



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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 26TH SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. R. Harris (Chair)	Cllr. P. Kember	Cllr. K. Rignall
Cllr. L. Henrick (Vice Chair)	Cllr. J. Kitchenham	Cllr. G. Watson-Smith
Cllr. L. Buck	Cllr. A. Moore	Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. N. Glynn	Cllr. A. Martin	

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

Cllr. D. Hiles.

ALSO PRESENT

T. Thorpe, Parish Clerk, Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC),
and Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC).

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

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

Parish Councillors: - Cllr. J. Richardson.

It was **RESOLVED** that the reasons for absence for the Parish Councillors be approved. Cllr. Martin had advised that he would be late in joining the meeting due to a conflicting appointment.

County and District Councillors: - Cllr. K. Obbard (WDC) had informed the Clerk that he would not be able to attend and had provided a written report which had been circulated to Councillors.

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 Councillors that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one during the course of the meeting.

c) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr. Standley (ESCC). Key points of his report were as follows: -

- Government Comprehensive spending review. ESCC will receive an extra £20m to enable a balanced budget for next financial year but cannot assume that the similar funding will be made in future years. Adult Social Care precept has capacity to increase by 2% and this will probably be required.
- The "Pupil Premium", on a "per head" basis for both primary and secondary pupils, will be allowed to increase. It is not yet known if there will be conditions imposed as to how it may be spent.
- "Looked after" children. There are currently 608 in East Sussex, although the numbers remain steady the costs associated are increasing. Complexity of many of the cases makes it difficult to contain these.
- Rotherfield Nursery damp issues. Has spoken to the officers involved and will follow developments.
- Willinghurst Lane drainage issues. He will take this up with Highways; owners of the property affected consider that their deeds state that County are responsible for maintaining the drainage involved.

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- King's Arms. Highways have advised that the report regarding further long vehicle mitigation measures will be available at the end of November.
- Attended and spoke at the first County wide Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony. Around 50 recipients were present, and it was encouraging to share the enthusiasm generated by their achievements.

Chair raised concerns that electric and other work had not been "signed off" for the Pre School. Also raised concern that an exterior electric device associated with sewage disposal required attention. Cllr. Standley will raise this.

Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC). Key points of his report are as follows: -

- Recycling. Concerns had been raised that "Tetra Paks" would no longer be recycled. They contain a source of aluminium which could be extracted. Unfortunately the cost incurred in recovering this outweighed its value hence these items will continue to be incinerated.
- Although the King's Arms is not in his electoral division, he receives information on the matter and shares the Parish Council's frustration and concerns that a remedy has yet to be found.

Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC)

- Local plan. Nothing new to report and the consultation continues. Cllr. Dixon shared details of the process with the meeting. The presence of the Ashdown Forest and the AONB causes complications and delay.
- Wealden's small grants initiative is now open for applications from eligible organisations.
- Was pleased to report that, for the first time in many months, he had not received any waste complaints or concerns.
- Query raised as to what powers Wealden had to enforce repairs to listed buildings. Cllr Dixon advised that enforcing repair work was difficult to pursue, the planning powers available were geared toward inappropriate changes to such buildings.
- Chair and Clerk summarised the processes used to identify and report overlength vehicles based on reports from parishioners and footage from the Council's CCTV. Time cost precluded viewing all footage on a regular basis.

d) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 29TH August 2019 for approval as a true record.

Draft minutes have been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that these be adopted as a true record and they were signed by the Chair.

Cllr. Martin joined the meeting at this point.

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

- Drone issues. Circumstances had meant that it had not been possible to arrange the demonstration session proposed. **CLERK** to contact parishioner concerned regarding this matter to apologise for the delay and to arrange a session during the school half term holiday week commencing 21st October. This will avoid the GDPR issues identified with the drone flight.
- Sussex Lund Grant. The final grant paperwork is being prepared to submit to the fund to enable release of the monies for the Old Burial Ground refurbishment to the Council.
- Dog bin on land adjacent to New Road. This has now been installed by the Millennium Green members.
- Cycle storage at Eridge Station. Clerk has visited Eridge Station to investigate current bike storage arrangements and the feasibility of increasing it. Report and photos have been sent to Councillors. **CLERK** to add an item to the November Highways Committee meeting agenda to discuss this and other matters relating to the station.
- Clerk, with the help of Adam Hardy, is in the process of producing "nameplates" for Councillors to use at meetings.

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2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT 30TH AUGUST 2019, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND NOTE OR AUTHORISE PAYMENTS.

Details circulated prior to meeting. Clerk advised that there had been late additions by way of notification from WDC that the £60K second instalment of the Precept had been paid, also payment of the External Audit fee of £1300. The latter had substantially increased from last year's fee as the purchase of the Surgery had inflated the Council's turnover such that it had gone up several fee bands for the Auditor's service. **CLERK** is to adjust allocation of this fee so that the additional cost is allocated to the Surgery budget. Also reported that there was still a small difference with the reconciliation of the Unity current account with the ledger. With this exception it was **RESOLVED** that the financial and budget reports be approved with no action required, and that the payments listed below be made: -

Financial transactions 1st - 30th September 2019

PAYMENTS

Payee Name	Amount	Transaction Detail
Rotherfield Football Club	£325.00	Pitch maintenance - August
W.L. Carey	£48.00	Oak posts for OBG sign
T.C. Woodgate	£2,304.00	Fences for football pitches
Unity Trust Bank plc	£3.00	Payment card fee
HM Land Registry fees DD	£3.00	Search fee
Tollwood Garden Service	£1,806.00	Grass and hedge cutting
Teambase	£40.78	Ink cartridges
Teambase	£32.39	Ink cartridge
Direct365Online Ltd	£372.20	Cemetery bin annual charge
Forest Row Parish Council	£144.00	Community Warden 8 hrs
Public Works Loan Board	£9,390.59	Loan repayment
Wealden District Council	£300.00	Dog bin emptying 1 Jul-30 Sep
Rotherfield St Martin	£36.00	Fixed IP annual cost
Rotherfield St Martin	£967.40	Autumn 2019 Newsletter costs
James Sweeney	£500.00	Allotment rental for half year
Rotherfield Village Hall	£32.00	Hall hire for August
Adam Hardy	£325.00	September support
Phil Ireland	£397.46	Street sweeping/litter picking
Trevor Thorpe	£193.00	Reimbursements with VAT
Trevor Thorpe	£38.84	Mileage and expenses
The Royal British Legion	£100.00	Wreaths x 4 for November 11th
Trevor Thorpe	£1,593.67	September salary
H M R C	£480.68	September Tax and NI
PKF Littlejohn LLP	£1,560.00	External audit fees 2018-19
Unity Trust Bank plc	£27.60	Bank charges June - September
Rotherfield Sports Club	£325.00	Pitch maintenance - September
Dual Energy Direct Ltd.	£193.20	Surgery Electric Bill August
Total Gas & Power Ltd.	£31.41	Surgery gas bill for August
Total payments	£21,570.22	

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RECEIPTS FOR INFORMATION

East Sussex County Council	£750.00	Pre School ground rent
Burslem Memorials Ltd	£805.00	Memorial fee
Family of deceased	£635.00	Burial fees
Rotherfield Surgery	£2,673.33	August rent
Wealden District Council	£60,000.00	Precept and support grant, second instalment
Santander Bank	£22.96	August bank interest
Total receipts	£64,886.29	

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

i. **Adoption of updated Financial Regulations based on the latest NALC model version.**

Cllr. Henrick had reviewed these, and it was **RESOLVED** that, after the changes she had identified had been implemented to the document, that they be adopted and published. **CLERK** to action and arrange to be published, also add to the schedule for annual review of policies.

ii. **Community Engagement Strategy, and Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy.**

- **Children and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy.** Cllr. Buck recommended that this be put in place and a draft version, based on those from other Parish Councils, was circulated. Further recommended that copies of such policies for organisations using Parish Council owned properties be obtained. Clerk advised that he had sought the SSALC view on this; their response is awaited. As the draft policy had only been available earlier that day it was **RESOLVED** that an item be added to the October Council meeting agenda. This will give Councillors time to consider the policy and for the Clerk to obtain information from SSALC, SLCC and other nearby Councils regarding the subject.
- **Community Engagement Strategy.** Cllrs. Buck and Moore showed a PowerPoint presentation regarding this and suggested a “Five year plan” be developed. It was **RESOLVED** that the Strategy be adopted and that the Communication and Social Media Committee form a working group to devise a five year plan after final approval by the Council with the aim of presenting this at next year’s annual parish meeting.

iii. **Unity Trust Bank – resolution to confirm account details prior to upgrading of their on-line security and payments system.**

Unity, in common with other banks, are upgrading on line security. They require confirmation of our contact, account management details. Chair and Vice Chair to review and confirm their agreement with the responses made.

iv. **Installation of further defibrillators in the Parish.**

British Heart Foundation (BHF) can provide a device subject to a £600 contribution and will fund one per applicant each financial year. Applicant must purchase a suitable cabinet and cover the installation/ongoing electric costs for its illumination and heating. Cabinet cost is in the order of £600, full cost of a defibrillator is around £1135 depending on model. There is already a defibrillator at Eridge Station. **RESOLVED**

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to proceed with purchase and installation at Mark Cross with Cllr. Kitchenham to liaise with the Community Centre and Church to establish most suitable location for this and if any Church formalities are required. Installation of a further defibrillator in Rotherfield Village will be discussed in the next financial year, **CLERK** to note.

v. Council For The Protection Of Rural England. Information from SSALC regarding Parish Council Corporate Membership and subscription renewal.

SSALC/NALC's legal advisors view is that the CPRE are a lobbying body. It could be deemed under some circumstances that a Parish Council's actions could conflict with that of the CPRE, the decision regarding continuing with membership is down to the individual Council. Individual councillor membership is not deemed an issue provided it is recorded in their register of interests.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council will not renew membership of the CPRE, **CLERK** to advise them.

vi. Town Row Green. Report from Chairman.

Chairman summarised the history of Council involvement with this area and that it has powers under Section 45 of the 2006 Commons Act to protect the land should it be required. Concerns have been raised locally regarding its current condition, but as yet no direct approach has been made to the Council. Cllr. Wickenden is to meet with a resident of the area and will encourage them to make a formal approach regarding their concerns.

vii. Pre School damp issue. Update from Cllr. Martin and decision regarding further action.

He has visited the site with a representative of ESCC who will provide a report on the matter to ESCC with details regarding the remedial action to be undertaken. The Parish Council will receive a copy.

viii. Parking issues. Confirm wording for the "calling card" and guidelines for use and reporting to "Operation Crackdown".

Specimen document was circulated.

RESOLVED the following: -

- If Councillors are willing, they can take photographs of illegally/dangerously parked vehicles and report to "Operation Crackdown" in their personal capacity.
- Alternatively they can pass details and registration numbers, but not photographs, of illegally/dangerously parked vehicles which will then be reported to "Operation Crackdown" by the Clerk in the name of the Council. Personal phones and devices cannot be used to pass information to the Parish Council as this will breach GDPR. The "calling card" can be left in these circumstances should it be wished.
- The final wording of the card was agreed, size to be A5, printed black on yellow.
- Eridge and Mark Cross will be included in this arrangement.
- Above arrangements to be reviewed by Adam Hardy prior to implementation to see if they comply with GDPR.
- Cards should only be used where the vehicle is parked on zigzag lines, double yellow lines obstructing an entrance/junction or the pavement where the parking impedes access.
- The use of the cards will be reviewed to see how they are received.

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4. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

- 23rd September - Planning and Building Committee
- 17th September - Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee
- 24th September - Planning and Building Committee

Draft minutes of these meetings have been circulated to councillors and published.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of these meetings, to approve and confirm recommendations contained therein and, as far as is requisite, the action taken by them.

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

a) Councillor Surgeries.

Three Councillor surgeries have been held so far. Issue raised at the sessions were as follows: -

- Path leading from Court Meadow. There is a steep and potentially slippery slope on this with barbed wire nearby. Cllr. Harris is to investigate and provide photos so that **CLERK** may raise a report with ESCC Rights of Way team and provide feedback for the complainant.
- Superfluous 30mph sign reported in Catts Hill. Clerk requested that photos and full details be forwarded to him so a report may be raised.

Other meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Cllr. Watson-Smith has attended meetings of the Sports Club and Village Hall. Matters raised at these have been passed to the Clerk for adding to the agenda of the forthcoming Recreation and Burial Committee meeting.
- Cllr. Glynn advised that the "Rotherfield in Bloom" baskets and pots will be gathered in next Thursday and stored.
- Cllr. Buck attended the WI Centenary barn dance.
- Chair attended a public session at Rotherfield St Martin regarding a "retirement village" project on the border of Tunbridge Wells near Frant.
- Cllr. Martin has met with the CCTV company to try and arrange additional storage capacity for the Council's system.

b) Clerk's updates and issues.

Had queried lack of invoice for hire of Eridge Hall and was advised that they do not charge us for its use for Parish Council meetings.

c) Items for next Parish Magazine column.

- Forthcoming Councillor surgery details. These are being held during the day at various Parish venues, some evening sessions have also been arranged at the Catts Inn.
- Details of new fencing in Recreation Ground which was funded equally by the Council and Sports Club.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- Clerks and Councils Direct - September 2019 edition
- Local Council Review - Summer 2019 edition
- The Clerk Magazine - September 2019 edition
- The Spa Valley Starter - Autumn 2019
- Action in Rural Sussex - Invitation to AGM on October 17th at Buxted Park starting at 17:30 – If anyone wishes to attend please contact the Clerk.

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7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

No items requiring urgent action were identified in these and they were signed by the Chair.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 8th October - Recreation and Burial Committee, to include Budget and Precept for 2020/21
- 15th October - Planning and Building Committee – **Scout and Community Youth Hall 19:30**
- 22nd October- Communication and Social Media Committee, to include Budget and Precept for 2020/21

Other than where noted these meetings will 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.

- Chair reported that arrangements are being made for a Working Group to be formed to discuss plans for commemorating the 75th Anniversary of V.E. day next year.
- Cllr Martin advised that the railings for installation by the War Memorial had been delivered to him and await installation.
- Pre School. Arrangements are being made for the Council's papers stored in the building's "undercroft" area to be relocated to temporary dry storage in Crowborough pending the remedial work taking place.
- Clerk's "Core Hours" have been agreed as 10:00 – 14:00 Monday to Friday.
- Hedges in the "St Chéron Twitten" have been cut.
- A new "Picture Gallery" of Councillors is being compiled.
- Cllr. Martin expressed his extreme concerns that the article regarding Highways appearing in the latest Parish Newsletter, differed considerably from the original compiled by he and Cllr. Kitchenham. They had not been consulted regarding the changes that, in his opinion, had reduced the impact of that which had been presented for publication. He considered it discourteous that this had not been the case.
Cllr. Martin left the meeting at this point.
- Cllr. Buck suggested that a process be put in place for reviewing articles for publication to incorporate opportunities for review by Chair/Vice Chair and the author prior to publication.
- Request received from a Parishioner who would like to install a bench with memorial plaque to her late husband on Court Meadow Green. Agreed provisionally, **CLERK** to add item to agenda of forthcoming R & B meeting regarding siting of this and the bench already promised by the local Royal British Legion Branch.

Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 22:10.

10. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

**Confirmed and signed as a true record at the 31st October 2019
Meeting of the Parish Council**

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

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