



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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL,
ALSO INCLUDING PLANNING COMMITTEE BUSINESS,
HELD ON TUESDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2017 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Hiles (Chair).	Cllr. N. Glynn	Cllr. A. Martin
Cllr. N. Wickenden (Vice Chair).	Cllr. J. Kitchenham	Cllr. G. Watson-Smith
Cllr. G. Farmer	Cllr. R. Harris	
Cllr. T. Gilbert	Cllr. L. Henrick	

ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Three members of the public, and two representatives of Rotherfield St Martin regarding item 2a)

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85)

Cllr. A. Hardy, Cllr. J. Cahan and Cllr. J. Richardson have submitted apologies for absence. It was **RESOLVED** that these apologies be accepted.

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

- i. Cllr. T. Gilbert declared a personal interest in item 2a) as both he and his daughter undertake work for the Surgery. Cllr. Gilbert also declared a personal interest in item 3c) as he is a near neighbour of the property.
- ii. Cllr. N. Wickenden declared a personal interest in item 3c) as the property is owned by a relative.
- iii. Cllr. R. Harris declared a personal interest in item 3g) as he lives opposite the property.

c) To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Building Committee held on 31st October 2017 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The meeting **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes as a true record and the Chair signed them.

2. TO CONSIDER INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE

AS REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.

a) Agree the Council's formal response, for submission to the High Weald Lewes Havens Clinical Commissioning Group, regarding the proposal for closure of Rotherfield Surgery. Also consider options for action and expenditure from the Parish Council to support the Surgery so as to avoid its closure.

It was agreed that this item would be dealt with after sections 3 and 4 of the Agenda had been completed. Cllr. Harris, (Council Chair), took over the Chair from Cllr. D. Hiles (Chair of the Planning and Building Committee) for the remainder of the meeting.

Key points raised and discussed were as follows: -

- i. An item has recently appeared on the Surgery website. This states that the decision on

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PCM & P&B 21st November 2017 Minutes.doc

the closure proposal is not expected to be made at the 5th December 2017 meeting of the NHS High Weald Lewes Havens Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

- ii. It is the Parish Council's wish that Rotherfield Surgery remains open.
- iii. A meeting is scheduled for 27th November between the CCG and Parish Councillors. This is intended to be an information gathering exercise to establish options available to keep the Surgery open.

ACTION for **CLERK** to add item to agenda of the 30th November Council meeting to receive a report from the above meeting, also a report from a forthcoming meeting with the Surgery Steering Committee comprising Dr Golton, Andrew Fermor and Cllr. Henrick.

iv. **Council's formal response to the closure consultation.**

Cllr. Henrick has circulated a draft of the response she had compiled.

RESOLVED that this document, with minor amendments, would be the Council's formal response. **ACTION** for Cllr. Henrick to circulate document to **CLLRS**. who are to advise her of any suggested amendments. **CLERK** to send final response to the CCG on the 23rd November.

v. Cllr. Harris summarised the Council's actions on the matter so far as follows: -

- On the 19th October, soon after the proposal became public (on 11th October) he, together with Cllrs. Henrick and Kitchenham and Bob Ely, met with Dr. Davies and the Practice Manager at the Surgery to discuss the situation.
- A further meeting took place on 2nd November at the Brook Medical Centre with Dr. Davies, Dr. Golton, the Practice Manager, Andrew Fermor, David Coe and Bob Ely.
- On Monday 20th November the Councillors had an interview in the Village with a BBC Radio Sussex reporter who is producing an item on rural surgery issues and wished to hear the Parish Council's views on the matter.
- The reporter also interviewed members of Rotherfield St. Martins at their AGM who gave their views regarding the impact of the proposed closure on the community. Broadcast date and time for this item is not yet known but will be during week commencing 27th November.

THE PUBLIC MEETING ON NOVEMBER 4TH, ORGANISED BY THE SURGERY – SUMMARY REPORT

- This was very well supported with Rotherfield Village Hall full. View of the meeting was that the Surgery should not close, but that it was sympathetic to the Partner's reasons for the proposal.
- Meeting suggested three options to protect the Surgery's future.
 1. Merger with one of the other surgeries in Crowborough.
 2. Be taken over and run by a commercial organisation such as Virgin Health care.
 3. Property to be taken over by the Parish Council/Community/Charity with a continuing GP presence on the site
- The main issues behind the proposal are the inability to attract a new Partner and the cost burden of operating on two sites.
- Other surgeries were not interested in merging with the practice and no response had been received from any commercial organisation.
- The favoured solution was for the Parish Council/Community to purchase the Rotherfield Surgery with a "lease back" of space to the practice to retain GP sessions in Rotherfield, with other rooms used by the Community or other health related practioners which would provide rental income.
- A consultant (believed to be a GP from out of the area) provided by the CCG from the GP resilience fund earlier this year to investigate the Surgery's issues had concluded that the practice issues could be alleviated by the closure of Rotherfield Surgery. This report was not available to the public. This approach clearly did not consider the value of the surgery to the community.

- vi. Parish Council's approach has two items on which to focus – continuing to lobby the CCG to reject the closure proposal and investigate ways in which the Council and Community can help to keep it open in the light of the current issues which have led to the closure proposal.
- vii. As yet there are no firm figures available to work with although at the public meeting a figure of £500,000 was mentioned as having been a recent valuation of the site provided

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- viii. by the district valuer and costs of £30 - £40,000/year for the maintenance of the site Finance matters. Parish Councils can source fixed low rate borrowing (about 2.5%) from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), the cost of the repayments would fall on the Parish Precept element of Parishioner's Council Tax Bill. It may also be possible to raise public funds for the purchase and operation of the site through a charitable route such as the League of Friends which could then also realise gift aid. The main constraint was that the doctors had indicated a timescale of closure of the 1st April 2018. Loans from the PWLB can be repaid early without penalty.

At this point the Chair invited the members of the public and Rotherfield St Martins representatives (RSM) to add their comments, summarised as follows: -

- It is vital that the Village retains its surgery.
- Two elements to the issue, first is funding the possible purchase of the Surgery and the second is to attract doctors to work therein.
- The Surgery's "League of Friends" could attract many donations toward the purchase – these could be eligible for "Gift Aid" to boost their value.
- RSM pledged their support to the Council in their endeavours to keep the Surgery open, with the need for those involved to focus on this main aim.
- RSM would be willing to manage the premises if taken over by the Community – the organisation wishes to "grow" and would commit to develop this asset for the benefit of all ages in the Community.
- If the Parish Council take on ownership of the site it should be "in perpetuity" for the Community's benefit.
- RSM have much expertise in fund raising and this could be utilised regarding this project.

It was **RESOLVED** that the matter would be further discussed at the November 30th Parish Council Meeting where reports of the meeting with the CCG and the Surgery Steering Committee would be given, and further action agreed.

3. TO CONSIDER AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS AND OTHER PLANNING MATTERS.

a) 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.

The meeting **RESOLVED** that Wealden District Council be recommend to **APPROVE** this application for the following reason: -

These are necessary repairs to a listed building.

b) 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.

The meeting **RESOLVED** that Wealden District Council be recommend **APPROVING** this application for the following reason: -

It will enhance the facilities available to their customers.

c) WD/2017/2165/F 4 Orchard Cottages, Station Road, Rotherfield, TN6 3HT

Excavation to create parking area at front of house. replace existing garage with wooden shed. building of raised patio at the rear of the house.

Cllr. Wickenden withdrew from the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

The meeting **RESOLVED** that Wealden District Council be recommend to **APPROVE** this application for the following reason: -

It will improve the garage and the parking facilities at the property.

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- d) **WD/2017/2385/RM** The Stables, Clackhams Lane, Jarvis Brook, Crowborough, TN6 3RN
Reserved matters pursuant to outline application WD/2017/1468/O (erection of 5 no. detached dwellings together with means of access (Amendment To WD/2016/2213/O)).
The meeting **RESOLVED** that Wealden District Council be recommended to **APPROVE** this application for the following reason: -
It will allow the development of the required housing to continue.
- e) **WD/2017/2440/F** 5 Brook Cottages, New Road, Rotherfield, TN6 3JT
Single storey front extension with two storey rear extension.
The meeting **RESOLVED** that Wealden District Council be recommend to **APPROVE** this application for the following reason: -
It will improve the facilities of this property.
- f) **WD/2017/2464/F** High Cross Hall, Station Road, Town Row, Rotherfield, TN6 3HR
New access with rotary parking.
The meeting **RESOLVED** that Wealden District Council be recommend to **APPROVE** this application for the following reason: -
It will improve the parking situation at the property.

Cllr. Martin wished it noted that he had voted against the proposal.

- g) **WD/2017/2514/F** 30 Court Meadow Close, Rotherfield, TN6 3LW
Addition of a 4th bedroom over the existing kitchen.
Cllr. Harris withdrew from the meeting whilst this item was discussed.
The meeting **RESOLVED** that Wealden District Council be recommend to **APPROVE** this application for the following reason: -
It will improve the facilities of the property.
- h) **WD/2017/2515/F** 2 School Cottages, Tunbridge Wells Road, Mark Cross, TN6 3PL
To erect a replacement orangery to the rear of the property.
The meeting **RESOLVED** that Wealden District Council be recommend to **APPROVE** this application for the following reason: -
It replaces the existing structure on a “like for like” basis.

4. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING FROM WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

i. Decision notices.

- a) **WD/2017/1209/F** 1 & 2 Danegate Lodges, Sham Farm Road, Eridge, TN3 9JB
Demolition of existing pair of semi-detached dwellings and erection of two replacement three-bed detached cottages.
Recommended for approval by this Committee and approved by Wealden District Council.
- b) **WD/2017/1655/LB** The Catts Inn, High Street, Rotherfield, TN6 3LH
Replacement of 3 no. doors and frames with fireproof equivalents.
Recommended for approval by this Committee and withdrawn by the applicant.
- c) **WD/2017/1940/F** Sandhill Cottage, Sandhill Lane, Eridge Green, Tunbridge Wells, TN3 9LW
Demolition of existing stables. reconstruction of a single storey structure to provide ancillary accommodation for private/family use.
Recommended for approval by this Committee and approved by Wealden District Council.
- d) **WD/2017/2029/LDE** Castle Hill Cottage, Castle Hill, Rotherfield, TN6 3RR
Two domestic dwellings in the existing barn.

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No recommendation submitted by this Committee, notice issued by Wealden District Council.

- e) **WD/2017/2062/F** Dewlands Barn Castle Hill Farm, Treblers Road, Rotherfield, TN6 3RR
To create accommodation ancillary to the main house for our elderly parents consisting of 2 bedrooms and independent living space. Also to provide some additional workshop and garden machinery storage space which could also be used as garage space for their car in winter and a small exercise pool. Recommended for approval by this Committee and approved by Wealden District Council.
- f) **WD/2017/2067/F** Sandhill Farm, Sandhill Lane, Boars Head, TN3 9LP
Proposed new 3 bay carport, conversion of existing barn store to games room, conversion and extension to existing barn for accommodation & proposed agricultural unit for means of machinery storage. extension to residential curtilage.
Recommended for approval by this Committee and withdrawn by the applicant.
- g) **WD/2017/2225/F** The Spinney, High Cross, Rotherfield TN6 3PX
Proposed extension.
Recommended for approval by this Committee and approved by Wealden District Council.
- h) **WD/2017/2233/F** Roselea, Boars Head Road, Boars Head, TN6 3GR
Single storey rear extension.
Recommended for approval by this Committee and approved by Wealden District Council.
- i) **TPO 2017/0003/Rotherfield.** Horsegrove House, Mayfield Road, Rotherfield.
Tree Preservation Order sealed by Wealden District Council on 9th November 2017

ii.Planning correspondence.

None.

iii.Any Enforcement, Conservation or appeal matters.

None.

5. TO RECEIVE NOTICE OF DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE.

12th December 2017 at 19:30 in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF ANY URGENT ISSUES FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA.

Christmas Lights - Clerk reported that the issue with a chimney, identified by the installers of the lights, is to be dealt with by a local roofing company. Scaffolding will be required regarding this work and contact details of the contractors and bonfire society representative have been shared with the aim of avoiding disruption to the lights. "Light Up" is scheduled for this Sunday 26th.

OneDrive. Clerk has discussed this with the software providers and will be liaising with Councillors to ensure that all have access to the shared folder arrangement set up to support sharing of papers for meetings and other Council matters.

7. The Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 20:55.

8. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

**Minutes confirmed and adopted as a true record
at the 21st December 2017 Parish Council Meeting**

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

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