



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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THE 31ST OCTOBER 2019 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. R. Harris (Chair)
Cllr. L. Henrick (Vice Chair)
Cllr. D. Hiles

Cllr. P. Kember
Cllr. J. Kitchenham
Cllr. A. Martin

Cllr. J. Richardson
Cllr. K. Rignall
Cllr. G. Watson-Smith
Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

Cllr. N. Glynn.

ALSO PRESENT

T. Thorpe, Parish Clerk, Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC),
Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC), Cllr. K. Obbard (WDC) and two members of the public.

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

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

These were submitted by Cllrs. Buck and Moore. It was **RESOLVED** that the reasons given for their absences be approved.

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

Chair declared a personal interest in item 3v) as he is a relative of Adam Hardy. Chair reminded the Councillors that they should declare an interest if at any point they became aware of one relating to a matter being discussed.

c) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr. Standley's report contained the following key points: -

- ESCC performance monitoring. Of the Council's 59 targets 53 are showing as "green" with the remaining 6 showing as "amber".
- He is chasing for progress from the County's surveying team regarding the recurring damp issue under the Pre-School.
- Was on holiday last week but had been made aware of Monday's serious incident of a further lorry strike to the King's Arms. This caused more damage to the building and led to a closure of Station Road for several hours. The incident involved the emergency services whilst debris was cleared, and the building made safe. Cllr. Standley continues to raise the profile of this issue with the County Council departments involved.

Cllr. Henrick joined the meeting at this point.

- Clerk and Cllr. Martin both raised issues regarding the difficulty and delay they had experienced in trying to speak to the Highways Call Centre and the area Highways Steward. Clerk has raised these matters with Highways and has had a response from the Assistant Director of Transport & Operations, Karl Taylor, who will investigate and raise with those responsible.
- The lorry involved was legitimately using Station Road to deliver to a farm near the Village centre.
- At her recent visit to Rotherfield School the pupils raised concerns to Cllr. Richardson that they felt unsafe walking through the village to school when large vehicles were encountered, particularly at the top of Station Road.

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CLERK to add an agenda item for the November 12th meeting of the Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee to receive details of any progress with the long vehicle issues and consider further actions.

Cllr. Dixon's report contained the following key points.

- The count location for the forthcoming General Election is yet to be determined.
- Those who are not currently on the electoral register are encouraged to join it; the last date for registering to vote is Tuesday 26th November.
- The Examiner's report on the Local Plan is still awaited and Cllr. Dixon is becoming concerned at this delay, particularly with Christmas approaching.
- Planning Applications. When the Parish Council recommend refusal in respect of applications before them, he suggests that more detail on specific areas of concern should be provided regarding the recommendation. This will encourage the Planning Officer dealing with the application to review the areas of concern when considering their decision.

Cllr. Martin raised concerns that Wealden Conversation Officers were delaying repairs to the Kings Arms as they wished for "historic" conservation matters to be dealt with prior to repair work commencing. Parishioners perceptions were that the problems and delays were being caused by both the District and County Council, thus reflecting poorly on them, and that the building could constitute a hazard.

Cllr. Obbard's report contained the following key points: -

- The Wealden Community Grant Scheme was still open for applications; the closing date is at the end of November.
- There are still places available for Councillors to attend the Wealden Parish Conference. Clerk reported that three Rotherfield Councillors will be attending.
- He had spent a very interesting morning with one of the four Ashdown Forest Rangers who cover the Forest. He learned about their work and the challenges created by funding reductions. He considered that the Forest is very much the "Jewel in the Crown" of Wealden.

d) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 27th June 2019 and 26th September 2019 for approval as a true record.

Copies of these minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that they both be adopted as a true record and the Vice Chair signed them.

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

Numbers reference the minutes of the 26th September Parish Council meeting

- 3i** – Financial Regulations update – Item on the agenda of this meeting regarding their adoption.
- 3ii** – Community Engagement Strategy, and Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy. This is to be carried forward to the November PCM for consideration as Cllr. Buck will be in attendance
- 3iii** – Unity Trust Bank. Chair and Vice Chair to please confirm that they have undertaken the review.
- 3iv** – Defibrillators. Cllr. Kitchenham reported that the Vicar is happy to allow installation of a Defibrillator in the porch of St. Marks's Church. **CLERK** to liaise with the British Heart Foundation to progress with this project.
- 3v** – CPRE membership - Clerk has advised them that the Council will not be renewing.
- 3vi** – Town Row Green – the bales of hay have been removed although items of agricultural machinery remain.

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3vii – Pre School – Items stored underneath the building have been removed to dry storage at “Xtraspace” in Crowborough by the efforts of the Chair and Cllr. Watson-Smith. Fungi is now growing under the decking, water is pooling on the floor and some of the footpath leaflets stored beneath were disposed of due to damp damage; fortunately none of the Council’s official records appear to have been affected. ESCC have been advised of the conditions and asked to provide an update on work proposed to address the issue. Cllr. Martin reported that both of the ESCC Officers with whom he has been dealing are both on holiday. Both return on Monday and it has been promised that they will contact him to provide an update.

3viii – Parking issues and “calling cards” – It was reported that no cards have yet been deployed.

2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT END OF SEPTEMBER 2019, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND NOTE OR AUTHORISE PAYMENTS.

i Budget, other financial reports and actions arising.

Reports had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. No matters of concern were noted, and it was **RESOLVED** that they be approved.

ii Approval of payments.

Clerk summarised the payments listed below, and it was **RESOLVED** that they be approved. Credit items are shown for information.

Financial transactions 1st - 31st October

PAYMENTS

| Payee Name | Amount | Transaction Detail |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| HM Land Registry fees DD | £9.00 | HMLR Search fees |
| Royal British Legion | £150.00 | Donation for Wreaths |
| Lloyds Bank Card Services | £3.00 | Commercial debit card fee |
| Eventbrite | £30.00 | SE Tree Warden Forum 2019 |
| NEST Pension Contribution | £136.94 | NEST Pension Contribution |
| SSALC Ltd | £84.00 | VAT essentials training course |
| Mulberry & Co | £207.00 | Interim audit fees |
| PowerBee Ltd | £689.70 | Christmas Lights |
| Rotherfield Village Hall | £59.20 | September meeting room hire |
| Wealden District Council | £740.84 | May 2019 Election Costs |
| Forest Row Parish Council | £216.00 | Community Warden costs |
| Teambase | £59.04 | First aid kit & storage boxes |
| Wealden District Council | £25.00 | Chairing skills training |
| KPS Contractors Ltd | £501.60 | Gravedigging |
| Trevor Thorpe | £1,593.67 | October salary |
| H M R C | £480.68 | October Tax and NI |
| Trevor Thorpe | £224.76 | Expenses & reimbursements |
| Rotherfield Sports Club | £325.00 | October pitch maintenance |
| Teambase | £20.39 | Ink cartridge |
| Adam Hardy | £486.16 | October admin. support |
| Tollwood Garden Service | £2,366.50 | Grass and hedge cutting |
| Phil Ireland | £514.36 | Street sweeping/litter picking |

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| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Dual Energy Direct Ltd. | £186.88 | Electricity bill for Surgery |
| Total Gas & Power Ltd. | £52.76 | Gas bill for Surgery |
| Total Payments | £9,162.48 | |

RECEIPTS

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Dignity Funerals Ltd | £718.00 | Burial fee & gravedigging cost |
| H M Revenue & Customs | £6,388.95 | VAT reclaimed for period 1 st Jul. – 30 th Sep. |
| Rotherfield Millennium Green | £31.25 | Dog bin emptying contribution July - Sep. 2019 |
| Tester and Jones Ltd | £100.00 | Memorial fee |
| Trevor Thorpe | £46.00 | Refund of fee from ESCC |
| Wealden District Council | £4,468.22 | CIL instalment for Oct. 2019 |
| Rotherfield Surgery | £2,673.33 | Monthly rent |
| Unity Trust Bank | £88.56 | Quarterly interest to 30th September |
| Santander Bank | £22.96 | Monthly interest for September |
| Total Receipts | £14,537.27 | |

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

i. Confirm arrangements for laying of wreaths at the forthcoming Service of Remembrance at St. Denys' Church.

This Service of Remembrance is to be held in St. Denys' Church on Sunday November 10th. Mr. David Thomas, a former Councillor and Chair of the Council, has requested that he be given permission to lay a wreath at the service on behalf of the Council. It was **RESOLVED** that permission be granted for this and that the following wreath laying arrangements will apply: -

- Cllr. Wickenden on behalf of Rotherfield in respect of WW1.
- Cllr. Watson Smith on behalf of Mark Cross in respect of WW2.
- Mr. David Thomas on behalf of the Parish Council in respect of WW2.
- Cllr. Rignall on behalf of the Parish Council in respect of WW2.

Two wreaths will be laid by Royal British Legion representatives.

ii. Agree requirements and specifications to enable quotes to be obtained for a CCTV installation for monitoring of the Rotherfield Recreation Ground area.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Martin draw up a scheme for CCTV cameras at the apexes of the front and rear elevations of the Village Hall with a further camera on the pre-school to monitor the Scout Hut. He will also investigate broadband speeds in the various buildings in the Recreation Ground so that the control unit may be placed in the best location. Quotes will be obtained from CSS who provided the CCTV covering the Square. These will be for various configurations and options. Cllr. Martin declared a personal interest in this item as he is a former director of CSS.

iii. Adoption of the following governance documents: -

1. Updated Standing Orders

2. Updated Financial Regulations

It was **RESOLVED** that these documents be adopted. **CLERK** to publish, add to website and to social media.

iv. **Receive details of the completed Annual Return for the 2018/19 financial year, and Interim Audit report and recommendations for the year ending 31st March 2020.** Copies of both reports had been made available to Councillors prior to this meeting. Clerk summarised the various matters requiring attention as identified in the reports. Some of these have already been addressed and **CLERK** will deal with those that remain outstanding. The contents of the reports were noted by the Councillors with no issues raised. Statutory Notices have been published in respect of the Annual Return.

v. **Six month review of Clerical Support arrangements for the Clerk, and holiday dates for 2020.**

Clerk reported that Adam Hardy's support has been invaluable in taking over many routine tasks and consequently the Clerk's average hours are reducing toward the contracted 33hrs. per week level. Adam is taking minutes for the two committees previously covered by councillors, (Planning and Building and Communications and Social Media) providing support for the V.E. Day Anniversary commemoration working party, Community Engagement and dealing with updates and improvements to the Council website. It was **RESOLVED** that these support arrangements continue with a further review in six months.

vi. **Update regarding Christmas Light arrangements and any actions required.**

Bonfire Society and light installers have been contacted and there appear to be no issues with regard to everything being in place for the 1st December "lighting up". Trees have been ordered, also further sets of solar fairy lights for Mark Cross and payment for these is on the list for authorisation at this meeting. Arrangements are also in hand for the pollarding of the trees in the Square prior to the lights being installed.

vii. **Report from VE Day Anniversary celebration working group and actions required.**

Activities will take place on the V.E. Day 75th Anniversary Bank Holiday on Friday 8th May 2020. The Group consists of Councillors and representatives of other organisations in the Parish and Adam Hardy is providing clerical support to the group as well as representing the Parish churches; details of the recent Working Group Meeting have been circulated to Councillors. It is intended to involve all areas of the Parish in these events.

Events so far discussed for the day are as follows: -

- Closure of North Street for a "bring you own food" street party with entertainment.
- 15:00 National Toast.
- 18:45 Lighting of the Beacon.
- 19:00 Church Bells Ringing out for Peace.
- On Sunday 10th May there will be a Service of Commemoration & Commitment at St. Denys' Church.

At the recent meeting of the Communication and Social Media it was agreed to include £1500 in the 2020/21 Budget for these events.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the Working Group Terms of Reference.

4. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES PUBLISHED SINCE THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING.

- 8th October - Recreation and Burial Committee
- 15th October - Planning and Building Committee
- 22nd October - Communication and Social Media Committee

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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) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Cllr. Martin.

- Had met with an ESCC Rights of Way officer to discuss FP22 that runs from Court Meadow. Some minor remedial works were identified to which ESCC will attend. ESCC have also undertaken drainage work on the public footpath on Horsergrove Farm and in Chant Lane. Cllr. Harris mentioned that they had also dug out a drain in Chant Lane and undertaken some tree work there.
- He has removed the Millennium Green car park footpath sign for repair.
- He has also raised the issue of the drainage at Cottage Hill which Highways have scheduled for them to be cleared. Clerk advised that he had raised a report regarding a blocked drain outside Brecon Cottages in Church Road.
- He will request our groundwork contractor to cut back the sides of the pavement near Deilsfoot Cottages' at Mark Cross as these are becoming overgrown.

- Cllr. Watson-Smith has attended meetings of Wealden Community Transport and the Sports Club.

- Cllr. Richardson - Has hosted three Councillor "drop in" sessions for Parishioners and attended a Chaining skills training session at Hailsham. She reported that the training session had been excellent and would recommend it to other Councillors if further sessions are held. The training reinforced the importance of the Council's Standing Orders and that Councillors should be aware of and follow them.

- Cllr. Rignall. Along with the Chair she had hosted an evening "drop in" sessions for parishioners at the "Catt's Inn". Issue was raised that the access protection by Monastery Gardens and the "Keep Clear" road markings by the Catt's Inn needed repainting, **CLERK** to investigate and report. Hedges on North Street that had been raised as an issue had been cut. Clerk reported that the double yellow lines in North Street had been repainted by ESCC as their lining team were in the area. This was at no cost to the Parish Council.

- Chair and Cllr. Wickenden – First Aid Course. Both considered that this was an excellent course. "Matters arising" from it were as follows: -

- An Accident Book for the Council is required.
- The importance was highlighted of households installing CO2 monitors and checking them regularly and the Chair suggested that the Council should raise the profile of this via Social Media
- Public premises should always be evacuated if fire alarms were activated.
- **Clerk** - VAT training Course. Reported that this had been useful and enlightening; he will circulate papers from the session when received.

CLERK to investigate and action obtaining an Accident Book, also to raise the profile of the CO2 monitor issue.

b) Clerk's updates and issues.

- Completed papers were sent to Barclays Bank over a week ago in respect of the account in the process of being opened with them. Their confirmation is awaited that all is in order and that it can be used.
- Sussex Lund have been reminded that we await receipt of the grant funds for the work on the old burial ground.

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- He has identified an overcharge of £9 in respect of a Cemetery interment from earlier in the year and will liaise with the Funeral Directors concerned to refund this sum.

c) Items for next Parish Magazine column.

- Information regarding V.E. Day Anniversary commemoration activities.
- Progress report regarding fingerpost work. The posts at Clackham's Lane and Redgate Mill crossroads have both been extensively refurbished and returned to site – both are looking “as good as new”.
- Surgery car park refurbishment.
-

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- Mr David Thomas – request to lay wreath at the Service of Remembrance at St Denys’.
- English Woodlands – Details of offer on shrubs and trees.
- LCR Magazine – Autumn 2019.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

No issues requiring urgent attention were noted and the reports were signed by the Chair.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 5th - Planning & Building Committee
- 12th - Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee
- 26th - Planning & Building Committee
- 28th - Monthly Council Meeting – **Mark Cross Community Centre**

All meetings start at 19:30 and, other than where noted, will be in the Parish Council Room at Rotherfield Village Hall.

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

- Mark Cross church clock. This was installed by public subscription to celebrate Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee and concern was raised at a recent “drop in” session that it had not worked for a while. Cllr. Kitchenham has investigated and received confirmation that it is the responsibility of the Church to maintain. Clerk has been informed of a local company who repair outdoor clocks should the Church wish to investigate feasibility and cost of repair, or conversion to electric operation.
- Coppard are dealing with the resurfacing of the Surgery Car Park from Thursday to Saturday.
- Councillors will be installing the railings to surround the Rotherfield War Memorial this weekend.
- **CLERK** to add item to agenda of the November Council meeting to review format of our meetings and possible re-ordering of some items.
- Chair requested the Councillors to consider joining additional Committees; to ensure that Committee meetings are quorate, and allow for absences, nine members is a desirable minimum. The Recreation and Burial, and Communication and Social Media Committees in particular would welcome additional members. Please e inform the Clerk if you are willing to join further Committees so that agenda items may be added to formalise your appointment.
- Chair requested that draft minutes of Committee meetings should be sent to the Chair and Vice of the Committee for review prior to publication and not to him and the Council Vice Chair.

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- Chair and Cllr. Martin have removed the direction signs on Rotherfield Stores for refurbishment. These will require new wooden “fingers”, the letters and numbers are metal and will require cleaning and repainting.
- Cllrs. Wickenden and Watson-Smith have met with a Parishioner who wishes to install a bench in Court Meadow Green.
- Member of the public present reiterated the importance of the Council maintaining an accident book so that incidents involving employees or members of the public can be correctly recorded. They also commented that a “not secure” warning message was displayed next to the web browser search bar when accessing the Council’s website. **CLERK** will raise this for Adam Hardy to investigate; the website is in the process of being revised with an updated version due for release within the next few months. Clerk also advised that the item regarding his holiday dates will be carried forward to the November meeting.

Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:25

10. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Adopted and signed as a true record at the 28th November 2019 meeting of the Council

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