

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 AT 19:30 ON THURSDAY 30TH JUNE 2011 AT ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chair)
Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson
Cllr. C. Clibbens
Cllr. C. Dennison

Cllr. M. Hall
Cllr. R. Harris
Cllr. R. Jaques
Cllr. J. Padfield

Cllr. C. Prince
Cllr. D. Thomas

ALSO PRESENT. 3 members of the public, Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC) and Keith Fairbank from the "Courier".

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

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr. Watson, Cllr. Miss. N. Bolton, Cllr. Wickenden, Cllr. Merriman (WDC) and PcsO Boyle.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

- The Chairman declared an interest in respect of item 6 b) as he occasionally assists this contractor.
- Cllr. Dennison declared an interest in respect of item 6 d) as he lives adjacent to the site of the proposed development.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

Cllr. J. Padfield (WDC) reported the following:-

- There would be 5 meetings each year of the WDC Full Council; there are now 6 cabinet members.
- Over the past 2 years, 1395 new homes have been built in the District compared to a target of 1049. Included in the new build figure are 380 affordable homes compared to a target of 224.
- Planning appeals against refusal of permission had successfully been defended in respect of sites at Honey Farm, Polegate and Dewlands Hill, Rotherfield.
- The quarter 4 performance targets for the Council showed that 52 departments were above target, 11 close to target and 7 below, the latter group included Planning, Health and Safety, and Housing.
- Waste collection cost the Council £7m p.a. with £3m being received back for recycled materials. Discussions are being held with 4 neighbouring Councils to look at a joint arrangement for collection, this is complicated by the fact that, unlike Wealden, these Councils contract out their collection services.
- Cllr. Padfield is currently on a Committee reviewing the ways in which affordable housing is allocated.

Cllr. Tidy (ESCC) reported the following:-

- Public consultations are taking place regarding modernisation of services.
- Those receiving adult social care now had the opportunity to receive cash payment direct so that they may arrange their own care package. This is proving to be popular as it gives them more control.
- As a consequence of the above, opportunities exist for local businesses to become involved in providing such services. Consultations are being held regarding this, it is acknowledged that it must be ensured that a proper service is provided.
- Some Council run care facilities are being closed, for example Hookstead in Crowborough. Private sector homes are being built in the County to provide these facilities, examples are currently under construction in Crowborough and Uckfield.
- PcsO's have requested that some of their duties and powers be extended, as has been the case in other Police Authority areas. Areas involved are as follows:-
 - Issuing fixed penalty notices in respect of disorder and alcohol possession.
 - Power to detain until an Officer arrives to take into custody.
 - Power to dissolve groups and return those under 16 to their homes.

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- Powers to search for alcohol and tobacco.

These changes are being recommended for approval by the Police authority and assurance has been given that this will not increase bureaucracy and reduce the time spent by Pcso's "on the street".

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT

In the absence of the Pcso, the Clerk delivered the following report:-

Crimes June

- 05-12th June: Theft of batteries from small holding on Eridge Road.
- 13-15th June: Attempted burglary, damage to window on Rotherfield Road entry not made into property.
- 12-20th June: Batteries taken from yard in Eridge Lane.
- 20th June: Shed broken into nothing taken.
- 19-22nd June: Barn entered on Eridge Lane, nothing taken .

Tickets

- 3 tickets issued to cars parking on the double yellow lines on North Street.

Other

With the hot weather please remember to close and lock windows and doors when you go to sleep or leave the house, there was an incident in Cross In Hand where a window was left open and somebody put their hands in and stole items that were within reach.

5. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 28th MAY 2011 & MATTERS ARISING.

It was RESOLVED that there were no other matters arising and that they be adopted. The Chairman signed the minutes.

6. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS

a) Information and request for support to form a Tennis Club in Rotherfield and construction of two tennis courts in the Recreation Ground.

A letter from the proposer of the scheme was circulated to the Councillors. It was noted that proposals had been considered in the past regarding tennis courts and the site of a former grass court remained in the Recreation Ground. Two representatives of the proposer were present and were permitted to give information and answer questions as below.

- The available space allowed for two hard courts to be provided, with possible relocation of the cricket nets.
- Enquiries had been made of the Lawn Tennis Association who had indicated that funds might be available to support the scheme.
- Could the court be "dual purpose" to allow for 5 a side football? The LTA generally resisted such arrangements but this could perhaps be negotiated for organised use at specific times.
- An online booking system was proposed to manage the use of the courts.
- The Sports Club were made aware of a proposed scheme within the past couple of years.

It was RESOLVED that a sub committee be formed of Cllrs. Dennison, Prince, Halse-Adamson and Hall to investigate this proposal. CLERK to circulate contact details of Councillors and those promoting the scheme.

b) Quote for thinning and felling trees and bushes on the bank between the football pitches in the Recreation Ground.

Quote for £700 received for this work. RESOLVED that this be accepted and CLERK to arrange.

c) Request for permission to trim trees fronting Village Hall to improve radio signal from the School.

Due to the confusion by the contractors as to what they were supposed to be cutting this issue is again being considered by the Council. Photo of trees affected, and report regarding the issue, were circulated to the Councillors. It was stated that the reduction requested of the tree concerned would probably kill it. It was RESOLVED not to grant permission for this reduction and that advice should be sought of a Parishioner with knowledge of the transmitters of this nature regarding alternatives.

ROOTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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d) Information and consider further action regarding proposed affordable housing development at Town Row.

An exhibition to the public of the proposal was held last night and it is understood that at least 49 persons attended this with a wide variety of views expressed regarding the project. Feedback forms were provided by the Housing Association, it was noted that a representative of WDC Planning was not present. Results of the speed survey undertaken by the site were circulated and CLERK is to enquire of Highways as to whether a survey has previously been undertaken at or near this point so that a comparison could be made.

e) Provision of a fire lighting area near the Scout Hut to replace the area lost by the building of the Pre School.

Scouts have been contacted to seek their requirements regarding this and also chasing for confirmation that £5m public liability cover is held by them. It RESOLVED that a site just below the car park extension near the Scout Hut would be suitable, CLERK to advise Scouts and seek confirmation that our insurance will not be affected by this.

f) Review of Council's policies and other governing documents.

This is carried forward from the Annual meeting at which it was agreed that as updated Financial Regulations and Standing Orders have recently been adopted, these excluded from the review. The Freedom of Information (FOI) and Grants policy, together with a draft Complaints policy, have been circulated. It was RESOLVED that the FOI and Grants policy did not require amendment and that the Complaints policy be adopted. Clerk advised that he was investigating other areas where it may be prudent to have formal policies.

g) Receive information regarding membership of the Parish Panel and consider renewal of membership of the Wealden District Association of Local Councils.

This was cancelled earlier in the year. We have been advised that membership would be required to partake in the panel and other WDALC activities and that the annual cost of this is £30. RESOLVED that CLERK renew membership and that Cllr. Thomas would be the Parish Council's representative.

h) Arrangements for Burials, Planning Committee Meeting and other matters during Clerk's holiday.

As with previous years, some burial plots will be provisionally allocated to the local funeral directors and the burial records passed to the Chairman for safekeeping over this period. A planning meeting is scheduled for 9th August in the Clerk's absence and arrangements will be made for planning documents to be forwarded to Cllr. Thomas during this period and for issue of the agenda. Guidelines to be provided for acquiring planning document details via the WDC Planning website together with other matters relating to planning meetings.

i) Action regarding correspondence containing invitations or otherwise requesting a response.

- **The Big Tree Plant** – Information from ESCC regarding this. Further copy to be obtained for Tree Warden as this copy is to be passed to the Millennium Green Trust.
- **Sussex Community Rail Partnership** – Notice of Annual stakeholder meeting at Oxted 2nd August 17:00 – 19:00. No volunteers to attend.
- **Sussex CPRE** – Invitation to 2011 AGM at 10:30 on July 12th at High Hurstwood.
- **ESCC Parish and Town Council meeting** – 16th September at Uckfield Civic Centre all day. The Chairman and Cllr. Clibbens expressed an interest in attending if schedules permit.
- **Wealden CAB Golf Day** - Dewlands Manor, Thursday October 6th.
- **Big Society, Small Communities Forum** – Jointly organised by Rotherfield St Martin and to be held at University of Brighton on 19th September 14:00 – 17:00. Cllr. Hall expressed an interest in attending and further details will be passed on when received.

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j) Information and further action regarding outstanding groundwork matters relating to the Pre School building.

Concerns have been expressed to ESCC at the lack of progress in dealing with these and it has been suggested to them that the Parish Council arrange for the work to be done with the cost coming from the retention monies for the project. A response is awaited. Children had been noticed playing on the flat roof area of the building, CLERK to advise PcsO. Concerns raised that the Pre School are still experiencing sewage odours, Cllr Tidy (ESCC) offered to assist in encouraging resolution of this issue, CLERK to pass on details to him regarding the contact within ESCC for this.

k) Information and further action regarding meeting with WDC regarding Closed Burial Grounds.

Clerk attended a meeting on Monday with representatives of the other Wealden Parishes and officers of WDC to discuss options regarding this. WDC figures show that the current annual running cost of St Denys' is £9500 with £1000 p.a. allocated to a major repairs reserve. It is understood that WDC undertake twice yearly inspections of the items for which they are responsible for. Those at the meeting considered that a more detailed breakdown regarding the make up of the costs (which is believed to include a management charge) was needed. Currently there is insufficient information to enable Councils to make an informed decision as to whether there were any areas of work relating to these Burial Grounds that could be better or more cheaply undertaken by Parishes. Wealden acknowledged that most Parishes would be unwilling to take on areas such as listed wall repairs that could potentially involve a large future liability. Further information will be passed to the Council when received.

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

- 21st June - Highways Lighting and Transportation Committee.
- 7th and 28th June - Planning and Building Committee.

It was RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted and that there were no matters arising. It was agreed that CLERK should provide a summary at the end of the 28th June Planning meeting minutes with respect to the briefing given by him regarding members interests.

8. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING

- **Other committees and sub-committees.** None.
- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.** None.
- **Clerk's report, issues and updates on work in progress.** None.

9. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Bank Reconciliation as at end of May 2011. The RFO presented the figures, which were agreed and signed by the Chairman.
- Review of Expenditure against Budget to end May 2011. The RFO provided the summary figures to Councillors and relevant detailed figures to the Committee Chairmen.
- Approval of Payments. Clerk explained that the repairs to the cemetery tap and the removal of the Mark Cross bus shelter debris had been authorised under his delegated powers under Section 3 iii) of the Council's Financial Regulations as both matters were urgent. After explanation it was agreed that the following payments be made:-

CHEQUE NO	CHEQUE PAYABLE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801270	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for June	£955.04
801271	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for June	£232.28
801272	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for June	£116.92
801273	Jim Gander	Street sweeping for June	£131.25
801274	Tollwood Garden Services	Grass cutting for June	£1,462.80
801276	Rotherfield Sports Club	Grass cutting of playing surfaces for June	£300.00

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801277	Burns Guthrie	Plans for Cemetery ashes interment area and wall	£394.80
801278	Konica Minolta	Photocopier lease fee	£41.08
801279	L.J. Head	Repair to tap in Cemetery	£80.40
801280	SALC	Councillor's induction course	£120.00
801281	Zurich Insurance	Additional premium	£30.03
801282	WDC	Emptying charge for Hall small bin	£143.52
801283	WDC	Emptying charge for Cemetery small bin	£71.76
801284	Tony Moaby	Removal of debris remaining from Mark Cross bus shelter	£180.00
Total			£4,259.88

Please note that cheques 801275 & 801284 are spoiled.

CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
HMRC	Vat reclaimed 1/3/2011 - 30/4/2011	£1,367.01
Santander	Interest on 4711394 for May	£60.27
Santander	Interest on 4711394 for April	£56.31
Rotherfield Village Hall	Licence fee for next 10 years at £1 p.a.	£10.00
Paul Bysouth Funeral Services	Interment fee, Parishioner rate	£130.00
Richard Green Funeral Services	Memorial fee, Parishioner rate	£70.00
Rotherfield Horticultural Association	Annual allotment rent	£500.00
Total		£2,193.59

- It was noted that the agreed expenditure of £700 for tree works on the Recreation Ground bank would be taken from contingency reserve as it was not included in the Budget.

10. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE

General

- **South East Water Resources update.**
- **Eridge Village Hall** - Thank you for grant.
- **Twinning Association** - Thank you for support for 25th Anniversary Weekend.
- **Sustrans** – Thank you for donation.

Circulars and magazines

- **LCR** – Summer 2011.
- **ESCC** – **Steps** to Action School Travel Plan information issue 19.
- **WDC** – Parish Bulletin issue 9.
- **Saint-Chéron en Bref** – No. 275.
- **Sussex Area Ramblers** – June 2011 edition of “Now Open”.
- **WDC** – Community Grants and voluntary sector support.

11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were presented to the Chair for signature.

12. DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- Tuesday July 19th – Planning and Building Committee.
 - Thursday July 21st – Monthly Parish Council Meeting.
- All of these meetings are to be held in Rotherfield Village Hall starting at 19:30.

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

- Sports Club have enquired if Council wish to participate in Jubilee Celebrations for next year. Clerk is to add an item to the Agenda for the July meeting to consider options.
- Request received from Bonfire Society to use part of area under Pre School for storage. Item will be added to July meeting agenda to consider use of this Community Storage area.
- Cllrs Bolton and Thomas attended the recent New Councillor training morning at Uckfield, this included "Power of well being" training.
- Disappointment expressed at the lack of WDC Planning representative at the exhibition for the Town Row affordable housing development.
- Concerns raised that a rash of advertisements had appeared at Mark Cross and that these are unsightly. Clerk to investigate and report to ESCC.
- Mailshot sent by Contractors regarding forthcoming resurfacing works from Palesgate Lane to Court Meadow. There is some confusion over dates as there are works scheduled in South Street on the ESCC website that are dated after the surfacing works. Clerk has contacted ESCC regarding this and awaits clarification.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:10.

14. PUBLIC FORUM.

- A resident advised that estate agent "for sale" signs in Catts' Hill had been "rearranged" and house name boards vandalised. He had not reported this to the Police and was encouraged to do so.

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