

# ROOTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND BURIAL COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT 19:30 ON TUESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2013 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

### COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas (Chairman)      Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson      Cllr. L. Pike  
Cllr. N. Bolton                      Cllr. A. Watson  
Cllr. N. Wickenden

**ALSO ATTENDING.** Four members of the Allotment Association and Cllr. J. Kitchenham as a member of the public.

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

The Parish Clerk was absent due to holiday and Cllr. Bolton took the minutes of the meeting. An apology was received and accepted on behalf of Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chair).

#### 2. TO CONSIDER APPOINTING CLLR. D. HILES AND CLLR. T. GILBERT TO THIS COMMITTEE.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr. Gilbert be appointed to this Committee. It was RESOLVED that Cllr. Hiles would not be appointed to the Committee in his absence and that an item be added to the agenda of the next meeting of this committee to again consider his request.

#### 3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS.

Cllr. Pike declared an interest in respect of item 8vii as he occasionally assists this contractor.

#### 4. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2013 AS A TRUE RECORD.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of this meeting, copies of which have previously been circulated to the all the Council members, be confirmed as a true record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

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

Numbers relate to agenda of 11<sup>th</sup> June meeting.

**7 ii.** The steel ring for the roundabout has been manufactured and collected by the Council Chairman. It is expected that the ring will be fitted by the end of August 2013.

**7 v.** "Be aware of livestock in field" signs now installed in Recreation Ground.

**9 ii.** Lower field of Cemetery now "topped", quote requested from Tony Moaby for rabbit proof fencing for the extension area identified as a first step toward bringing this into use.

**9 iii** Awaiting response from insurers regarding liability and recommendations for the issue of H & S compliance by gravedigger engaged by funeral director.

#### TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MATTERS

#### 6. ALLOTMENT ISSUES

##### i. Update regarding signing of agreement between Allotment Association and Council.

The formal business of the Meeting was suspended to allow Mr. R. Chesterton, Chairman of the Allotment Association, to report the following to those present:-

- Only a half plot remains vacant out of 20.
- Only 5 allotment holders live outside the Parish, 4 of these have family connections in the Parish thus giving them priority.
- The 15 year old rabbit fence was no longer fit for purpose. The rabbits can jump over 2' 6" and the grass surrounding the fence is around 2' high.
- The Committee chairman asked for details from Mr. Chesterton of the rent reduction request sent to the Clerk on July 30<sup>th</sup> via email. He explained that, if demand increased the Association would want to consider expanding the rabbit proof enclosure to accommodate more plots. Quotations had been obtained for maintaining the grass and hedge outside the allotments which would cost less than the proposed rent increase to cover.

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- Mr. Mellor, Association Treasurer, raised concerns regarding public liability insurance as there is a right of way across the allotment to a stable. Members of the Recreation and Burial Committee were invited to visit the allotments and an invitation was given to attend the BBQ to be held lunchtime on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September.

The formal business of the meeting recommenced and the Committee considered the comments. Cllr. Pike, who is appointed as Parish Council representative to the landowners and Allotment Association, commented that the landowners had committed to cutting the grass once or twice a month at the original meeting held to discuss increasing the rent. RESOLVED CLERK to organise an urgent meeting of the Committee Chairman, Cllr. Pike and the Association's committee to discuss their wishes before arranging a further meeting with the landowners.

## 7. GENERAL RECREATION AND BURIAL ISSUES, AND OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS

### i. Outside event issues.

- a) **Letter to regular hirers of council land to remind them that they must make a formal request to hire for every event and letter to include the new Application Form and Risk Matrix.**

It was RESOLVED that CLERK would undertake this.

- b) **Agreement of scale of public liability insurance to be applied by Parish Clerk in his risk assessment of hiring requests.**

It was RESOLVED that the Committee Chairman, Cllr. Pike and Cllr. Harris would meet to consider this and report their recommendations at the August Council meeting CLERK to add to agenda.

### ii. Amenity Land issues

- a) **Consideration of placing a bench in the amenity land to enjoy the exceptional view of St Denys Church.**

It was RESOLVED that if a memorial bench was offered to the Parish it should be located in the Amenity Land.

- b) **Consideration of placing a Restrictive Covenant to protect against building development.**

RESOLVED CLERK to investigate cost of Council's solicitor drawing up of this legal document to protect against building development on the Amenity Land.

### iii. Chant Lane. Information regarding insurance cover for proposed work and decision regarding further action.

RESOLVED to get a quote from Coppards to supply labour and plant for the work required with Council providing road planings "off the road", unless Coppards can get these at a better price. CLERK to action.

### iv. Litter picking. Review of duties within the Recreation Ground and hourly rate.

RESOLVED that Chair of this Committee and the Highways Committee discuss this and present their recommendations to the August Parish Council meeting, CLERK to add to agenda.

## 8. RECREATION GROUND.

### i. Issues and actions arising from monthly safety inspections of Recreation Ground and Play Area.

Latest inspection for Play area was July 21<sup>st</sup>, roundabout noted as awaiting fitting of metal surround. This has now been obtained and this will be fitted by the end of August.

Latest inspection for Recreation Ground showed no items causing H & S concerns but noted that litter along the bowls club hedge had not been collected and raised concern that a bollard had been removed to allow access to the pitch for school sports event even though they hold a

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key to the barrier. RESOLVED CLERK write to Head Teacher expressing our deep concerns at this action which it is believed may have enabled thieves to gain access prior to the break in at the Sports Club.

**ii. Update and decision on any further action required in respect of recent diesel spill.**

At the school leaver's event held on the Recreation Ground on the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> July the vehicle collecting the bouncy castle split its diesel tank when exiting the pitch via the barrier. Around 60L of diesel spilt onto the car park surface, unfortunately the Council were not made aware of this incident until Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July. The following actions were taken subsequently:-

- On the advice of WDC Clerk informed Environment Agency who have logged details of the incident.
- Council insurers sent specialist company to mop up as much as possible of remaining diesel on surface of car park and scatter absorbent material. Absorbent pads were placed in the drain channel to soak up diesel, none of which appeared to have made its way down the drain at the bottom SW corner of the recreation ground where there is a drain outlet.
- Committee Chairman held site meeting with Loss Adjuster and quotes have been obtained from Coppards and Hailsham Roadways for removal and safe disposal of contaminated tarmac, resurfacing and re lining.
- Committee Chairman is progressing claim with insurance brokers to gain approval to proceed with repair work.

RESOLVED to await approval of insurers, Committee Chairman has requested that Coppards schedule work for the week prior to the return of the Schools.

**iii. Quote to improve security of the two lockable barriers in light of the recent break in.**

Cricket Club have used Culverden Engineering, based near Millbrook Garden Centre, to improve security of their storage shed. Clerk has requested a written quote from them to straighten the padlock brackets on both barriers and fit protective shrouds to hinder attempts to cut off padlocks – verbal quote of around £250 given. Key for the temporary padlock is in the clubhouse, copies held by the Sports Club should we wish to fit a more durable replacement in the interim.

RESOLVED CLERK to arrange work to repair and improve security of the padlocks if it is confirmed that the quoted figure of £250 is for both barriers.

**iv. Action regarding unauthorised removal of pitch side post to access the pitch for an event. Concreting of pitch side posts to improve security.**

See item 8i for action regarding unauthorised removal of post. RESOLVED to have 3" rebars either side of posts to allow easy replacement if required. CLERK to seek quote from Tony Moaby for fitting these to all posts bordering the car park to include replacing any posts identified as rotten. Cllr. Pike did not vote on this item.

**v. Decision regarding preferred item of playground equipment to install in the Play Area.**

Once decision reached on preferred item the Rotherfield Trust need to be approached for funding - £3K allocated in reserves for this. Branch overhanging proposed location needs trimming back. Committee Chairman and Clerk have been involved in site meetings with representatives of Monster Play, Sovereign, Wicksteed Leisure and Sutcliffe. Quotes have been received for supplying and installing an item of playground equipment suitable for children in the 8 -14 age range to enable challenging climbing and social play. Committee chairman presented details of the quotations and a sketch plan prepared by him showing location of proposed equipment and relocation of the see-saw.

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RESOLVED CLERK to obtain confirmation from each supplier of the projected “realistic” lifespan of the equipment and maintenance regime. Evidence to be sought from them of suitability of their recommendations for children aged 12-14. Quotations to be circulated to all Councillors.

Cllr. Pike suggested removal of all the banking along the Bowls Club hedge be considered when planning the new entrance to the Club and the playground works.

**vi. Quote for refurbishment of “1200” commemorative plaque in path by flagpole.**

David Peacock has quoted £22 plus Vat for this to wire brush off and sign write lettering in black. RESOLVED quote accepted, CLERK to authorise work.

**vii. Quote for installation of 5 new bins in the Recreation Ground and removal of existing bins, installation of bin by Mark Cross bus shelter and new shelter at Millennium Green bus stop.**

Tony Moaby has quoted £200 to install the seven bins using threaded rod set in concrete to secure. RESOLVED to accept this quote, CLERK to action. Cllr. Pike did not vote on this item.

## 9. ST DENYS’ BURIAL GROUND

**i. Issues and actions arising from safety inspections.**

Most recent inspection was 27<sup>th</sup> June when no issues were noted. Clerk has identified fifteen graves that require filling and suggests that the soil arising from removal of the bank in the Play Area is used for this subject to suitability. Committee Chairman is to discuss with Clerk whether any of the graves require urgent attention.

**ii. Report and decision on further action arising from recent site meeting at St Denys’ to discuss maintenance of War Graves**

Cllr. Thomas, Clerk, Brian Harman (Hon. Sec. of Royal British Legion Branch), Bill Booth (Chairman of Branch) and Tony Sargeson (Area Supervisor of Commonwealth War Graves Commission) met recently to discuss the nine war graves. RBL wish to restore these to good condition in commemoration of Centenary of the start of the Great War in 2014. CWGC advise that preferred method of maintaining surface of War Graves in public burial grounds is to lay to grass and mow, with possible addition of spring bulbs, as this will ensure ease of continuing maintenance. The memorials are subject to regular inspection and maintenance by the CWGC, one of the graves (a personal family memorial – J H Harvey 608 - rather than the standard design) has recently been laid flat by unknown persons. CWGC will repair.

RBL expressed concern at difficulty of accessing the War Graves each year on Remembrance Day due to the long grass on path access which may create a hazard. The grass also obscures the poppy crosses which they install each year. As last cut scheduled in Burial Ground is final week of September RESOLVED to ask contractor to do an additional cut of the War Graves only and access path during the first week of November each year.

## 10. ROTHERFIELD PARISH CEMETERY

**i. Issues and actions arising from safety inspections, provision of new padlock for side gate.**

Most recent inspection dated 25<sup>th</sup> July. Replacement of tap and cutting of lower field noted as issues which have now been addressed. Mole activity noted alongside boundary hedge to car park. RESOLVED CLERK to request another visit from the mole catcher. Clerk has reported that padlock on gate at bottom of parking area has been changed and he no longer has a key, RESOLVED CLERK to obtain a new robust padlock and sufficient additional keys for authorised keyholders. CLERK to chase up contractors as warning sign in lane is still obscured and that hedge has not been cut to specification.

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## ii. Decision regarding provision of bin for waste collection now the WDC contract has ended.

Bin no longer emptied by Wealden, although it is still in situ. Clerk removed some of the overflowing waste recently; persons unknown have disposed of the rest. Cost of contract to empty, based on information obtained earlier in the year from Waste 365, would be £5.65 per collection for a 240L bin, £6.25 for a 360L bin (plus Vat). Fortnightly collections should be sufficient if the larger size is used. RESOLVED CLERK to arrange 360L bin with fortnightly collections to commence immediately, contract for one year.

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

- Licence now received from ESCC for bus shelter in Station Road, Clerk will liaise with local contractor regarding installation on return from holiday.
- Cllrs. Thomas and Wickenden visited affordable housing site and met with site manager. He advised that bases for the bus shelters were scheduled for installation w/c 19<sup>th</sup> August and that two shelters had been ordered from the local supplier.
- Cllr. Pike expressed concern at lack of progress in completing the tarmac work on Fp31a by the King's Arms. Cllr. Thomas to email Coppards cc Cllr. Clibbens.
- Cllr. Pike expressed concerns over quality of work being undertaken by grass cutting contractors. Sections omitted outside the Recreation Ground to the Bowls Club steps, hedge by Village Hall North Street entrance and verge by Millennium Green entrance. CLERK to check if work has been done and charged, also arrange meeting with Contractors, Recreation and Burial Committee Chairman and Clerk.
- Cllr. Pike has received many complaints regarding lack of waste collection across the Parish. CLERK to write to WDC, cc to Cllrs. Merriman and Standley and Charles Hendry MP to point out that Kier were in breach of contract between WDC and taxpayers, and Kier to WDC.
- Cllr. Gilbert reported car legally parked opposite the Institute – complaints received as it is causing a nuisance. CLERK to ask PcsO to speak with owner, also suggest to ESCC that double yellow lines be extended to Kennedy Brothers to prevent vehicles parked impeding entry to North Street.
- Cllr. Watson expressed the view that the cutting of the grass verges in Sheriff's Lane was a waste of public money. She thanked the Chairman for the very good Parish Council Newsletter which has recently been sent to all Parish households.
- Cllr. Wickenden reported that a property in Sheriff's Land had gates that were left open outwards over the grass verge and he considered that this was a hazard. CLERK to investigate and ask ESCC to check safety.
- Cllr. Halse Adamson reported that the tables in the Parish Council room had been left in a sticky condition and had required cleaning prior to the meeting, Cllr. Kitchenham to please mention this at the next Hall meeting.
- Cllr. Kitchenham had made a brief tour of the houses in the new development. Work on the houses is now complete but cannot be occupied until the bus shelters and other highways work is finished. He is to investigate the purpose of the 3 weeks of roadworks advertised on the board on the Town Row triangle.

## 12. TO RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE.

- 19:30 Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

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

## 13. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

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Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date

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