



**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 27th APRIL AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

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

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe,

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

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

Cllr. J. Richardson and Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC).

The Chair suspended standing orders at this point in the meeting to read a statement written by him in respect of the workings of the Council. The text of this statement forms a supplement to these minutes. Standing orders were reinstated and the meeting continued.

Cllr. Kitchenham left the meeting at 19:40 to attend another local meeting.

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

None.

c) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr. Dixon's report contained the following key points:-

- The Wealden Local plan was presented to full Council at their 22nd March meeting at which progress was approved. It was agreed to await further work and evidence before final approval of the Plan and this is hoped to take place before the Summer.
- Waste Collection Contract. This has been with Kier for the past 4 years and over this period some £4m has been saved. It has been decided to mutually terminate the contract in 2019. Original contract provided for contract holder to take on full costs and benefits, but falling prices for recyclable material have created issues.
- Cllr. Henrick queried the worth of providing notices advertising that Wealden Car Parks are free. Cllr. Dixon stated that Wealden are determined to keep their parking free and the signs are to encourage parking there rather than by the roadside.

d) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on the 30th March 2017 for approval as a true record.

Clerk advised that two minor alterations to the Cllr. Standley's ESCC report had been made to reflect the correct figure for Social Costs and the fact that Cllr. Dixon, not Cllr. Whetstone, was absent from that meeting due to holiday. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes were a true record of the meeting and that they be adopted. The Chair signed the minutes.

Items v to vii were dealt with as the next items on the agenda, and Cllrs. Wickenden (Chair of the Planning and Building Committee) and Hiles (Vice Chair of that Committee) took charge of the meeting whilst these were discussed.

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

Numbers reference to the 30th March Council meeting agenda: -

3b) War Memorial Project. Consider choice of design, recommendations of project approval of expenditure up to level of allocated budget and leadership of Project Working Party.

Cheque is on list for issue at this meeting in respect of the Planning Application. Cllr. Henrick confirmed that the "Courtyard" had displayed information regarding this during a recent Royal British Legion lunch. A display will also appear in the Catts Inn, information was also on display at the Council's stall at the Easter Egg hunt and will be appearing in the forthcoming edition of the Parish Magazine. Chair has also addressed a recent Royal British Legion regarding the project. **ACTION** for Cllr. Henrick to give Clerk information to share via Social Media.

3c) "Raise the Roof" project. Review proposals and consider Council's support.

Rotherfield Players are in the process of completing the Planning Application for submission to Wealden. Clerk has sent letter to the Hall seeking their confirmation and agreement to the proposed work, letter sent to Cripps seeking advice on drawing up a lease/agreement between the Council, Hall and Players. Planning Application has been received for the Council to scrutinise prior to submission in the name of the Parish Council with the application fees met by the Players. **ACTION** for **CLERK** to write to Chair of Hall requesting that a full structural survey be obtained for submission with the application.

2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT END OF MARCH, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND APPROVE PAYMENTS.

i. Clerks budget report and actions arising.

RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation be approved, **CLERK** to ensure that hard copies of the reports and statements are brought to the May meeting of the Council. No items of concern to report in the budget, **CLERK** to ensure that the reserve figures are updated to reflect the increased precept. Clerk reported that the first funds had been received from Wealden in respect of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) due to the Council, this was for the modest sum of £79.52.

ii. Approval of payments.

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments below be authorised and the accompanying cheques signed.

Payments authorised at this meeting

Date Paid	Payee Name	Chq. No.	Amount	Purpose
26/04/2017	East Sussex County Council	802377	£5,632.27	Streetlight energy/maintenance
26/04/2017	Tollwood Garden Service	802380	£1,642.20	April cutting
27/04/2017	The Computer Studio	802360	£530.00	Replacement laptop
27/04/2017	Katherine Luxton	802361	£250.00	War Memorial project
27/04/2017	Wealden District Council	802362	£97.50	Planning application
27/04/2017	Rotherfield Village Hall	802363	£58.00	Hall hire fees March meetings
27/04/2017	Mallatite Ltd	802364	£92.31	Mallatite Ltd
27/04/2017	A. Martin	802365	£328.20	Various minor works
27/04/2017	Phil Ireland	802366	£378.00	Parish Warden duties
27/04/2017	Rotherfield St Martin	802367	£500.00	Support grant 2017-18

27/04/2017	Wealden Citizen Advice Bureau	802368	£300.00	Support grant 2017-18
27/04/2017	Tunbridge Wells & District Samaritans	802369	£200.00	Support grant 2017-18
27/04/2017	Rotherfield Friendship Club	802370	£200.00	Support grant 2017-18
27/04/2017	Smith and Fermor Charity	802371	£500.00	Support grant 2017-18
27/04/2017	North Wealden Community Transport	802373	£1,016.00	Support grant 2017-18
27/04/2017	Kent, Sussex & Surrey Air Ambulance	802372	£250.00	Support grant 2017-18
27/04/2017	Trevor Thorpe	802374	£1,556.94	Salary for April
27/04/2017	H M R C	802375	£497.11	Tax and NI for April
27/04/2017	Trevor Thorpe	802376	£33.85	Clerk's expenses April 2017
27/04/2017	Muriel Greenwood	802378	£530.00	Fence repairs
27/04/2017	North Wealden Community Transport	802379	£17.00	Support grant balance 2016-17
27/04/2017	Rotherfield Sports Club	802381	£325.00	April pitch cutting
Total Payments			£14,934.38	

Receipts for April 2017

Date	Received from	Amount	Receipt Details
03/04/2017	Dignity Funerals Ltd	£426.40	P17 Gravedigging cost recovery
24/04/2017	H. M. Revenue & Customs	£1,964.18	Vat reclaim 1st Jan-31st Mar
19/04/2017	Wealden District Council	£79.52	CIL Receipt
24/04/2017	Wealden District Council	£50,075.00	Precept first instalment
Total Receipts		£52,545.10	

3. TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE AS REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.

i. Consider candidates for co-option to fill the Councillor vacancy in Mark Cross Ward.

No applications received for this vacancy, Clerk will re-advertise and profile of vacancy will be raised at the forthcoming Parish Meeting.

ii. Review further the Scripts for Planning and Building Committee meetings and agree policy on site visits and pre-application meetings.

Item carried forward to the May meeting, CLERK to note. **RESOLVED** that site visits be discontinued whilst recognising that Councillors may still wish to view properties from public land: if questioned they are merely a member of the public and not representing the Council. Clerk clarified that Pre-Application meetings related to occasions when planning applicants/developers approach the Council to discuss a proposal. **RESOLVED** that these can continue if they are dealt with at a Full Council meeting at which members of the public may be in attendance, this make any discussions transparent to the Parishioners.

iii. Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. Consider cost, workload impact and potential benefits.

Clerk has obtained and circulated details of various sources of information on this subject. Has had a conversation with Tom Warder, Housing and Community Engagement Team

Leader with Action in Rural Sussex who is willing to visit and discuss the subject with Councillors; he noted that we are affected by the Ashdown Forest "Exclusion Zone". Clerk recommends that we take up this offer to establish what benefits a plan would bring to the Parish over and above the increased percentage of CIL it would permit. Cllr. Dixon (WDC) recommended that the Parish Council establish clearly what benefits and outcomes it wishes to achieve with a Plan over and above increased percentage of CIL contributions. A plan would involve a large amount of work, cost and commitment, probably over one or two years. Community engagement, consultation and a referendum would be involved and the Plan requires passing by a Planning Inspector.

RESOLVED that Tom Warder be invited to attend and address a Full Council meeting regarding this subject, and if a decision is made to proceed with such a plan that it is driven by the Planning Committee. **CLERK to ACTION**

iv. Policy for paying expenses to Councillors who require to employ a carer to allow them to attend Council meeting.

Cllr. Cahan declared an interest in this item as she could be affected.

Clerk has sought advice from SLCC and their view is that the General Power of Competence could be used to pay expenses. The spending should be discussed and resolved at a Council meeting without any Councillors affected being involved in the discussions. SLCC recommend that the Council devise and adopt a clear policy for expenses paid in respect of carer costs and that this policy states clearly in what way the spending will benefit the community by encouraging Councillors to come forward who could more widely represent the members of the Community. **RESOLVED** that a policy be drawn up for adoption and that Cllr. Cahan's offer to draft this be accepted; a notional upper limit of £300 per Councillor per financial year is to be set in the policy.

Council Cahan requested volunteers to help staff a table at the Mark Cross Fayre on May 20th, and left the meeting at this point - 21:16.

Consider and make recommendations regarding the following Planning Applications: -

v. WD/2017/0647/F Catts Farm Yard, Tunbridge Wells Road, Mark Cross, TN6 3PN

Erection of a single dwelling to replace existing redundant rural outbuildings (Revised scheme to approval WD/2015/1045/F)

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to recommend that Wealden District Council Planners **APPROVE** this application.

REASON: It is an inconsequential change to a plan previously recommended for approval by the Parish Council.

vi. WD/2017/0499/MAO Millbrook Nursery, Treblers Road, Crowborough, TN6 3RP

Outline application for erection of up to fifteen dwellings including details of access and layout with all other matters reserved.

Residents of properties near the site attended the meeting to express their views regarding this application. Key objections raised to the proposal were as follows:

- Inadequate width of access for vehicles whilst site under construction, and for servicing the completed development afterwards.
- Transport appraisal understates estimated vehicle movements and will add to the traffic on Trebler's Road.
- Hedgerows, bats and other wildlife will be affected. Ecological Impact assessment underplays this.
- Visual impact of the properties.
- Brownfield status is incorrect as the bulk of the site has been used for horticultural purposes.

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to recommend that Wealden District Council Planners **REFUSE** this application.

REASONS:

- The ecological impact of the development has been understated in the reports.
- The logistics for construction on this site have been understated.
- There are an insufficient number of affordable “starter” homes included in the proposal.

vii. **WD/2017/0717/F** The Granary, Yew Tree Lane, Rotherfield, TN6 3QP

Proposed replacement of existing windows and doors.

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to recommend that Wealden District Council Planners **APPROVE** this application.

REASON: The proposed work will improve the facilities of the building.

Decision notices.

- **WD/2016/2965/F** The Old Dairy, Rotherhurst Lane, Rotherfield, TN6 3JG
Conversion of the old dairy building to residential use.
- **WD/2017/0303/F** 1 Renby Farm Cottage, Forge Road, Eridge, TN3 9LG
Proposed rear extension.
- **WD/2017/0326/F** Tubwell Farm, Tubwell Lane, Crowborough, TN6 3RQ
New two storey extension with veranda to first floor.
- **WD/2017/0421/F** Site of The Former Memorial Hall, Tunbridge Wells Road, Mark Cross, TN6 3PN
New single dwelling.
- **WD/3338/CC** Jarvis Brook C P School, Hadlow Down Road, Jarvis Brook, TN6 3RG.
Retrospective planning permission for the siting of one double mobile classroom to the west of the school site, and one single mobile classroom to the north of the school site.
- **WD/2017/0223/F** Catts Inn, High Street, Rotherfield, TN6 3LH
Formation of new painted hardwood half glazed door to rear elevation; construction of new external stairs to rear garden; new stone paving to rear garden hardstanding; erection of 1 no. canvas canopy; raising of existing brick boundary wall in common with Catts Cottage to approx.1.8m.

All the applications above had been recommended for approval by the Parish Council, and were approved by Wealden District Council.

4. RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MINUTES.

- i. 28th March – Communications and Social Media Committee
- ii. 4th April – Planning and Building Committee
- iii. 11th April – Recreation and Burial Committee
- iv. 18th April – Finance and General Purpose Committee

Draft minutes of meetings i and iv have been circulated in advance to the Councillors.

It was **RESOLVED** to note and approve the acts and proceedings of the 4th April Planning and Building Committee meeting, and confirm recommendations contained therein and, as far as requisite, the action taken by them. Draft minutes for meeting i and iii are awaited and as Cllrs. Have not yet had the opportunity to read the minutes of the 18th April Committee meeting these also will be carried forward to the May Council meeting.

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

a) Other committees and sub-committees.

None.

b) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

Cllr. Gilbert – Village Hall Committee Meeting. Rates for hiring are to increase by 5%. Installation of CCTV is being considered to monitor the path alongside the Hall as there have been instances of trespassers accessing the Hall roof by standing on the bins, also breaking of glass deposited in them.

c) Clerk's updates and issues.

Volume of work continues to be an issue. Clerk is investigating methods of benchmarking against other Parishes, will draw up time sheet in line with SLCC model to monitor how workload is divided. Weekly average hours January to date is 34:33.

Annual Parish Meeting – Final agenda please needs to be published by end of Friday. First Responders would like to have a presence there as they hope to recruit for the Parish. Pre-School also wish to say a few words.

d) Items for next Parish Magazine column.

Item regarding misuse of disabled parking bays in the Rec. car park to be included in next edition, Clerk has recently been contacted on behalf of a "blue badge" holder who has been affected by others misusing these bays.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- Spa Valley Railway – Spa Valley Starter magazine 61
- Information regarding Nkuringo Aid Project supported by Rotherfield School and St Denys Church.
- HAGS Fitness Equipment Catalogue.
- English Woodlands "Special Offer" information.
- CPRE Fieldwork Magazine – Spring 2017 Edition.
- NALC Magazine – Spring 2017 Edition.
- Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee – Minutes of March meeting and agenda for June meeting.
- Countryside Voice Magazine – Spring 2017.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

No issues of concern noted in these or raised by the public; the three missing posts on the Rec. boundary have been replaced and the new sign with additional details for the play area has been ordered.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 10th May – Annual Parish Meeting – Village Hall at 19:30
- 16th May – Planning and Building Committee – **Rotherfield Scout and Youth Community Hall.**
- 23rd May – Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee.
- 25th May – Monthly Council Meeting.
- 30th May – Communications and Social Media Committee

Other than where noted meetings are in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall, and start at 19:30.

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

- Cllr. Watson Smith enquired re: provision of warning signs by Little Millhole Wood to warn of dogs and horses. Cllr. Martin had been dealing with ESCC regarding this and will chase the officer involved for progress.
- Cllr. Kitchenham. Issues with items missing from Dropbox. Clerk and Cllr. Henrick reported that this was in the process of upgrading with enhanced storage capacity.

- Cllr. Hardy reminded Cllrs. of the forthcoming event at Rotherfield School regarding the Nkuringo Aid Project and hoped that the Council would be represented. He also advised that he has been appointed as the Council's representative to the Sussex Rail Partnership in respect of the Uckfield Line, and if there any matters relating to this please could he be made aware.

The Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:40.

10. PUBLIC FORUM.

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

Draft minutes subject to confirmation and adoption as a true record