

# ROTHERFIELD 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 8<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2014 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

### PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas (Chairman)	Cllr. T. Gilbert	Cllr. J. Kitchenham
Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chairman)	Cllr. P. Halse-Adamson	Cllr. L. Pike
Cllr. Miss N. Bolton	Cllr. D. Hiles	Cllr. N. Wickenden

### ABSENT

None.

**ALSO ATTENDING.** The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe. No members of the public attended.

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

None.

#### 2. TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF CLLR. PHILIP DIXON TO THIS COMMITTEE

It was RESOLVED that Cllr. Dixon be appointed to this Committee and he joined the meeting at this point. CLERK to update and circulate contact details to Councillors and forward Cllr. Dixon's completed Register of Member's Interests form to WDC.

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

– Cllr. Pike declared an interest in respect of items 8 iii), 10 iv) and 11 i) as he occasionally assists this contractor.

– Cllr. Dixon declared an interest in respect of item 6 i) as his wife is an allotment holder.

#### 4. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2014 AS A TRUE RECORD.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of this meeting, copies of which have previously been circulated to 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 refer to agenda of February 11<sup>th</sup> meeting:-

**6 i)** Grant cheque has been sent to the Allotment Society who thank the Council, and in particular the Chair of this Committee, for their support. Our allotments will be open as part of the Rotherfield Open Gardens Day on behalf of the church roof fund on 20th July. They will review the agreement between the Council and the Association.

**7 viii)** Bench has been ordered, Clerk visited Rec. yesterday with donor of bench and position by the NW corner near the play area has been agreed.

**8 ii)** Clerk has made some enquiries of Crowborough TC regarding their skate parks and costs. Proposal has been mentioned in the Council's monthly page in the Magazine, comments and suggestions have been invited.

**8 v)** Site meeting to be arranged regarding works proposed to amend entrance to Bowls Club.

**8 vi)** Cllr. Pike is to progress with the wood strip for the door to the storage area under the Pre School to prevent water ingress.

#### TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS REGARDING THE FOLLOWING MATTERS

##### 6. ALLOTMENT ISSUES

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

Agreement sent to Secretary of the Society along with our grant cheque. Have asked that they sign and return or clarify their outstanding issues with the proposed agreement. CLERK to monitor and chase for completion of this long outstanding matter.

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## 7. GENERAL RECREATION AND BURIAL ISSUES

### i. **Information and further action regarding protection for the status of Town Row Green.**

Recently National press articles have highlighted concerns regarding protection offered to land designated as a "Village Green". This area of land is not registered as a Green and was entered on to the register of Common Land, maintained by ESCC, in 1967. Clerk outlined history of site and decision taken by the Parish Council in 2012 not to attempt to register the land in its name based on advice received from Solicitor and SLCC Legal advisers. RESOLVED to take no further action, Council may act as though "owners" using powers in the 2006 Commons Act should the need ever arise to take action to protect the site, preserve interests of the community and those with Commoners Rights over the land.

### ii. **Offer from Sussex Wildlife Trust for free Black Poplar trees and suitable sites for planting.**

Interest registered with the SWT, details circulated to Councillors and details of potential sites requested so that trees may be planted in November. RESOLVED to request trees for planting on a suitable site identified at Town Row, CLERK to liaise with SWT regarding this offer; also send details to the Powdermill Trust and owners of Hornshurst Woods.

### iii. **Agreement of process for deciding "Eligible Parishioner" criteria for burial fees in cases not covered by the guidelines in the published "Fees and Charges" document effective 1st April 2014.**

Current burial ground guidelines state "The decision to grant "Eligible Parishioner" standing for the Parish Cemetery is at the absolute discretion of the Parish Council". RESOLVED that cases such as this may be decided by any two of the Clerk, Chair or Vice Chair of this Committee or Chair of Vice Chair of the Council.

### iv. **Quote from KPS Contractors for grave digging work.**

RESOLVED to accept quote for this work, costs will be passed on to Funeral Directors. CLERK to advise and investigate if an administration fee is added by other local councils who use the services of this contractor. If this is in the region of 15% Parish Council will implement, otherwise add agenda item to April Council meeting to discuss and agree a suitable fee.

## 8. RECREATION GROUND AND CAR PARK.

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

Last inspection of Play Area was March 17<sup>th</sup> – no issues of concern were noted.

Last inspection of Play Area was February 26<sup>th</sup> – no issues of concern were noted. Committee Chairman advised that a more recent Rec. inspection had taken place with no issues noted but due to his holiday absence from the March Council meeting it is yet to be submitted. Various maintenance and improvement issues noted at the February inspection have either been dealt with or will be dealt with shortly.

Wicksteed have acknowledged request for accompanied annual inspection with risk assessment, they advise that they will contact during the week prior to visit and intend that this will be no later than May 10<sup>th</sup>.

### ii. **Concerns raised regarding litter in the Recreation Ground.**

Litter Picker has raised concerns regarding litter around the Scout Hut and on the pitches after matches have been played. Clerk has already raised the issue with the Scout Hut and will contact Sports Club to ask that they "litter pick" playing surfaces and surround after matches.

### iii. **Request from Village Hall to consider surfacing of the path alongside the southern boundary of Village Hall and information regarding cost and options for such work.**

This matter has been raised in the past by the Village Hall. Coppards have visited site and provided quotes for extending path from existing surfaced area to the car park with a dropped kerb at this point and two further dropped kerbs on the "island" in the car park; also quoted for the option of continuing the pitch side path beneath the car park bank thus completing a full circuit. Costs for these options would be £3250 and £8280 (plus Vat) respectively. It was

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noted that these would reduce the parking available by three spaces, also it was not clear what safety benefits would be gained as pedestrians would still need to cross the parking area to reach the Pre School. Neither scheme has been included in the budget for 2014/15, CLERK to contact Pre School to establish if they have any particular safety issues with parents and children in the car park at “school run” times, also to investigate if there is space for path alongside the hedge as this would eliminate the need for drop kerbs and subsequent loss of parking spaces.

**iv. Diesel Spill on car park. Progress update regarding claim and further action that may be required.**

Solicitor has spoken with SSL (Civil Engineers engaged by insurers of van) to seek precise requirements regarding the core samples they seek; SSL have been advised that the area claimed for is based in information from the loss adjusters who visited in the aftermath of the incident. As yet no admission of liability has been made by the insurers of the vehicle involved. RESOLVED to write to Solicitors stating that third parties insurers should admit liability; also that they should be responsible for obtaining the core sample information that they seek. Solicitors advise that third party correspondence regarding the legal aspects of the claim should be directed to them; correspondence regarding Council’s actions should be directed to the Council to be dealt with after the claim has been concluded. CLERK to draft letter to Solicitors for review/comment by Chairs and Vice Chairs of this Committee and the Council, also Cllr. Hiles who has offered to assist.

**v. Approval by the Council for the Sports Club’s spring maintenance programme for the playing surfaces; Request for financial support from the Council toward this work.**

Council have paid Grants of £1000 in 2012 and £1500 in £2013 toward this annual work. RESOLVED to agree work proposed work by the Sport’s Club and grant £2K from this year’s grant budget toward the 2014 work proposed to improve the drainage on the lower pitch which has been largely unusable during the recent wet winter. This conditional on Terran membrane being used to surround the French drains proposed and not just used on the top surface. CLERK to advise Club and arrange for cheque issue at April meeting; Club to be advised that they should not rely on Council funding be available in future years and thanked for the high standard to which the pitch is maintained.

**vi. Update and any further action required in respect of installation of new item of play equipment.**

Work due to start on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> anticipated duration 4 days. Clerk has advised Schools and other interested parties of this and will liaise with contractors on Friday who will be on site from 0800; they believe they will be able to remove the bollards for access via “1200” path and they may work at the weekend. Cllr. Harris has volunteered to be the point of contact for the contractors whilst they are on site, CLERK to pass details to them. It is hoped that a “photo shoot” may be organised with a representative of Rotherfield Trust once equipment is installed to acknowledge their kind support for this work.

## **9. ST DENYS’ BURIAL GROUND**

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

Last inspection of Burial Ground was March 27<sup>th</sup> – no issues of concern were noted; two holes have appeared in the boundary hedge with Court Meadow Green are being dealt with by Tony Moaby.

**ii. Request for scattering of ashes in the Old Burial Ground as previously permitted for this family in 1973.**

A family with Parish connections have requested permission for small ceremony for this may be organised at the end of May to scatter the ashes of their late mother. Their father’s ashes were scattered here in 1973. RESOLVED to permit this without charge, suggestion to be made that they may wish to make a donation to a Parish Charity. CLERK to contact family to obtain details for our records and proposed date/time so that contractors may be advised.

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## 10. ROTHERFIELD PARISH CEMETERY

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

Last inspection of Cemetery was February 26th – no issues of concern were noted. Committee Chairman advised that a more recent inspection had taken place with no issues noted but due to his holiday absence from the March Council meeting it is yet to be submitted.

Tony Moaby has completed most of the boundary work associated with the commissioning of the lower field. Council Chairman has suggested a possible source of a cover to house the waste bin, CLERK to follow up and obtain details of cost and style for consideration at a future meeting.

### ii. Decision regarding “sub soiling” of unused section to improve drainage and work to properly identify the route of water main across this area.

Before “sub soiling” can be undertaken the course of the water main must be established and marked. CLERK to investigate information already held and obtain quotes for relaying existing main with users’ permission as it is considered that this may be cheaper and more effective than trying to trace current main.

### iii. Quotes for refurbishment and extension of paths within the Cemetery.

Coppards have provided quotes for the following works:-

- Resurface current paths
- Extend current path to Memorial Wall.
- Extend current path to bottom of lower field.

Width requirement for resurfacing is to be investigated before decision regarding this work, CLERK to carry forward to next meeting of this committee.

### iv. Revised quote for utilising spoil in lower field to infill along bottom hedge line, grading of surface in North East Corner and drainage ditch by North West boundary of lower field.

Tony Moaby has provided quote for this £300 for this work and a further £140 for refiling and levelling four graves and re seeding. RESOLVED to accept quote, CLERK to action.

## 11. TO CONSIDER URGENT ITEMS ON BEHALF OF OTHER COMMITTEES

### i. Quote for installation of direction sign on corner by the Stores.

Coppards quote £380 for installation against ESCC quote of £460.57 (both ex vat), sign and post are costed at £175. RESOLVED to order sign from ESCC and accept quote from Coppards for installation.

### ii. Information regarding forthcoming works property renovation work in Village which will impact on pedestrians and motorists; request for signage suggesting Church Path as an alternative route for pedestrians.

Clerk reported that work to 6 and 6a will require scaffold on the High Street side of the property. Currently ESCC Highways are liaising with the contractors regarding this. Present plan is for 3 way traffic lights to permit safe erection/removal of the scaffolding. There would then be restricted pavement width under the scaffolding and suspension of the three parking spaces opposite whilst the work is in progress, estimated duration is four months. It is understood that the pavement will still be passable but the Church Path (Rotherfield fp22c) will be signed as an alternative route for pedestrians particularly those with buggies. The gates at each end of the path will be removed and stored by the contractors whilst this is the case so that access is less restricted. Nearby residents have received letters advising them of the work, start date to be 21<sup>st</sup> April. RESOLVED CLERK to raise following concerns with ESCC regarding removal of gates:-

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- Clarification sought as to where they are to be stored; preference is for this to be in the property concerned or in the Community Storage area under the Pre School.
- Removal of gate at Church Road end would allow children to run out directly on to the busy road.
- Listed status of Church extends to curtilage; WDC need to be made aware of the temporary removal of the gates.

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

- 17<sup>th</sup> June at 19:30 in the Parish Council Room at Rotherfield Village Hall.

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

- Cllr. Dixon has volunteered to be the Parish Council representative on the "Rural Sounding Board" which is being operated by the Rural Services Network. This will involve occasional "on line" surveys from the Network to gauge views and information regarding rural communities. He has also been discussing proposals by the owners of Hornshurst Woods regarding liability insurance for public access to their land.
- Clerk on holiday next week, Chairman to be provided with agenda to publish/circulate to Councillors.
- Update received from Scouts re: plans for Scout Hut refurbishment, too late for this meeting but item will be added to agenda of the April Council meeting.
- Coppards advise that Chant Lane surfacing work should be undertaken in June at some point. CLERK to advise residents and Allotment Society.
- CLERK to raise concerns regarding advertising signs displayed on verge on approach to Village from Crowborough.
- CLERK to investigate hedge overgrowing Kings Arms – New Road path and contact owners to request that it is cut back.
- CLERK to request progress report in respect of tree considered to be a hazard to road users opposite the entrance to Jameah on Catt's Hill.
- CLERK to investigate reports of hole in fence allowing access to fields, bottom corner of lower football pitch.
- Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee are revising and updating guidelines of use of Parish land for events, CLERK to forward copies of examples from other Councils and add agenda item for April Council meeting.
- Issues again raised regarding items displayed outside a village shop. Council Chairman has discussed this with business involved. It is considered that if any additional action was needed it would have to be applied equally to all businesses displaying wares and signs on the pavement and this may be at odds with our desire to support and encourage local enterprise.

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

## 14. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

**Confirmed as a true record at the 17th June 2014 meeting of this Committee.**

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

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