

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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

MINUTES OF THE APRIL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 19:30 ON THURSDAY 28TH APRIL 2011 AT MARK CROSS VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Vice Chair)	Cllr. C. Dennison	Cllr. J. Padfield
Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson (Vice Chair)	Cllr. C. Clibbens	Cllr. Mrs. A. Watson
Cllr. D. Clark	Cllr. R. Harris	Cllr. N. Wickenden
	Cllr. R. Jaques	

ALSO PRESENT. 8 members of the public, PCSO Matt Boyle and Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC).

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

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr. J. Bowerman, Cllr. C. Prince, Cllr. Miss N. Bolton, Cllr. H. Merriman (WDC) and Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC).

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr. Harris declared a personal interest in respect of item 6 f) on the agenda as he farms land adjacent to Chant Lane.

3. TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS.

Cllr. Tidy (ESCC) reported the following:-

- At the recent Council Cabinet meeting, the local transport plan to 2026 was approved. Aspirations within this include the reinstatement of the Uckfield – Lewes rail link and completion of the Bexhill to Hastings link road.
- 57 NHS employees have been seconded to the Council to help develop the strategic policy for future health provision in East Sussex. Further delays to this process have been caused by Central Government changes in policy.
- Cllr. Tidy will not be seeking re-election in 2013 and is shortly to stand down from the Cabinet which will be reducing its strength by one member.
- Signs are up for forthcoming road maintenance work on the B2100 from Palesgate Lane to the Village.

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

- It has been a busy year for the Council particularly in the areas of finance, development, waste collection and future planning.
- The Council's transformation plan started 2 years ago, key component is to merge services on to the one site in Hailsham and redevelop the Crowborough office. To enable this staff have been relocated temporarily to offices in Eastbourne and Crowborough. Key aim is to reduce costs whilst maintaining services. Single site work is to be completed by 2012 and work will save £350k per year.
- Grant from Central Government is being reduced by 28% over the next 2 years.
- The Local Development Framework replaces the Local Plan and covers the period to 2030. Original plan had provided for 11000 new homes to be built by 2026, this figure is now 9600 to 2030 approximating to 400 per annum.
- Some services are to be shared with other Councils. Wealden already operate Building Control Services for Eastbourne Borough Council.
- Kerbside waste collections are now in place across the area, it is aimed that 60% of all waste will be recycled by 2015.

4. TO RECEIVE POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT

PCSO Boyle reported that crimes for April consisted of some tools being stolen from a van in Mark Cross plus damage to a vehicle parked at Eridge Station and theft of the spare tyre.

It was reiterated by the Councillors that illegal parking was still taking place on the double yellow lines outside the Institute, also hazardous parking close to the Spout Hill/B2100 junction. Vehicles had again been spotted parked on the pavement opposite the Catts' Inn. It was hoped that firm enforcement action would be taken over all of these parking issues.

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5. **TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 31st MARCH 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. **Update on various Mark Cross Highways issues.**
- Damaged fence by car park and damaged kerb near Hall have been reported to ESCC for attention. Cllr. Padfield requested that a dropped kerb be installed outside the Mark Cross village hall to assist wheelchair access, CLERK to pass this request on to Highways.
 - Direction sign approaching junction from Catt's Hill has been replaced by County at the request of the Parish Council due to the poor state of the old one.
 - Issues reported to Clerk regarding fly posting on A267 road signs for an event at the Hall, details passed on to the officers concerned at ESCC. Due to lack of resources and the fact that signs such as these are usually posted at the last minutes it is not always possible to take action to remove them.
 - Clerk has repeatedly reminded ESCC that the bus stop post opposite Garden Centre requires replacement, original removed after vehicle damage in June 2010. Stagecoach have also been contacted re: services failing to stop here, they are to remind the drivers at their Eastbourne depot of this and request that any incidences are reported to them on 08456 002299 or eastsussex.enquiries@stagecoachbus.com. Stagecoach advise that they had been requested to install bus stop signs on the A267 near Sheriff's Lane, unfortunately due to sighting difficulties it was not possible to install a stop at this point.
 - No entry sign on slip road has now been up righted, attention still awaited to warning sign near Sheriff's Lane junction on A267.
 - B2101 – ESCC have acknowledged the case for introduction of a speed limit (currently national 60mph) and, subject to funding and other priorities, it is hoped that a 40mph limit will be put in place between the Cottage Hill junction to beyond the Sheriff's Lane junction during the 2012/13 financial year.
 - ESCC have been contacted for information regarding options to discourage parking on the verge opposite the Church, which is being damaged as a result. Their reply is still awaited.
 - Cuckoo Line permissive bridleway. Clerk understood that a report was to have been considered by Mayfield Parish Council early in April but he has not yet received an update from them. Cllr. Wickenden reported that there were some issues at the Rotherfield end of the route regarding crossing an area of land to access Yew Tree Lane. CLERK to add to Agenda of June Highways Committee meeting.
 - Installation of the Nap Wood fingerpost is imminent.
- b. **Issues arising from the Annual Parish Meeting.**
Chair considered that this had gone well. Regarding the proposal for reviving the scheme for a footpath/cycleway between Rotherfield and Jarvis Brook a "show of hands" at the meeting had indicated 28 in favour of the scheme, 1 against and 3 abstentions. CLERK to add scheme to June Highways Committee agenda for discussion.
- c. **Appointment of Internal Auditors.**
Clerk recommends that existing auditors be re-appointed. RESOLVED that Gwen and Tony Pritchitt be appointed for the 2011/12 audit and also the second visit to complete the 2010/11 audit and Annual Return. CLERK to investigate process and benefits of attaining "Quality Council" status now that he has achieved CiLCA.
- d. **Update regarding statutory plan for new ashes interment area in Parish Cemetery and arrangements for plaques on the Wall of Remembrance.**
Site due to be visited within next fortnight to enable this to be drawn up.
Clerk recommends "Horsford" design plaque from Memorial Plaques (or equivalent) rectangular brown bronze style 6"x4" and photos were circulated of this design. RESOLVED that this is to be the approved style for affixing to the wall.
- e. **Request for permission from Sussex Wildlife Trust to run a Forest School Project in the wooded area of the Recreation Ground – additional information provided.**
Details of public liability cover and risk assessment for the site have been sent by the Trust. RESOLVED CLERK to carry forward to agenda of May Recreation and Burial Committee meeting for final decision.

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f. Information regarding surfacing in Chant Lane and measures to discourage vehicles using this route when advised to do so by “SatNav”.

Have spoken to ESCC rights of way, they can only make a modest contribution toward any works and suggest 20% toward the surface improvements proposed at the Eridge Lane end and a 20% contribution toward surfacing at the Station Road end, both based on the lower of the quotes received from Coppards for the work. Correspondence ongoing with Tomtom regarding removal of route from their SatNav database, have also requested whether there is a central method of updating information used by other providers. RESOLVED CLERK to write to residents, other users and Horticultural Association inviting contributions toward cost of resurfacing lane as per Coppards lowest quote. RESOLVED to also pursue ESCC to add lane to the winter closure program for the section from the allotments to Eridge Lane.

g. Information regarding final regrading and reseeding of banks adjacent to new Pre School building, regrading of access path and reseeding of service trench line.

Clerk is to investigate and contact contractors and ESCC, although a visit was made late March there are still the following matters outstanding that require attention from them:-

- Regrade and reseed banks by Pre School.
- Regrade and reseed infilled service trench running across recreation ground.
- Regrade the driveway by the Pre School.

CLERK to take this up with Contractors/County and add to agenda of Recreation and Burial Committee meeting for update.

h. Measures to raise profile of the Parish for visitors and tourists.

It was suggested that a tourism sub committee be formed to investigate ways of promoting this, also that Tourism be added to the role of the Council press liaison officer. Cllr. Tidy (ESCC) suggested investigating joint efforts with neighbouring Parishes. Clerk add to May agenda for review.

i. Update on proposal for a cycleway/footpath between Rotherfield and Jarvis Brook.

Clerk has not had time to progress notices and Parish Magazine article regarding this.

j. Request from ESCC to trim silver birch trees fronting Rotherfield Village Hall interfering with telecom signal from School.

Site visit undertaken recently with representative of ESCC and their telecoms provider. The trees are claimed to be interfering with the signal from the School to Whitehill School, there are apparently no options available regarding repositioning of equipment. RESOLVED that County are permitted to trim the trees on the basis that the Chairman and Tree Warden be present to ensure the work is done in accord with the Parish Council's wishes.

k. Information regarding management of Allotments by the Horticultural Association and request for a more formalised arrangement.

No formal arrangement appears to exist between the Association and the Parish Council for the day-to-day operation of the allotment. Research suggests that the responsibility of the Council under the 1908 Small Holdings and Allotments Act s23 (1) is solely to provide soil for cultivation. Clerk recommends that an agreement is drawn up between PC and Association as they are in effect managing it on Councils behalf thus saving valuable clerk time. Specimen agreements have been obtained from other Council's, RESOLVED CLERK to draw up draft agreement for consideration at the Recreation and Burial Committee meeting this month.

l. Contribution toward Sports Club toward end of season pitch maintenance and agreement for grass cutting of playing surfaces.

At the February Recreation and Burial meeting the following was agreed:-

- Allow club to extend/repair fence along bank between pitches. Club to let Council have indication of costs incurred once work completed when a contribution toward cost would then be considered.
- Council to check trees on bank and mark those that it is willing to allow to be removed/reduced.

Club are querying working of the agreement for grass cutting, this is yet to be signed and CLERK is to investigate wording of this reflecting status of the Club. After discussion it was AGREED to contribute £1000 to the Sports Club to support the end of season works in view of the benefit that the recreation ground brings to the Parish for those participating in both organised and informal activities there, CLERK add to May cheque list.

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m. Information regarding forthcoming Local Elections and first meeting of the new Council on May 17th.

This is being held earlier than usual as in an election year it must be no later than 14 days after the Election. Code of conduct and acceptance of office forms were handed out together with the latest edition of the "Good Councillor's Guide". Clerk will shortly be displaying notices inviting applications for co-option on to the Council to fill the vacant seat in Rotherfield Ward.

n. Information regarding Clerk's success with CiLCA qualification and granting of additional salary scale points.

RESOLVED that Chair, Vice Chair, Cllr. Padfield and Cllr. Clibbens form an "Employee Committee" to discuss with Clerk the granting of additional salary scale points after the end of the May 17th meeting.

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

- 5th and 26th April 2011 – Planning and Building Committee.
- 12th April 2011 – Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Mention of the lack of grass cutting activity at St Denys' has been omitted in error from the Planning Minutes and is to be added, RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted and that there were no matters arising.

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 March 2011. The RFO presented the figures, which were agreed and signed by the Chairman. Review of Expenditure against Budget to end March 2011. The RFO provided the summary figures to Councillors and relevant detailed figures to the Committee Chairmen.
- Approval of Payments. RESOLVED that CLERK is to contact Grass Cutting Contractors expressing concern that updated prices for 2011/12 have still to be provided and that invoices continue to be received at the last minute rather than no later than the 20th of each month as has been requested. Failure to submit invoices by this deadline will lead to payment being withheld until following month. After explanation it was agreed that the following payments be made:-

CHEQUE NO	CHEQUE PAYABLE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
801245	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's salary for April	£888.07
801246	H.M.R.C.	Tax and N.I. for April	£187.31
801247	Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses for April	£154.03
801248	Wealden District Council	Non domestic rates for Cemetery and St Denys' old burial ground	£107.02
801249	Wealden District Council	Dog bin emptying costs Jan - Mar	£208.26
801250	Rotherfield St Martin	Annual support grant s137 LGA 1972	£1,750.00
801251	Eridge Village Hall	Grant toward refurbishment s133 LGA 1972	£1,500.00
801252	Sustrans	Donation s137 LGA 1972	£20.00
801253	Teambase	Stationery	£52.44
801254	Jim Gander	Street sweeping for April	£105.00
801255	Signs of Style	Posters for APM	£165.00
801256	Tollwood Garden Services	Grass cutting for April	£1,222.80
		Total	£6,359.93

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CREDITS

PAYMENT FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Adjustment - Rent cheque from ESCC last month erroneously entered in ledger as £350 instead of £375		£25.00
Millennium Green Trust	Contribution toward dog bin emptying	£26.70
Santander Bank	April interest on 4711394	£60.15
Wealden District Council	1/2 Year Precept payment	£26,250.00
	Total	£26,336.85

10. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE

General

- None.

Circulars and magazines

- CPRE – Fieldwork Spring 2011.
- CPRE – Sussex Review Spring 2011.
- Wealden Senior Citizen’s Partnership – Grey Matters March 2011.
- Saint-Chéron en Bref – No. 273
- Wealden District Council – Issue 8.
- Now Open – May 2011

11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

These were presented to the Chair for signature.

12. DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- Tuesday 17th May - Combined Annual Council Meeting and Planning and Building Committee.
- Tuesday 24th May - Recreation and Burial Committee.

The above meetings are in the Parish Council Room at Rotherfield Village Hall starting at 19:30.

- Thursday 26th May – May Council Meeting, Eridge Village Hall at 19:30.

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

- WDC advise that ivy on St Denys’ Churchyard wall fronting Church Road has been treated and contractors will be removing it in due course. Will have update regarding position re: Moons’ Yard wall for forthcoming Rec. and Burial meeting.
- Fly tipping reported in Brickyard Lane, details to be passed to Clerk for action.
- St Denys’ Church has circulated an appeal for financial support in the Parish. Clerk explained that Parish Council had limited powers to contribute toward Church for specific purposes, not to cover general costs.
- CLERK to add £75 cheque for contribution toward Twinning Association Reception to list for next meeting, this to come from Chairman’s allowance.
- Owner of hedge alongside New Road – Station Road twitten will arrange to cut this after nesting season. CLERK to advise ESCC who have been in contact with them regarding the matter.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:30.

14. PUBLIC FORUM.

- Mark Cross resident advised that large vehicle had damage verge and knocked down “protected area” sign on corner of Millennium Green. CLERK to investigate and raise with ESCC for repairs.
- Concern raised re: cost of merging WDC sites and whether cost savings claimed would achieve payback of this.
- Concern raised at need to trim tree in front of Village Hall as detailed in agenda item 6 j), considered that this was due to poor planning of the original installation.

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

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