to research possible benefits and enquire of Forest Row as to reason they left, joining the Association will be considered again when budgets and precepts are drawn up.
- e) **Repair/extension of Parish Cemetery paths. Select quote from those submitted in response to the Council's request to tender.**  
Cllr. Pike declared a personal interest in this item as he has done occasional work for some of the contractors providing quotes.  
The four quotes were considered and it was RESOLVED to accept the quote from Noakes Driveways and Groundworks to undertake the repair to the existing path plus extensions to the Wall of Remembrance and to the bottom of the existing Cemetery area. Total cost £4864.00 plus Vat. It was not considered worthwhile completing the path extension in the lower field at this stage as it will be some time before this section is brought into use.  
CLERK to contact contractor to accept quote and arrange for work to be undertaken in the spring, also enquire if discount may be offered as three of the four elements of the quote are being accepted. Arrangements to be made for weed killing the current path prior to the work taking place.
- f) **Response to consultation from Rotherfield Primary School's proposal for expansion to one form entry.**  
Several Councillors attended a recent presentation at the School, which outlined plans for this project for which funds are available. Intention is to provide space for seven forms in the School. Council Chair and Vice Chair had attended a separate meeting with the new Head Teacher and toured the school to see it "in action", and learn of its development plans. RESOLVED to send letter of support for this project from the Council; offer to be made for a Councillor to attend future Governor's meetings if it is so wished.
- g) **Request for grant support from Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau.**  
RESOLVED to carry forward to November meeting. Chairman reported that he and the Vice Chairman had recently visited the Pre School. Because of this, a request has been made by three Councillors under section 11a of Standing Orders to review the decision under item 7d) of the June meeting and to further consider the possibility of grant support at the November Council meeting. CLERK to add items to November agenda.
- h) **Arrangements and design for signs to mark the renaming of Fp31a as the "St Cheron Twitten".**  
RESOLVED to investigate further an "Anglicised" variation of the sign erected in St Cheron. Suggestions for wording to be passed to Cllr. Pike who will co-ordinate this project. CLERK to investigate cost of a sign of the same quality as that used in St Cheron, signs to be installed at each end of the path. It was suggested that funding be sought from the Wealden Community Dividend scheme; CLERK advised that just over £500 remained in the fund allocation to the Parish; £601 has been paid to fund picnic benches in the Play Area and Court Meadow Green, submission made for a further grant of £868 for projects at Mark Cross.
- i) **Information and remedies for water ingress into storage area under the Pre-School.**  
RESOLVED Clerk to approach Tony Moaby for suggestions/quote for installing wood or other material strip in front of door to direct water away from the door and profile bank below to carry water away.

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It was RESOLVED that during consideration of the two items below the public be excluded from the meeting under s1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the personal nature of item j) and the commercial sensitivity of item k).

**It was RESOLVED that during consideration of the following two items the public are to be excluded from the meeting under s1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the commercial or personal sensitivity of the matters being discussed.**

- j) CONFIDENTIAL ITEM. Approval of reasons for Cllr. Sharpe's absence from recent meetings.**
- k) CONFIDENTIAL ITEM. Report and further action from the Land Acquisition Committee.**

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

- 7<sup>th</sup> October 2014 – Planning and Building Committee
- 14<sup>th</sup> October 2014 – Recreation and Burial Committee
- 28<sup>th</sup> October 2014 – Planning and Building Committee

Minutes of the above meetings have been circulated to the Councillors and it was RESOLVED that they be adopted by the Full Council.

## **9. TO RECEIVE REPORTS**

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

Land Acquisition Advisory Group held a meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> and their recommendation has been passed to the Council for consideration.

- **Councillor “Have Your Say” session and arrangements for the next session.**

Clerk is arranging a session for Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December in the Institute, volunteer(s) sought to host.

- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**

- Resilience Fayre at Eastbourne. Chairman and Cllr. Wickenden attended. This had emphasised the importance of maintaining contact list of Parishioners “at risk” so that they could be helped in times of emergency. They may also register with utility providers so that their needs are prioritised. Concerns were expressed that, although the Emergency Co-ordinators have a radio to communicate they have received no training in use.
- Tree Warden Seminar at Aylesford. Cllrs. Gilbert and Wickenden attended.
- Planning Training session at Edenbridge. Cllrs. Hiles and Wickenden attended
- Rotherfield Village Hall Committee meeting. Cllr. Gilbert attended. It was commented at this meeting that the Luncheon Club had been omitted from the recent Parish Guide, CLERK to note for future edition.

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Cllr. Kitchenham reported on recent Speedwatch matters.

- Lack of volunteers remains an issue; suggestion was made of a leaflet drop in the Mayfield Road area to raise profile.
- Our PcsO is endeavouring to get more sites sanctioned.
- Recent session had been recipient of abusive language from a motorist. Vehicle details were noted and they subsequently received a visit from the Police to give “words of advice” on the matter.

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

None.

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## 10. TO RECEIVE FINANCE INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation as at end of September 2014 has been circulated to the Councillors, together with budget report, in advance of the meeting. Clerk reported the following
  - VAT reclaim of £2182 is still outstanding – there are currently nationwide delays with this service. Have spoken to Vat office who deal with Parish Council reclaims and at their request resubmitted reclaim form as “urgent” on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Funds still awaited, their phone line appears to be overwhelmed.
  - £10K grant from Rotherfield Trust for the new play canopy has been received and credited to the deposit account.

It was RESOLVED that these reports be approved and the Chairman signed them.

- **Approval of Payments.**

It was RESOLVED to make the following payments:-

### List of Cheques issued

Payee Name	Cheque	Amount	Authorised Ref.	Transaction Detail
Trevor Thorpe	801835	£1,478.40		October Salary
H M R C	801836	£491.75		October Tax and NI
Trevor Thorpe	801837	£200.03		October expenses non Vat
Trevor Thorpe	801837	£10.20		Reimbursement inc. Vat
Rotherfield Village Hall	801838	£22.80		September meeting room hire
Teambase	801839	£17.94		Stationery supplies
Wealden District Council	801840	£278.76		Dog bin emptying
Nordis Signs	801841	£22.50		Replacement sign for play area
Tollwood Garden Service	801842	£940.00		October grass and hedge cuts
Rotherfield Sports Club	801843	£315.00		Rotherfield Sports Club
Royal British Legion	801844	£60.00		Donation for wreaths
Direct365Online Ltd	801845	£78.62		Upgrading bin at Village Hall
Kent Assoc. of Local Councils	801846	£144.00	Financial Regs. 3iii	Planning training course
PJI Contract Packers Ltd	801847	£403.20		Oct street sweeping/litter
A.C. Moaby	801848	£755.00		Work Town Row Mark X and Rec
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>£5,218.20</b>		

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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 29<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

## 11. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

### CIRCULARS AND MAGAZINES

- Wealden District Council Parish Bulletin 35.
- Saint-Chéron en Bref no. 311.
- Clerks and Councils Direct issue 96.
- LCR Autumn 2014.

### OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

- CPRE Sussex Countryside Trust – Information regarding public event 8th November to discuss plans for A27 east of Lewes.
- Thank you letter and information from Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance.
- Independent Panel for Remuneration. Email seeking information and other comments regarding allowances for Parish Council members and Chairman.
- Rotherfield St Martin. Email invitation to their AGM, 14:00 24<sup>th</sup> November in the Village Hall.

## 12. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were signed by the Vice Chairman. No safety issues were identified in these reports; an issue raised by a Parishioner regarding the roundabout in the Playground was considered at the 14<sup>th</sup> October Recreation and Burial Committee meeting with no further action deemed necessary.

## 13. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 4<sup>th</sup> November – Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee including budget and precept for 2015/16.
- 18<sup>th</sup> November – Planning and Building Committee including budget and precept for 2015/16.
- 25<sup>th</sup> November – Recreation and Burial Committee including budget and precept for 2015/16.
- 27<sup>th</sup> November – Monthly Council Meeting.

Except where marked all 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

- Tony Moaby has replaced bollards facing the parking area with shorter more robust versions as requested. Bollards now installed at Town Row Triangle.
- Dewlands Hill/Castle Hill Triangle has been damaged by a vehicle.
- All those associated with the Bonfire Society and organisation of the recent Carnival should be complimented on another excellent event.

## 15. PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR THE CLERK IN THE MONTH AHEAD.

- Review asset register and insurance values against Council's insurance policy.
- Circulate comments received from Councillors regarding draft Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 22:35.

## 16. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

**Confirmed as a true record at the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014 meeting of the Council**

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

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