



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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 21ST DECEMBER 2017 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. R. Harris (Chair)
Cllr. J. Cahan
Cllr. T. Gilbert

Cllr. A. Hardy
Cllr. D. Hiles
Cllr. J. Kitchenham

Cllr. A. Martin
Cllr. J. Richardson
Cllr. G. Watson-Smith
Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

T. Thorpe, Clerk. Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC) and
Mr. A. Fermor regarding item 3i on the agenda

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s 85).

Apologies were submitted by Cllr. L. Henrick, Cllr. N. Glynn and Cllr. G. Farmer.

It was **RESOLVED** that these apologies be accepted.

b) Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda, and updates to members' register of interests.

None declared. The Chair reminded the Councillors that if they became aware of a disclosable interest at any point in the meeting they should declare it.

c) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr Standley (ESCC) - key points of report.

- County finances continue to be "challenged", although the recent provisional Local Government Settlement proposes an increase in the general council tax referendum limit from 1.99 per cent to 2.99 per cent for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- Opinions are being sought by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner regarding support for an increase in the Policing element of the precept to allow further resources to be deployed.
- Adult Social Care and Children's Services are already facing a £2.3m overspend this year, there is some contingency available but tough choices will need to be made to balance the budget.
- In response to a question from Cllr. Hardy regarding the "Get A Grip" campaign targeted at reducing school absences Cllr. Standley reported that there had been a reduction in the number of "signed off" absences. Acknowledged that there had been some negative response to the campaign; the second phase of the strategy will take concerns raised at phase 1 into account.

Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC) - key points of report.

- Central Government expects the County Council to do the same things with a reduced budget; Central Government needs to decide what it wishes the priorities to be.
- Is in discussion with a Mark Cross resident in response to issues raised by them regarding the positioning of a new warning sign relating to the forthcoming enforceable

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ban on vehicles over 10m passing through Rotherfield Village. Indications are that an acceptable solution may have been found to this issue by East Sussex Highways.

Cllr. Cahan arrived at this point in the meeting.

Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC) - key points of report.

- The District Council element of the Council Tax is to increase by £5 based on the "Band D" rate.
- Council is seeking ways of increasing their income. The Crematorium at Horam will generate earnings. In addition, Council are in the final stages of acquiring the Vicarage Fields Shopping Centre at Hailsham which will generate a reasonable rate of return on the funds utilised. It will also present opportunities for regeneration and improvement of the area.

d) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 7th, 21st and 30th November 2017 for approval as a true record.

It was **RESOLVED** that these minutes be adopted and signed as a true record, and they were signed by the Chair.

e) Update regarding matters arising & action items from previous meetings.

November Council meeting.

Consider quote submitted by East Sussex Highways for UKPN to connect the recently re-installed lamp column 34 in Catt's Hill.

Carried forward to the agenda of the 9th January meeting of the Highways Lighting and Transport Committee meeting.

2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT END OF NOVEMBER 2017, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND APPROVE PAYMENTS.

i. Budget, other financial reports and actions arising.

Copies of financial reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. Clerk reviewed budget report, total Council expenditure is within budget. Clerk highlighted an error in allocating the Christmas Light costs and will correct this in time for the January meeting, **CLERK** to note. It was **RESOLVED** that the financial reports be accepted.

ii. Approval of payments.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments be authorised and the respective cheques signed:

Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Authorisation	Transaction Detail
Jemma Cahan	802437	£182.00	Financial regs. 4.1	Printing cost - Newman's – for parking poster competition.
NEST Pension Contribution	DD	£33.97		November pension contribution
Trevor Thorpe	802438	£1,545.10		December salary
H M R C	802439	£494.11		December Tax & NI
Trevor Thorpe	802440	£47.26		Expenses & reimbursements
L. Henrick	802441	£182.00	Financial Reg. 4.1	Printing cost - Newman's – parking maildrop.
KPS Contractors Ltd	802442	£138.00		Grave digging cost L10
Wealden District Council	802443	£288.00		Dog bins emptying
Rotherfield Village Hall	802444	£51.40		December room hire
Ultralite Ltd	802445	£4,200.00	2f) 12 Sep. HL&T	Supply and Install Xmas lights
T.C. Woodgate	802446	£1,656.00	Financial regs. 4.1	Tree works various
ALCC	802447	£30.00		Annual Sub

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SLCC	802448	£185.00		Sub for Clerk
Glasdon U.K. Ltd	802449	£464.48	Financial regs. 4.1	Grit bins purchased
Phil Ireland	802450	£207.90		Road sweeping & litter picking
A. Martin	802451	£259.75	Financial regs. 4.1	Various works for Council
The Catt's Inn	802452	£100.00	Chairman's allowance	Event for Councillors
Total		£10,064.97		

No payments to the Council have been received since the November meeting.

3. TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE AS REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.

i. Rotherfield Surgery – Updates on situation and details of recent meetings.

Key points are summarised below :-

- a) Draft Terms of reference for the Parish Council Surgery Working Group (PCSWG), draft minutes of the recent PCSWG meeting and that of the Surgery Steering Committee had been circulated to the Councillors prior to this meeting. Cllr. Harris reported that the PCSWG had held its inaugural meeting on the 12th December and had agreed its term of reference. Group currently consists of Cllrs. Harris, Henrick, Kitchenham, Farmer, Glynn and Richardson, together with Parishioners Sascha Evans (Trustee, Rotherfield St. Martin) and Vicky Cheeseman (Charity Manager, Rotherfield St. Martin.)
- b) The Steering Group, consisting of Doctors from the practice, the Practice Manager, Cllr. L. Henrick and Andrew Fermor (Friends of Rotherfield and Brook Surgery) met on the 15th December. Discussions had been held by the Practice with a local health trust regarding it taking over both Surgeries operated by the Practice, but with no commitment from the Trust regarding Rotherfield Surgery being retained. This option had now been discounted.
- c) This meeting also discussed the Parish Council's proposal to purchase the Rotherfield Surgery premises utilising a loan from the Public Works Loan Board; purchase conditional on the Practice taking a lease back (period to be determined) on the Surgery to allow a GP service to continue in Rotherfield Village. Loan will require submission of an application via the Surrey and Sussex Association of Local Councils (SSALC), accompanied by a business case, evidence that costs, risks and affordability had been investigated and that the Parishioners had been consulted. Loan may be up to £500K but could be reduced if funds could be attracted from the community and other sources such as the Rotherfield Trust, the High Weald Lewes and Havens Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Friends of the Surgery.
- d) A tight time scale is involved due to the possible impact on the Council's Precept requirement for 2018/19, for which the formal documentation must be in the hands of Wealden District Council no later than Wednesday February 21st. The precept must be agreed by Full Council; this may require rescheduling of the February Council meeting, currently to be held on Thursday 22nd.
- e) Cllr. Standley reported that he had attended a meeting with Cllr. Stogden (ESCC Councillor for Crowborough) and Dr. Davies of the Practice regarding the closure of Rotherfield Surgery and its impact to the services to Crowborough residents provided by the Brook Surgery. Cllr. Standley and Nus Ghani MP are meeting with the CCG in the New Year to discuss various health topics and the Surgery issue will be included.
- f) Cllr. Standley considers that the key challenge to the Practice is in attracting new GPs (possibly salaried rather than Partner) to replace the Doctors who are approaching retirement, and that purchasing the Rotherfield Surgery building may not be the answer to the problem.
- g) Chair asked Cllrs. Standley and Dixon if they supported the Parish Council in its efforts to retain a GP presence in the heart of the village. Both are fully supportive of the efforts to retain such a presence but are uncertain that purchasing the premises is the solution to the issue.
- h) Rotherfield Surgery has very recently been valued on behalf of the practice and it is recommended that the Parish Council arrange their own valuation.

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It was **RESOLVED** that :-

1. The Terms of Reference for the Parish Council Surgery Working Group be approved and adopted by the Parish Council.
2. **CLERK** to write to the various funding sources identified in 3i) f above to seek their support: **COUNCILLORS** to pass on details of other suggested sources to be contacted.
3. The working group be authorised to utilise the £1K in the Council's Legal Fees budget if needed. Clerk reminded Councillors that no funds have so far been allocated under this category for the 2018/19 budget.

ii. **Consider approval and completion of application to open a bank account with Unity Trust Bank, with signatories as per existing Santander accounts, and to utilise on line payment methods.**

Details of the Bank and other information regarding their services to Council's may be viewed on their website.

RESOLVED the following:-

- a) **CLERK** to proceed with submission of an application for opening an account with Unity Trust Bank, to include on line banking and payments.
- b) Parish Clerk, and Cllrs. Harris, Henrick, Martin, Gilbert and Wickenden to be initial signatories to the account.
- c) Any three of the above be authorised to set up and authorise payments, undertake other transactions and authorise matters relating to the account.

iii. **Arrangements during Clerk's forthcoming holiday absence.**

Due to holiday 27th – 29th December and 2nd – 4th January the following arrangements will apply: -

- HL&T meeting agenda for 9th January meeting will need publishing no later than 4th January, draft agenda and instructions for publishing have been passed to the HL&T Chair/Vice.
- P & B meeting scheduled for 2nd January. **RESOLVED** that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, together with Cllr. Hardy, review and agree recommendations for submission to Wealden District Council in respect of any applications received for this meeting under their delegated powers contained in that Committee's Terms of Reference. **CLERK** to advise that the advertised meeting will not be held.
- Clerk to arrange for email redirection and social media login information to be provided for use if needed.

iv. **Report and recommendations relating to Pre-School building issues.**

There are issues with damp penetrating into the storage area beneath the building. This has been inspected by Councillors and the opinion is that this is due to defects with the original build rather than a maintenance issue. Cllr. Martin is investigating the various leases and agreements relating to the build and is also trying to establish who dealt with the "sign off" formalities before hand over to the occupiers. Clerk has contacted the ESCC surveyors, who inspected in the autumn, with the request that a further site visit be made and that a colleague with experience of building matters accompanies them.

v. **Agree responses to Wealden District Council regarding the following planning applications.**

- a) **WD/2017/2800/F** Oaklands, Hosmer's Field, Rotherfield, TN6 3JD
Single storey rear extension, entrance porch and loft conversion with dormers and small balcony.

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The meeting **RESOLVED** to recommend to Wealden District Council that this application by **APPROVED** for the following reasons: -
It will enhance the building.

- b) **WD/2017/2739/F** The Stables, Clackhams Lane, Jarvis Brook, Crowborough TN6 3RN
Replacement of outbuilding with annexe for ancillary accommodation.
The meeting **RESOLVED** to recommend to Wealden District Council that this application by **APPROVED** for the following reasons: -
It will improve the facilities of the building.
- c) **WD/2017/2798/F** Hill House, Steep Road, Crowborough, TN6 3RX
Proposed single storey rear extension to existing annexe.
The meeting **RESOLVED** to recommend to Wealden District Council that this application by **APPROVED** for the following reasons: -
It will improve the facilities of the building.
- d) **WD/2017/2365/FR** Moonstone Wood, Limekiln Wood, Boars Head Lane, Crowborough, TN6 3HF
Part retrospective application for all weather area (sand school) for winter turnout and exercise - 20m x 40m with 1.2m high post and rail fencing.
The meeting **RESOLVED** to recommend to Wealden District Council that this application by **APPROVED** for the following reasons: -
It will regularise the planning situation at this site.
- e) **Decision notices received from Wealden District Council**
- i. **WD/2017/0805/LB** Catts Cottage, High Street, Rotherfield, TN6 3LH
Partial rebuild of existing front elevation and associated internal works following vehicular impact, all to match existing.
 - ii. **WD/2017/1611/F** Land at the North of Laurel Tree Farm, Boars Head, TN6 3HE
Demolition of timber/glass structure and erection of a one bedroom bungalow
 - iii. **WD/2017/1787/FR** Mark Cross Inn, Wadhurst Road, Mark Cross, TN6 3NP
Retrospective application for fire reinstatement works to include enclosure of utility area and installation of mechanical air ventilation systems, and proposed construction of outdoor seating pavilions.
 - iv. **WD/2017/2107/F** The Pines, Eridge Road, Boars Head, TN6 3HD
Extensions to existing building to form 2 no. residential dwellings
 - v. **WD/2017/2440/F** 5 Brook Cottages, New Road, Rotherfield, TN6 3JT
Single storey front extension with two storey rear extension
 - vi. **WD/2017/2464/F** High Cross Hall, Station Road, Town Row, Rotherfield, TN6 3HR
New access with rotary parking.

These applications had all previously been recommended for approval by the Council's Planning and Building Committee, and all were approved by Wealden District Council.

4. NOTE ACTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES AT THEIR RECENT MEETINGS.

The following meetings have taken place since the November 30th, 2017 Council meeting and draft minutes have been circulated to all the Councillors.

- 5th December 2017 – Finance and General-Purpose Committee.
- 12th December 2017 – Planning and Building Committee.

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It was **RESOLVED** that the Council noted the acts and proceedings of the above meetings.

5. TO RECEIVE OTHER REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ARISING FROM THEM.

a) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- **Cllr. Hardy** – 7th December War Memorial Group meeting. An article is to appear in the forthcoming Parish Magazine regarding this project and inviting donations toward it. Other funding sources are being investigated and the Clerk has provided information to the Group to assist with their Tesco “Blue Token” campaign in the New Year.
- **Cllr. Wickenden** – Attended the recent “Parish Panel” meeting with WDC Planning Team at Hailsham. Reported that there appeared to be no WDC support for the major development proposal near Goldsmith Leisure Centre in Crowborough due to possible air quality impact on Ashdown Forest. Information regarding air quality issues is to be sought and featured at a forthcoming Planning Committee meeting.
- **Cllr. Gilbert** – attended the monthly Village Hall committee meeting at which it was reported that the recently purchased new microphones were working well. Means of attracting more lettings and income were being investigated along with upgrading the door lock to a keypad operated model.
- **Cllrs. Martin and Cahan**. They had visited local schools to present the parking campaign certificates. Maildrop regarding the parking issues in the Rotherfield and Mark Cross is to be undertaken shortly.

b) Clerk’s updates and issues.

- Wealden Clerks meeting at Heathfield. Key features.
 - Presentations to the meeting from WDC regarding the Local Plan, including Ashdown Forest air quality issues.
 - Presentation regarding the work of the WDC Streetscene Team of which all four members were present at the meeting.
 - General Data Protection Regulations and potential challenges/costs.
 - Wealden DC proposals for parking – was to be discussed at the WDC Cabinet last week but was withdrawn, Cllr. Standley may have information regarding this. Notes will be circulated when received.

Other matters:-

- Councillors please advise if issues remain with use of OneDrive and email addresses.
- Cllr. Photos for website – have these all now been submitted?

c) Items for next Parish Magazine column.

Cllr. Henrick has submitted Parish Council articles for the January edition.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- SLCC “Clerk” Magazine – November 2017.
- Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee – 15th November minutes. Next meeting is 10th January 20:00 in Buxted Reading Room.
- Spa Valley Railway – “Starter” magazine for Winter 2017/18.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

Inspected and signed by the Chair. The only issue identified was a slip hazard during icy conditions on the slope by the Pre-School; two Councillors had recently fallen here when inspecting the building. A grit bin has been purchased for this location and will be installed shortly.

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8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 2nd January Planning and Building Committee – subject to confirmation.
- 9th January Highways Lighting and Transport Committee.
- 23rd January Planning & Building Committee
- 25th January Monthly Council Meeting

All the above meetings are to be held in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall, starting at 19:30.

9. REPORT DETAILS OF ITEMS AND ISSUES NOTIFIED TO CLERK IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING FOR INVESTIGATION, FURTHER ACTION OR FOR FUTURE AGENDA.

- Clerk has been in contact with East Sussex Highways regarding concerns raised by Parishioners of the surface conditions on the B2100 from the Village to Jarvis Brook, and the quality of recent “patching” work near Palesgate Lane. Highways advise that resurfacing is scheduled for April 2018 from the New Road junction in the Village to the Western Road junction at Jarvis Brook, also that the Palesgate Lane works will be inspected in the New Year.
- Street sweeper has reported collapsed kerb and drain cover in Station Road near the old chapel. Clerk has reported this to East Sussex Highways.
- Due to the large number of contractor’s vehicles involved in connection with extensive works to a property in the Parish there has been grass verge damage. It is understood that the work has finished, **CLERK** to write to property owner requesting that he arranges repair work to the verge.
- **Cllr. Kitchenham** raised concerns regarding a conspicuous illuminated sign recently erected in the Parish. Clerk reported that Cllr. Farmer had already contacted him regarding this and had been requested to provide photos of the sign so that details may be forwarded to the Wealden District Council planning team for investigation.
- **Cllr. Wickenden** will undertake repair work to the surface damage to the verge at Town Row caused by contractor’s vehicle from the recent Catt’s Hill resurfacing work. Clerk reported that he had already passed on details of this area, and one near the B2100 crossroads at Mark Cross, with the request that they be repaired. Councillors expressed their appreciation that these patching works appeared to have been done to a good standard with the areas involved thoroughly “planed” to a good depth prior to reinstatement.

Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:00.

10. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

**Adopted as a true record and signed at the
25th January 2018 meeting of the Parish Council**

.....Chair.....Date