



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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS LIGHTING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 3RD MARCH 2020 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

Cllr. A. Martin (Chair)	Cllr. L. Henrick	Cllr. A. Moore
Cllr. J. Kitchenham (Vice Chair)	Cllr. D. Hiles	Cllr. G. Watson-Smith
Cllr. L. Buck	Cllr. P. Kember	Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe, and eight members of the public in respect of item 2b).

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public Forum

The Councillors and Clerk introduced themselves to the public present at the meeting. All were from the Eridge Station area and had been affected by the parking issues there. It was agreed that, after the formalities of items a) to f), that item 2b) relating to the matter would be dealt with as the first item under section 2).

b) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85)

None.

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

Cllr. Buck declared an interest in item 2d) as she is a resident of Monastery Gardens. Chair reminded the Councillors present that they should declare an interest at any point of the meeting if they became aware of one in connection with an item being discussed.

d) To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 14th January 2020 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Copies of the draft minutes have been circulated to the Councillors.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be adopted as a true record and the Chair of the Committee signed them.

e) Budget report to date for this Committee and consider any actions required.

Clerk reminded those present that, as agreed at the February Council meeting, budget and nominal ledger reports would be provided to all Committees in advance of the March Council meeting. Any corrections and budget re-allocations can then be agreed and dealt with prior to the end of Financial Year work undertaken by the Clerk.

f) Update regarding matters arising and action items from previous meetings.

- Installation of mirror facing New Road junction with Mayfield Road.

Cllr. Henrick reported that it will not be possible to attach a mirror to the wall opposite. The matter will be raised at the forthcoming Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) meeting with East Sussex Highways to establish if a mirror mounted on a pole will be permissible.

- **Arrangements for "Urban Cut" by the Council's contractor.**

Some cutting has already taken place and confirmation has been received that the

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£739 due to us from ESCC for 2019/2020 will be with us shortly. Clerk will complete and submit documents to ESCC for the 2020/21 cutting in time for the end of March deadline.

- **“Town Row” sign in Catts’ Hill.**

ESCC are having difficulty in identifying a suitable area of Highways land to install this due to the narrow verges.

2. RECEIVE INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE AS REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

a) Council’s response to the Rotherfield HGV Length Restrictions - Phase 2 Traffic Movement Investigations report from East Sussex Highways.

The options within the report were discussed at length and it was **RESOLVED** that, at the forthcoming SLR meeting, the following be recommended to East Sussex Highways for using on a trial basis: -

1. Sacrificial temporary bollards on the approach to the Kings Arms.
2. Removal of the white centre lines on the approach to the junction.
3. Restricting the junction at Mark Cross to make it less inviting for use by large vehicles.
4. Temporary changes to the parking spaces on the Catts Inn side of the High Street on experimental basis.

b) Eridge Station parking issues. Receive update from Cllrs. Buck and Kember and agree further action to discourage dangerous parking and damage to verges.

The members of the public present raised the following points regarding the issues and problems created for them by the vehicles parked in Groombridge Lane and Forge Road areas by the station.

- A Forge Road resident raised concerns that the parking situation had deteriorated in the four years since moving to the. Vehicles parking on the road and verges such that only vehicles up to 4x4 size can pass, but anything larger cannot. Cars parked near the junction with A26 make the area hazardous and they had an accident there recently. When station users are emerging on to the A26 after a train has arrived it makes it difficult and dangerous for those waiting to turn into the junction from the A26.
- Double yellow lines are disregarded and suggestions to those who are parking on them are met with abuse and aggression; residents wish action to be taken to address these matters.
- Another resident who has lived in the area for many years raised issues with the entrance to Forge Road and difficulty with accessing it, also with the intimidating actions from some of those parking.
- A resident living near the station reported that vehicles parked near the A26 junction, some on the yellow lines, meant that when entering it at busy times drivers were forced to reverse back on to the A26 due to oncoming vehicles not giving way.
- Another Forge Road resident highlighted the lack of enforcement against those who were parking on double yellow lines and in other areas such as to cause a danger to other road users. He also reported that, in December 2018, he unfortunately experienced a chimney fire in his property. Fire brigade were called but, although their sirens could be heard it was a further ten minutes before they were able to access their property, this due to vehicles parked by the Forge Road junction.
- A single deck bus noticed on March 2nd parked in an obstructive location. It was not clear why it was present, and the station staff confirmed it was not in connection with the railway.
- A resident from near the “Huntsman” corner was often obstructed by vehicles parking on the corner near their property.
- It as commented that, if rail travellers paid the £2.90 per day parking charge and

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used the Station car park many of the issues described could be avoided.

The Chair summarised the situation from the Parish Council's perspective: -

- Problems created by the parking had been an issue for at least ten years and probably longer.
- The cost of a rail season ticket from Eridge to London is considerably less than that from Tunbridge Wells, as is the car park cost for those who choose to pay it.
- The Council had managed to get 36 extra spaces in the car park paid for by Network Rail.
- The key issue is that there is no enforcement against those parking illegally and dangerously;

Cllr. Buck summarised the work that she and Cllr. Kember have undertaken in an endeavour to deal with the issue.

- Unfortunately the problems cannot be solved overnight.
- A multi-faceted approach was needed involving residents, the rail operator, East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council and the Police.
- Double yellow line markings are either obscured by mud or worn away, and grass verges destroyed.
- Some of bollards acting as a deterrent at the Forge Road "island" have been knocked over.
- It would be desirable for the double yellow lines at the A26 junction to be extended further back toward on the Forge Road side. It is estimated that 22 spaces would be lost through this.
- Some spaces would be gained if echelon parking were introduced at the front of the Station.
- There is a "survey toolkit" available that could be used by community groups to identify the where vehicles causing the problems originate from.
- The data gathered could be used to influence East Sussex Highways.

Cllr. Kember summarised actions that could be undertaken now to alleviate the issues.

- Install bollards on the right hand side of Groombridge lane leading up to the A26 junction and display notices to advise that these are in place to allow the verges to be restored by turf/seeding.
- Ask ESCC to repaint the double yellow lines in the area.
- Introduce a "drop off" point in front of the Station.
- Chair recommended that the issue be raised at the forthcoming SLR Meeting with East Sussex Highways. He foresees that issues will be raised by them regarding licencing and style of bollards to be used. A Traffic Order will be required to extend the yellow lines and introduce changes to the parking arrangements to "echelon" style in front of the station building.
- Cllr. Kember considered that any vehicles affected by these changes could relocate to the Station car park or the layby on the A26.
- If this phase is successful a "phase 2" would address issues at the "Huntsman" corner.

Cllr. Standley (ESCC) joined the meeting at this point.

- Cllr. Wickenden enquired as to how many vehicles parked on the roadside at the weekend.
- Residents advised that there were very few and those that did park were visiting or working on the Spa Valley Railway. Few parking issues were created by them other than when "special events" were being held such as those at Christmas.
- Due to the small size of the car park direction sign visitors were often unaware of its existence. It was suggested that Network Rail be approached to improve the signage.
- A resident raised the issue that "It would take a fatality to get an action". The residents are keen for a solution to be found and would like to help if possible.
- Cllr. Standley stated that all accidents involving personal injury are taken into

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- account when assessing priorities for action, not only those causing a fatality.
- It was reiterated that the main area of danger was created by the cars parking at the A26 junction, frequently on the double yellow lines. Traffic created by those leaving during in the evening peak frequently forced vehicles trying to enter Groombridge Lane to back out toward and onto the A26, a road with a 60mph limit. Once again lack of enforcement was raised as the issue for this.
- Cllr. Kember advised that work on to repair/replace the footbridge accessing the mainline platform commences on 20th March for 20 weeks. Subject to agreement there will be a temporary footpath from Forge Lane to the platforms.
- The issues will all be raised with ESCC Highways Officers at the forthcoming SLR meeting.
- Sussex Police will not enforce parking restrictions unless vehicles are deemed to be parking dangerously.
- Cllr. Buck enquired if the residents would be interested in forming a group to assist with monitoring and vehicle counts to reinforce the case for action.
- Clerk reported that daily car parking costs at Crowborough are £4.75 compared to £2.90 at Eridge. Annual rail season ticket for Tunbridge Wells to London is £4928 compared to £3180 from Eridge. He visits the Station regularly, notes any vehicles parked illegally and creating a hazard and then raises a report with photographs of offenders to the Sussex Police "Operation Crackdown" website.
- Clerk also recommends that the Wealden Local Police Commander and the PcsO covering the area be made aware of the concerns at the lack of enforcement.

Chair thanked those attending for their input on this issue.

c) Introduction of charges for researching and providing CCTV footage

The following was **RESOLVED**: -

- That a minimum charge of £30, plus £20 per hour, be introduced for researching incidents recorded and requested in connection with insurance claims.
- No fees would be charged for footage requested by the Police.
- CLERK** is to arrange for our CCTV policy to be updated to include this.

d) Installation of mirror opposite Monastery Gardens to improve safety for vehicles emerging.

The property owner concerned has been approached to seek their agreement for installation of the mirror and has refused permission.

CLERK will chase progress regarding repainting of the white "access protection markings" on either side of the entrance to the Gardens. He requested that Councillors report to him any areas of road marking in the Parish requiring repainting so that East Sussex Highways can add them to their schedule of work.

e) Community Match Funding – Rotherfield speed awareness enhancement

ESCC have responded to our request for this. **RESOLVED** that Cllrs. Moore and Henrick liaise with ESCC to proceed with these measures on the basis of this and as outlined in the ESCC report from November 2017. This comprises of enhancing the 30mph speed limit terminal points with red patching, road roundels and sign improvements.

f) Parking issues outside Rotherfield School

- The Governor dealing with this issue was unable to attend this meeting. Cllr. Buck has spoken with him to clarify the issues. These include speeding and provision of additional parking. With regard to speeding issues the most recent deployment of our Speed Indicating Device (SID) monitored speeds of vehicles approaching the village by the school throughout the period 22nd September to 16th October 2019. The speed at which 85% of the vehicles were monitored was shown as 28.36 mph and below.
- The Council had considered surfacing and extending the unmade parking area by echelon parking by the bank by the Recreation Ground. This would have required

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the 30mph limit to be moved further down Eridge Lane and had been disregarded as an option by ESCC. It was also noted that if parking was extended in this location there was no footpath to allow safe access to the School.

- It was recommended that the School be advised to approach ESCC directly regarding improving/extending the parking area by the Recreation Ground, also that the School work on changing the behaviour of the parents in relation to school drop off and collection.
- Cllr. Buck is to convey this information to the School and Cllr. Martin will arrange for a further session of monitoring by SID.

g) Mark Cross. Suggestions for “low level” bollard style lighting by the Millennium Green car park.

This suggestion was misinterpreted as relating to the Millennium Green area but actually relates to the bollard lights in front of the Church/Community Centre which are frequently damaged. It was recommended that the Centre review their requirements for repairing/replacing the lighting and then approach the Parish Council so that they may consider a contribution toward the cost. Cllr. Kitchenham and Buck are to liaise with the Centre regarding this.

With regard to the dog bin installation at the Brickyard Lane/A267 junction Clerk advised that a licencing application had been submitted and he was awaiting cost details before proceeding. It may not be necessary to obtain a licence for a new post as there are posts nearby which may be suitable.

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

Tuesday 26th May 2020 at 19:30 in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

4. REPORT DETAILS OF ITEMS AND ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION, FURTHER ACTION OR FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- Cllr. Moore. She had contacted Sussex Community Speedwatch who advise that, once volunteers have come forward, they will visit the Village to undertake training and risk assess the sites identified as locations for monitoring.
- The monitoring device may be borrowed from Speedwatch or to give greater flexibility one may be purchased at a price in the order of £500. A campaign to recruit team members will be run when the weather improves.
- Mark Cross School are keen for pupils to be issued with Hi Vis jackets. Clerk requested that Cllr. Moore obtain details of numbers, size and any printing requirements from the School so he may obtain them.
- Mark Cross Millennium Green. A fenced public play area has been suggested for this location and **CLERK** will add to the agenda of the next Recreation and Burial Committee meeting to discuss. Cllrs. to please provide further details of what is suggested. It was suggested that further investigation take place as to how many people would use a play area in this location.
- Clerk suggested that Mark Cross School contact the PcsO regarding issues with parking at school drop off/collection times.
- Cllr. Wickenden has offered to deal with a tree branch fallen next to New Road.

The Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:55.

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

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