

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community
in Rotherfield, Town Row, Mark Cross, Eridge Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD AT 19:30 PM ON TUESDAY 11TH DECEMBER 2012 AT ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chair)	Cllr. C. Clibbens
Cllr. Miss N. Bolton (Vice Chair)	Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson	Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. R. Harris	

ALSO PRESENT. The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe. Cllrs. Hall and Prince attended as non-members of the Committee.

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

None.

2. TO RECEIVED DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None.

3. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 8TH MAY 2012 & MATTERS ARISING.

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes and the Chairman signed them.

4. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

a) Granting of dispensation by this committee to discuss matters regarding the Budget and Precept for 2013/2014.

Clerk explained that the 2007 Code of Conduct stated that Councillors did not have a prejudicial interest by virtue being Council Tax payers when setting council tax or precept. The updated code does not contain an equivalent clause and it is therefore necessary for a dispensation to be approved by the Council to discuss these matters at this meeting. It was RESOLVED to grant dispensation for Councillors to discuss the 2013/14 Budget and Precept requirements at this meeting. Clerk advised that a similar dispensation, to cover the remaining term of the Council, will be considered at the December Council meeting.

b) Approval of Budget for grants and subscriptions.

Details of regular grants and subscriptions paid during the current financial year were as follows. The General Power of Competence will be used to make these future payments.

i. Rotherfield St. Martin.

£1500 granted under s137 in 2012/13. RESOLVED to include £1500 in the 2013/2014 Budget for a grant.

ii. Rotherfield preschool.

The July 2009 Council Meeting agreed to grant £500 p.a. under S137 powers, reviewed after 3 years, this to part offset the £750 p.a. rent charged by the Council to ESCC for the land. Paid in half yearly instalments March/September the final instalment will be in September 2013. RESOLVED to include £500 in the 2013/2014 Budget for a payment of £250 in September 2013 and a further £250 in March 2014. Arrangement will then be reviewed for 2014/15

iii. Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau.

£350 to be paid in December PCM, RESOLVED to include £250 in the 2013/2014

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Budget for a grant.

Anchor Staying Put.

Last payment was made to them in October 2009 and no approach has been made subsequently. RESOLVED to omit this from the 2013/14 Budget.

iv. Rotherfield Bowls Club.

The £5K allocated to support new clubhouse has now been withdrawn as the Club are no longer progressing with the scheme.

v. Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee.

Requests are made on an "ad hoc" basis for modest sums to assist with admin. costs, £25 paid in September 2011. RESOLVED to consider further requests of this scale from the Committee as and when received.

Subscriptions

i. Wealden District Association of Local Councils (WDALC).

Re-joined last year and £30 sub. Paid for 2011- included in Establishment costs. We are now active members of this group. RESOLVED to include £30 in the 2013/14 budget for this.

ii. Sussex Association of Local Councils/National Association of Local Councils (SALC & NALC).

£852 subscription paid March 2012 – included in Establishment costs. RESOLVED to include £852 in the 2013/14 budget for this.

iii. Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).

£29 subscription paid in July 2012 - included in Establishment costs. RESOLVED to include £29 in the 2013/14 budget for this.

iv. Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

£162 invoiced and to be paid at December PCM. Advice given by them in relation to Town Row Green has saved Council considerably more than this - included in Establishment costs. RESOLVED to include £162 in the 2013/14 budget for this.

c) Approval of The Council's total expenditure and income budget for 2013/2014.

After discussion and amendment it was RESOLVED to approve the following budget:-

Recreation and Burial

Capital Works: Recreation and Burial

New bins for Recreation Ground	1,000
New entrance and path to bowls club	2,500
TOTAL	3500

Recreation Grounds

Grounds Maintenance Contract playing surfaces Sports Club	2,400
General Repairs & Maintenance	3,000
Grounds Maintenance Contract - Recreation Ground	4,000
Grounds Maintenance Contract – Amenity Land Court Meadow	850
Allotments rental	1,000
Car Park Repairs	500
Play Area	2,000
Dog Bins - Millennium Green	600

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Clerk: Trevor Thorpe 82 Fernor Way Crowborough East Sussex TN6 3BJ 01892 664245.

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Street sweeping and litter picking	800
TOTAL	15,150
<i>Less</i> School Contribution for Recreation Ground maintenance	500
<i>Less</i> Allotment Rent Income	500
<i>Less</i> Millennium Green Dog Bin contributions	150
NET EXPENDITURE	14,000

Burial Grounds

General Maintenance	1,000
Grounds Maintenance Contract	4,700
Repairs & Renewals	500
Tree and Hedge Work	1,000
Water Supply	50
Rates	100
Other improvement works	0
TOTAL	7,350
<i>Less</i> projected Burial Fee Income	2,500
NET EXPENDITURE	4,850

RECREATION AND BURIAL TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE **22,350**

Highways Lighting and Transport

Capital works

Provision for one additional bus shelter in the Parish	3,000
Provision for possible surface works in Chant Lane	1,000
TOTAL	4,000

Lighting

Lighting & Maintenance Contract	4,500
Repairs	1,000
Capital Works: New Installations	1,500
Christmas light costs	750
TOTAL	7,750

Highways

Footpaths	1,000
Seat Repairs	500
Street Sweeping	1,600

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Fingerposts & Signs	1,000
Bus Shelter Refurbishment	300
Other maintenance	500
Mark Cross & Hornshurst Road dog bin	550
Ground Maintenance Contract	500
TOTAL	5,950

HIGHWAYS LIGHTING AND TRANSPORT TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE 17,700

General Administration

Employment Costs and Training	20,500
Office Costs (Tel, Home Office, Stamps, Stationery)	1,750
Office Equipment	100
Establishment Costs, Subs & Insurance	3,000
Meeting Costs including hire of Village Hall	600
Noticeboards	200
Election Costs	1,500
Chairman's Allowance	250
Newsletter and other community engagement costs	1,500

TOTAL 29,400

Less projected interest Income 750

Less rent from ESCC for Pre School 750

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION NET EXPENDITURE 27,900

Grants using General Power of Competence

St Martin's Project	1,500
Other Grants	2,000
Pre School grant	500

TOTAL 4,000

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND GRANTS TOTAL 31,900

PROPOSED 2013/14 EXPENDITURE GRAND TOTAL 71,950

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Less ADJUSTMENT FOR PROJECTED UNDERSPENDS IN 2012/13 16,300

RECOMMENDED PRECEPT FOR CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL 55,650

d) Approval of the Committee's Precept figure recommendation for 2013/2014, to be considered for final approval by the Full Council.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council the figure calculated in c) above of £55650 for the 2013/14 Precept. Clerk advised that the final figures regarding Tax Base and Grant is unlikely to be available until after the December Parish Council meeting as WDC will not be in a position to finalise these until they in turn have received confirmation of their finance settlement from Central Government. Additionally there may be implications if the precept increases as the Secretary of State has yet to announce the "trigger" point for local referendums on Council Tax increases (widely considered to be 2%) and whether this will apply at Parish level. The January Monthly Council meeting has been brought forward to 24th January to accommodate these circumstances and enable the Parish precept request to meet the absolute WDC deadline of 1st February for submission.

e) Review of existing banking arrangements.

Clerk advised that the 1% offered by current bankers on the Council's instant access account remains competitive.

f) Review of hours, pay and job description for Street Sweeper.

RESOLVED that future contract would be for 6hrs per week to allow a rota system to tidy other areas of the village. CLERK to investigate job descriptions for role, tax and NI implications, risk assessment, employer's liability and specialist equipment/clothing and report.

g) Review of Grant Policy and timing of submissions.

Updated Policy circulated for consideration. RESOLVED to accept amendment to policy so that grant requests are considered at the Financial and General Purpose meetings in April and December. CLERK to amend and publish new policy.

5. URGENT ISSUES FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA.

- Patch of worn tarmac in Village Hall car park requires attention, CLERK to request Coppards for a quote.
- Streetlamp 9 by florists is out again, CLERK to report.
- Water run-off in Catt's Hill is causing an ice patch, CLERK to report to Highways Steward.
- Chairman has received a letter from Boar's Head residents requesting a street light at the junction of the A26 and Boar's Head Lane, CLERK to add to January Highways agenda.

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6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday April 16th 2013 in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall at 19:30.

7. PUBLIC FORUM.

Issue raised regarding gritting of Eridge Lane – currently this is a secondary gritting route only treated in extreme conditions. Damage to bridge rail near Redgate Mill Lane junction is also to be reported. Several minor accidents have occurred recently due to the icy conditions. CLERK to raise with ESCC and will add to agenda of SLR.

.....Chairman's Signature.....Date