

ROOTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS LIGHTING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 19TH JANUARY 2016 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL AT 19:30

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. C. Clibbens (Chairman)	Cllr. T. Gilbert	Cllr. A. Martin
Cllr. J. Kitchenham (Vice Chair)	Cllr. R. Harris.	Cllr. G. Watson-Smith
Cllr. K. Curtis	Cllr. D. Hiles	Cllr. N. Wickenden

ALSO PRESENT

Clerk to the Parish Council, Trevor Thorpe, two members of the public and Alan Cook, Principal Transport Planner, Infrastructure, Design and Delivery, East Sussex County Council.

ABSENT

None.

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

An apology was submitted, and accepted, by Cllr. L. Watts.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND UPDATES TO MEMBERS' REGISTER OF INTERESTS.

Cllr. Hiles declared a personal interest in item 5a) as he lives in a property affected by this issue.

The Chairman reminded those present that they should declare an interest if at any point during the meeting they became aware of an interest relating to a matter being discussed.

3. UPDATE FROM CLERK REGARDING MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.

Numbers reference those of the 10th November Council Meeting which included Highways business:-

5 b) and c). Items appear on the agenda of this meeting to discuss and agree action regarding these.

5d) i, v & vi. Clerk will progress these once budgets have been finalised and agreed at the January Council meeting. First step will be to obtain quotes for the items, and enquire as to eligibility for "Match Funding" from ESCC for item i.

5d) iii Item on this agenda to discuss comments to ESCC who are now proposing that a 40mph limit be put in place on the B2101 Argos Hill to Rotherfield, this as part of other speed limit work on the A267.

5d) iv Clerk has contacted Brewery Company, who it is claimed own the piece of land in the Village suggested as a possible site for additional parking; response awaited from them.

5d) vii Clerk has obtained specialist plans for the consultants dealing with this, final report awaited to then enable an indication of likely cost of providing the path from the Village to Jarvis Brook.

Other items.

- **Mark Cross School.** Signs have yet to appear outside declaring that the "zig zag" markings are now enforceable. Whilst it is assumed that these will appear as part of the slip road closure work due to commence shortly Clerk has contacted ESCC for confirmation that this is the case.
- **B2100 Church Road – Rotherfield.** ESCC had advised that carriageway resurfacing work was scheduled for mid-March. Unfortunately it has subsequently been advised that budget has been reallocated to a higher priority site therefore the work will not now be taking place.

4. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH NOVEMBER 2015 FOR APPROVAL AS A TRUE RECORD AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES.

Draft minutes have been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was RESOLVED that they were a true record of the meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman of the Committee.

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5. TO CONSIDER AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ANY FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

a) Presentation from Alan Cook of ESCC Highways regarding proposal for an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order to restrict large vehicles from using the B2100 between Mark Cross and Jarvis Brook.

Map showing details of the proposal and enhanced signage was circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting.

The issues, options, and proposed measures to address, were summarised by Alan Cook (AC) as follows:-

- Key problem caused by large vehicles using the B2100 junction by the King's Arms, causing congestion within the village and frequently causing damage to the listed buildings on either side.
- Consideration had been given to extending parking restrictions by the junction to provide additional turning space, but this had been discounted.
- Proposal is to introduce an enforceable ban on vehicles over 10m in length in from using the B2100 from Mark Cross to Jarvis Brook via Rotherfield, also the B2101 from Argos Hill via High Cross to the Village Centre. Inclusion of an "except for access" clause had been considered, but discounted due to difficulty in enforcing. Public Services Vehicles such as buses are to be excluded from the restriction; the ban will include all HGV over 10m in length, not just articulated vehicles.
- The two main freight transport organisations had been consulted; no objections were raised by either. Crowborough Chamber of Commerce were also been approached for their view but had not responded.
- An Experimental Traffic Order is proposed, which may run for a maximum of 18 months; 12 months duration is proposed for this particular Order with a view to reviewing after this period, incorporating any changes needed and then making permanent.
- A public consultation event will take place in the Village to raise the profile of the proposal. AC will liaise with Clerk re: dates and times for this, probably to be held on a Friday p.m. and Saturday a.m. in the spring.

The following comments and concerns were raised:-

- **Will Satnavs be updated to include these new restrictions?**
All information relating to restrictions introduced on routes is passed to the organisation who maintains the database from which Satnavs get their data. However, there is no compulsion for anyone to make use of a SatNav, or for HGV drivers to use the more expensive variations of the device, which include route restriction information for HGVs.
- **Rigid long vehicles.** It is considered that these vehicles, which are often less than 10m long, are the prime cause of damage rather than articulated vehicles. In addition, tractor and trailer combinations accessing farmland in the Village could exceed 10m. Could the restrictions cater for these?
AC advised that fine-tuning the restrictions to cater for this could possibly be made if it is found to be an issue during the trial.
- **Is funding in place for this proposal and what is the implementation timescale?**
AC advised that it is included in the 2016/17 programme of Highways projects and estimates that by the time all the necessary formalities have been dealt with the pilot scheme could be in operation in the autumn.

After this session AC confirmed that all HGV's over 10 metres in length will be included within the ban, not just articulated lorries

The Councillors thanked AC for his efforts with the project and for taking the time to attend this meeting.

Clerk reported that Wealden require architect drawings and a Heritage Statement in relation to the application for installing CCTV on the King's Arms, he will contact the owning brewery to see if they can provide the former items.

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b) Agree comments for ESCC proposal to reduce speed limit on the B2101 Argos Hill - High Cross - Rotherfield to 40mph.

Plan showing details of the speed limit changes proposed in the Argos Hill area was circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. Reduction of the limit on this route has been an aspiration of residents affected, and the Parish Council, for many years. It was RESOLVED that the Council fully support this proposal CLERK to advise ESCC.

c) Decisions on further action regarding the following parking and traffic issues in village centre.

i. Vehicles parked in the Square and outside the King's Arms.

- Land ownership and Highway plans circulated prior to meeting. Land outside properties on the West side of The Square is not considered as adopted Highway by ESCC. However, plans obtained from HMLR show that it is not owned by the adjacent properties either. Have spoken with the ESCC Highways Land Ownership Team who advises that the land is "unadopted highway" in the sense that ESCC have no duty to maintain it, but that the public have a right to pass over it hence blocking it with parked cars or other items could be deemed as obstructing the Highway.
- Land outside the King's Arms in North Street is Adopted Public Highway. Vehicles parking thereon would be considered to be obstructing it.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Clibbens arrange a meeting with the King's Arms and party involved. This to discuss this matter and request that the vehicle is parked on land owned by the King's Arms such as not to obstruct pedestrians. CLERK to draft letter regarding parking on the West side of the Square and liaise with Cllr. Clibbens regarding raising issue with the residents concerned.

ii. Vehicles parked at top of New Road.

Email and photo from Parishioner circulated showing two cars parked at the top of New Road. Clerk has acknowledged and invited to attend this meeting to discuss concerns. Councillors are to raise this issue at the forthcoming Strengthening Local Relationships ("SLR") meeting with ESCC Highways. It is recalled that this issue has been raised with them previously and that it was intended that a white "access protection" be marked at the junction to discourage vehicles from parking there, a progress report will be requested.

iii. Recent incident causing damage to the Memorial Institute Porch. Suggestions for possible highway improvements in the area to discourage a reoccurrence.

This issue is also to be raised at the forthcoming SLR. Installation of a bollard next to the Institute entrance is suggested as a remedy.

iv. Request from local business for additional restricted time limited parking in the Village Centre.

Cllr. Clibbens reported at the December meeting that he had discussed this issue with the person concerned and put forward the Council's view that it did not support additional restricted parking in the Village centre. He also advised that, if support from other businesses in the Village centre could be demonstrated, then the Council could reconsider their stance. No such support for the proposal has been forthcoming.

v. Other areas of concern.

Submission made by a Parishioner concerned at vehicle speeds entering/leaving Village via Rotherfield Hill – considers that 30mph is not observed and suggests traffic calming/interactive signs. Cllr. Clibbens is to contact Parishioner to discuss, it is noted that the Speedwatch team had hoped monitoring would be authorised at this location but unfortunately the Police deemed it unsuitable.

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d) Possible extension of footpath over the former “Cuckoo Line” formation in the vicinity of Argos Hill. Consider information from ESCC from March 2015 regarding potential maintenance cost and liabilities. Decision on support for this project.

This subject has been talked about for many years; earliest email on matter is from June 2009. ESCC own the land currently and have responsibility to maintain the disused bridge (almost a short tunnel) under the A267 near the former “Bicycle Arms” at Argos Hill and at least one other bridge. Mayfield Parish Council is also involved as the route south of the Argos Hill is in their Parish. Last meeting with them appears to have been in September 2014. A further joint meeting was proposed at our March 2015 meeting of this Committee but it is believed that this has not occurred. Believe land was offered to the Councils for £30K but that this would involve taking over maintenance responsibility for the route. Email from ESCC to Mayfield PC on the matter has been forwarded showing that costs involved in maintenance of the remaining overbridges could be considerable even if ESCC retained responsibility for maintaining the Argos Hill “Tunnel”. It is considered that the chances for extending the route further, either toward the current section starting at Heathfield, or north from Rotherfield, are remote. It is believed that the landowners on these sections would not support such proposals. RESOLVED that no further action is to be taken with this unless Mayfield Parish Council has any information regarding funding sources.

e) Rights of Way. Information regarding surface and other issues concerning Rotherfield BR66 near Forge Road, Eridge Station and BW29 High Cross to Castle Hill.

- **BR66** - Main problems are in the middle section, Rotherfield 66c, as well as 66b and 66d, where there is surface water and damage by vehicles. There is also a blockage in a culvert under a private gateway entrance forcing water onto the path. There does appear to be 4x4 use, presumably unauthorised, as well as agricultural vehicle traffic. As there are no gates along the entire bridleway there is currently no way to prevent 4x4 use. RESOLVED that Cllrs. Wickenden and Martin participate in a site visit with representatives of ESCC RoW team and Withyham Parish Council (part of route is in that Parish) to discuss siting of barriers to restrict use by vehicles, and arrangements to consult landowners affected. CLERK to arrange.
- **BW29** – Cllr Martin has provided photographs of damage caused by 4x4 uses. ESCC Rights of Way team report that the damage warrants a seasonal closure and will be taking the matter to the next Local Access Forum meeting (20th January), recommending this. There is quite a lengthy process involved in arranging a seasonal closure, so assuming that it is approved by the LAF they would then look to make interim arrangements to close the byway to 4x4 vehicles for this and future winters. Cllr. Martin was thanked for visiting the site during the Christmas period to provide photographic evidence of the issues here.

f) Review of Parish Council’s snow clearance plans.

There are snow shovels and Hi Vis vests stored under the Pre School in case of need. A local farming contractor is part of the ESCC Snow Plough scheme and has a plough for use in case of need. Information circulated regarding current arrangements; CLERK to contact those featured on the list of snow clearing volunteers to establish if they still wish to participate in the group.

g) Consider request from WI to clean the Village Sign by Johnson’s Pond as part of the “Clean for the Queen” initiative in March.

Sign is believed to belong to them and Council have no objection to the work being carried out. RESOLVED that CLERK contact the WI thanking them for this proposal, and suggesting that they contact ESCC, believed to be the owners of the land, to make them aware of the proposal; also that the group investigate if their insurance cover extends to this area of work.

6. TO CONSIDER URGENT ITEMS ON BEHALF OF OTHER COMMITTEES

None.

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.

See items 5c) ii and 5c)v regarding issues raised via email by Parishioners.

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8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

- 8th March 2016 at 19:30 in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

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

The following Highways issues were reported/updated.

- White van that has been a long term resident of the Village Centre. Clerk reported that both he and PcsO had submitted reports, and requests that this be removed. A recent check disclosed that both Tax and Mot have expired but unfortunately DVLA consent is required before vehicle can be removed by Wealden DC. PcsO has submitted further request to DVLA requesting that consent be granted.
- Accidents have been reported as occurring at the Castle Hill junction during recent icy conditions. No reports have been submitted to Sussex Police to regarding any so the assumption that no injuries have occurred which would have needed reporting to them.
- Clerk had reported street light out at the end of Church Path, this has now been repaired.
- Clerk is to contact ESCC Lighting team again to request change made to timing of the new light in the Village Hall car park to avoid "light spill" affecting adjacent property.
- Clerk to investigate if large pothole on the B2100 travelling toward Wadhurst near Mark Cross Inn has been reported.
- Clerk to ask Tony Moaby for quote to tidy and cut back roadside footpath in Mark Cross from Church northward.
- Cllr. Kitchenham reported that he was standing down as leader of the Parish Speedwatch team. Support from volunteers willing to stand by the roadside in all weathers, and occasionally face abuse from motorists, had diminished. He was also frustrated at the lack of "higher level" Police support although at local level this had been good.
- Cllr. Curtis reported that East Sussex Fire and Rescue are involved in the launch of a new road safety initiative, details to be announced shortly.
- Clerk to chase WDC again re tree work in St Denys' Churchyard.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:15

10. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Confirmed as a true record at the 8th March 2016 meeting of this Committee

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