

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 9TH FEBRUARY 2016 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL.

PRESENT

Cllr. R. Harris (Chairman) Cllr. K. Curtis Cllr. D. Thomas
Cllr. Gilbert (Vice Chairman) Cllr. Martin Cllr. N. Wickenden

ABSENT

ALSO ATTENDING.

The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe.

1. **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s 85).**
Cllrs. Cahan and Hiles submitted apologies for absence.
2. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND UPDATES TO MEMBERS' REGISTER OF INTERESTS.**
None declared. The Chairman reminded those present that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one at any point during the meeting.
3. **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25TH NOVEMBER 2015 AS A TRUE RECORD.**
These had been circulated to the Councillors and it was RESOLVED that the Chairman of this Committee sign them as a true record of the meeting.
4. **UPDATE REGARDING MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.**
Numbers relate to agenda of the 11th November 2015 meeting.
5a) Meeting to be held in the near future re: War Memorial for the Village.
5c) Information awaited re: suggested siting for additional picnic benches.
5d) Millennium Green sign for Mark Cross is with Tony and awaits decision re location.
6b) Drones sign still to be done.
6d) Drainage issues on the agenda of this meeting for discussion.

TO CONSIDER INFORMATION & MAKE DECISIONS ON FURTHER ACTION REGARDING THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:-

5. **GENERAL RECREATION, ALLOTMENT AND BURIAL ISSUES AND CONSIDERATION OF QUOTES**
 - a) **Consider suggestion that a representative of the Sports Club be invited to attend meetings of this Committee.**
As the Committee meetings are open to public attendance it was considered that there was no need for representation as Club representatives could attend and comment on agenda items relevant to them if they so wished. RESOLVED that it was unnecessary to issue invitation and that Agenda to be sent to the Club in advance of meetings.
 - b) **Quote for tree work in the Recreation Ground and Court Meadow Green.**
Quote from Daniel Jenkins Treecraft for £600 submitted for various treeworks in the Recreation Ground and Court Meadow Green. RESOLVED that quote be accepted, subject to

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ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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contractor providing confirmation of £10m Public Liability Cover and meeting onsite with Cllr. Wickenden to agree arrangements for coppicing trees on Recreation Ground batters.

- c) **Request from the League of Friends of Rotherfield and Brook Surgery for permission to hold fund raising event on Court Meadow Green, and provide grant support to cover insurance cost.**

RESOLVED that permission be granted, subject to Clerk, verifying documentations is completed; also that Council will grant £75 toward cost of providing insurance cover for this community fund raising activity.

- d) **Grass cutting and weed killing. Review contractors cut list, agree amendments and programme for weed killing. Consider offer of no price increase for this year in return for a 3-year agreement.**

Contractor has held prices for 2 years and has offered to hold for a third subject to Council agreeing a new 3-year agreement.

RESOLVED to confirm acceptance of this offer subject to the following.

- i. Current grass and hedge cutting arrangements and frequencies to remain unchanged.
- ii. Additional mid-season cut of Hedge from North Street to bottom South West corner past Hall, Scout hut and preschool to be undertaken.
- iii. All weed and moss killing items to be removed from the contract.

CLERK to advise Tollwood of these arrangements, also seek quotes from local certificated weed killing contractors for consideration at next meeting of this Committee.

- e) **Report and recommendations regarding floral displays in the Parish.**

Cllr. Watson Smith to please provide an update and recommendations for consideration at the 25th February Council Meeting.

- f) **Insurance – information regarding cover for volunteers working for the Council and for road sweeping/litter picking.**

Cover for volunteers

Letter from Council's insurers giving information on limitations of cover provided has been circulated. Concerns expressed that this would not cover a Parishioner volunteer who has offered to tidy spoil at the Parish Cemetery using a hired digger, or volunteers undertaking work at height by the roadside when installing/removing Christmas lights in the Village.

RESOLVED the following:-

- i. CLERK to investigate if Coppards can offer short-term cover for operators of plant hired from them, Cllr. Harris to check if NFU can provide this cover; progress to be reported at next meeting of this Committee.
- ii. CLERK to obtain information from Christmas Light contractor to confirm that Risk Assessments, Method Statements and liability insurance will cover volunteers assisting with the Christmas Light work. Outcome to reported at next meeting.

Street sweeper/litter picker

RESOLVED that CLERK write and request confirmation of the following within 14 days:-

- i. £10m Public Liability Cover is in place for this work and that a copy is provided.
- ii. That this cover extends to others who may be engaged by him to undertake the work.

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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- iii. That the work has been risk assessed, particularly if being undertaken alongside the Public Highway, and that “Hi vis” jackets are worn.

6. RECREATION GROUND AND CAR PARK.

a) Report regarding recommendations and actions arising from inspection of pitch drainage and possible funding opportunity via the - Tesco “Bags of Help” scheme.

The lower football pitch is currently unplayable, and there are drainage issues on the top pitch and junior pitch. Agrifactor of Heathfield has provided quotes, the cost estimated to rectify the issues with the lower pitch is £10800 plus VAT. Cllr. Harris is exploring the possibility of support via the Tesco scheme; the Club have also approached Rotherfield Trust for support. The Parish Council consider that the Club direct much effort and funds in maintaining the pitches to a high standard and the Committee RESOLVED the following:-

- i. That the Parish Council will explore sources of funding to support the drainage, the level of support available from Council funds will be decided once the outcome of grant applications is known.
- ii. That a “Recreation Ground Working Group” be formed, consisting of the Councillors at this meeting. They will work with the Sports Club to find an affordable solution to the drainage issues and make recommendations to this Committee/Full Council.

b) Trees on lower batter. Recommendations from Cllrs. Gilbert and Wickenden regarding action to cut these back to improve view.

See item 5b) above – this work is included in quote.

c) Quote for installation of bollards to protect flues at the rear of the Village Hall.

Coppards quote £670 plus VAT to install two bollards at the rear of the Hall, if work is undertaken at the same time as removal of tree stump nearby and surface reinstatement of surface the joint cost of the two projects will be reduced by £180. RESOLVED CLERK to instruct Coppards to proceed with quoted work, and liaise with Hall regarding payment of their share of the project.

d) Additional signage and contacting of regular users to reinforce “no dogs” policy in the Rec.

Concerns expressed that poor siting of signs was leading to dog owners being unaware of our policy. RESOLVED the following:-

- i. Cllrs. Gilbert and Harris to review location of present signs and pass recommendations to Clerk for relocations and additions to the signs in the Rec. and suggestions regarding wording.
- ii. CLERK to write to all the sports groups who use the Rec. to request that they advise all visiting teams of the “no dogs” policy in the Rec; Clerk to also contact Schools, Scouts and Hall to remind them of the policy.

e) Details of the December 2015 Play Area safety inspection by Wicksteed Leisure and agree any actions on potential hazards identified.

Report circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Committee RESOLVED the following:-

- i. Council to address issues marked as Medium or High in the report, CLERK to investigate and order any components that may be required for installation by Council.
- ii. Cllr. Harris to complete risk assessment provided by Wicksteed, this to be used to monitor areas highlighted by Wicksteed in their report.

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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

f) Agree arrangements and payment level for grass cutting of playing surfaces by the Sports Club.

Arrangement for 2015 was from 1st April to 31st December and consisted of 9 x £325 payments, copy of agreement form circulated prior to meeting. RESOLVED that terms and payment level and frequency are to remain unchanged for 2016 CLERK to send new agreement to the Sports Club for signature.

g) Request from Bonfire Society to hold an Easter Egg Hunt on the Recreation Ground on Good Friday.

Event to run from 09:30 to 13:00. RESOLVED that this be agreed subject to CLERK to liaising with Society to obtain details of Risk Assessments and Public Liability cover for this event.

**7. ROTHERFIELD PARISH CEMETERY (RPC) AND OLD BURIAL GROUND (OBG)
Reports from Cllrs. Harris and Gilbert's site visits, and recommended action regarding the following:-**

a) Graves requiring levelling or tidying, repairs to seats, action on overgrowing shrubs and areas requiring weed and moss killing (both sites).

The Committee RESOLVED the following:-
Cemetery.

- i. Seat by memorial wall requires wood treatment, Cllr. Gilbert is to provide a quote for dealing with this.

Old Burial Ground.

- ii. Many graves require filling, Cllrs. Harris and Martin are to investigate whether adjoining landowners would allow access across their fields to deliver topsoil for infill, CLERK to seek quotes from Tony Moaby and KPS Contractors for the work that is to be carried out when surface conditions permit.
- iii. Concerns that some of the large memorials may be in poor condition. Information awaited from Tester and Jones regarding their recommendations of a specialist to undertake this inspection work. CLERK to monitor, also provide plans of Burial Ground and Cemetery Cllrs. Harris, Wickenden and Martin.

b) Preparation work to lower field to enable commissioning for use, and extension of path. (RPC)

RESOLVED that the lower field be harrowed, rolled, mowed and sprayed to improve its condition. Cllrs. Harris and Martin are to seek quotes which are to be sent to Clerk so that they may be considered at future meeting.

c) Action regarding unofficial "gateways" which have been formed to access the Burial Ground.(OBG)

Plans and photographs circulated prior to meeting. The HMLR plans are of insufficient detail to clarify the boundary. RESOLVED CLERK to write to owner of the property concerned requesting that the pipe discharging on to the Old Burial Ground be removed within 14 days. In addition, the Council will be blocking off the access into the Cemetery at this location as it considers that it has been created on Council land.

d) Recommendations arising from review of Burial Fees, and rules relating to the Burial Grounds (both sites).

Copies of current and proposed fees circulated in advance of the meeting. Cllr. Thomas spoke on behalf of the working group formed to look at this matter and outlined the proposed changes to fees and rules relating to the Burial Grounds.

RESOLVED the following:-

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

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

- i. New scale of fees and rules to be adopted with an amendment to paragraph 5 of the "Information and conditions for Cemetery users and visitors" to include installation of plaques on to the Memorial Wall by Council'
- ii. Letters are to be sent by recorded delivery to address of last known owner of plots causing concern due to installation of kerbing, chippings or overgrowing shrubs. Action will be requested to remove or rectify issues raised within 21 days, or the Council will deal with the matter causing concern.
- iii. CLERK to investigate if it is possible to cancel an Exclusive Right of Burial if the owner cannot be contacted.
- iv. New ashes interments in the dedicated plots alongside the Eridge Lane boundary hedge are to be kept in one line until it is complete, and then the second line may be commenced.
- v. At end of each financial year burial fee income is to be transferred into a designated reserve for Burial Ground maintenance, CLERK to set up reminder for this.

8. TO RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE.

- 12th April 2016 at 19:30 in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

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

Clerk reported that the bollard by Kennedy Brothers side entrance had now been replace by ESCC after suffering damage in November.

The Chairman declared the business of the meeting closed at 21:35

10. PUBLIC FORUM

None.

Confirmed as a true record at the 12th April 2016 meeting of the Committee

_____ Chairman _____ Date