



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

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON THURSDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2019 AT 19:30  
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT**

Cllr. R. Harris (Chair)  
Cllr. L. Buck  
Cllr. N. Glynn  
Cllr. D. Hiles

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

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

**COUNCILLORS ABSENT**

None.

**ALSO PRESENT**

Trevor Thorpe (Parish Clerk), Adam Hardy (Clerical Support), Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC),  
Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC), Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC) and Cllr. K. Obbard (WDC).

**1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -**

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

Cllr. L. Henrick had submitted an apology for absence and it was **RESOLVED** that the reason be accepted.

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

None. The Chair reminded those present that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one at any point during the meeting.

**c) District and County Councillor reports.**

Key points of the reports were as follows: -

**Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC)**

- West Sussex County Council are currently facing challenges with the running of their Children's services which have been judged "inadequate" by Ofsted. Commissioners have been appointed from Hampshire County Council to assist recovery.
- East Sussex County Council also have been asked to assist the situation by "mentoring" and sharing their Chief Executive, other key members and officers on a shared cost basis. The Council have capacity to undertake this.
- We are now entering "peak pothole" season – please report any that you see to East Sussex Highways.
- Cllr. Standley wished all a Merry Christmas, and the Chair thanked Cllr. Standley for his help through the year.

**Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC).**

- He recalled that a few years ago West Sussex CC mentored ESCC in respect of their Education Advisory Service.
- Eridge Station obstructive and dangerous parking. A message has been sent by a resident to both he and the Parish Council on this matter by a Parishioner who lives near the station.

- There was talk a few years ago of adding a “deck” on the existing car park to provide extra capacity. This was discounted due to the site being within the AONB, but he considered that the suggestion should be revisited.
- Enforcement regarding parking issues on the highway is the responsibility of the Police but as we are aware from problems elsewhere in the Parish this does not take place.
- Cllr. Richardson stated that this issue had been raised at several of the “drop in” sessions she had hosted. She considered that if people could park for free instead of paying the daily charge of £2.90, they will take the free option and empty spaces are seen as a result. This charge compared favourably with the £4.75 levied at Crowborough Station.
- Cllr. Whetstone expressed the view that another factor encouraging roadside parking was that a returning traveller is faced with having to go up the footbridge and down the other side before reaching the car park, whilst it is quicker to walk to a car parked elsewhere. To improve access to the car park would require another “bridge” at platform level across the track next to it.
- **CLERK** will add an item to the agenda of the January Highways Lighting and Transport meeting and check usage of car park and level of dangerous roadside parking early in the New Year.

#### **Cllr. Dixon (WDC).**

- The Election Count went smoothly, and it was the fastest he had experienced.
- Voter turnout was around 1% below the previous Elections.
- Nothing to report regarding the Local Plan.
- Council Tax. This was going to consultation with a 2.6% increase proposed on last year's figure.

#### **Cllr. Obbard (WDC).**

- A recent survey by WDC had revealed an increase of 8% in expenditure by tourist visitors to the District. It is estimated that £370m was spent by them with much of it at local businesses.
- A change to the Code of Conduct has been approved by the Full Council to include malicious allegations, harassment and bullying. This reflects changes made by ESCC and WDC has recommended that other Council's update their Code accordingly. Clerk has added an item to the agenda of the January Council meeting for this to be considered.
- The Council has pledged that it will work towards Wealden becoming a modern slavery free community.

#### **d) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 28th November 2019 for approval as a true record.**

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

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

Clerk reported the following-

- **November 2019 meeting agenda items**  
Website demonstration will take place at this meeting.
- **Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy.**  
This will be considered at the 30<sup>th</sup> January Council Meeting.
- **5 Year Council plan.**  
Thank you to the Councillors who have already submitted their five suggestions for this, look forward to receiving further input for consideration at the January Council meeting.
- **Telephone kiosk.**  
Header panels have arrived, shelf installation is awaited. Chair reported that shelving work to enable its use as a book exchange is scheduled for early in the New Year.

- **ESCC report re: measures to discourage long vehicles.**  
Still awaited.

- **Mark Cross Defibrillator.**

The Council's £600 contribution toward this is on the payment list for this meeting, as is the fee for the Church formalities required to allow installation. Clerk has enquired of Crowborough First Response volunteers regarding training, which is one of the British Heart Foundation's conditions for their assistance, he is also seeking an electrician to undertake installation of the cabinet for the device which requires a power supply.

Clerk acknowledged the help of St. Denys' Church with the formal arrangements required to allow the installation on Church property.

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

### i. Budget, other financial reports and actions arising.

Cllr. Richardson had checked and approve the bank reconciliations and it was **RESOLVED** that these and the other reports be **APPROVED** with no actions arising.

### ii. Approval of payments.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments be made: -

#### PAYMENT DETAILS

Payee Name	Amount	Transaction Detail
Xtraspace	£84.40	November storage costs
Rotherfield Village Hall	£46.20	November hall hire costs
Lloyds Bank Card Services	£59.00	Chargecard items
Angela Moore	£21.50	Reimbursement for prizes
Rotherfield Surgery	£118.80	Water testing reimbursement.
James Valentine	£250.00	Grass cutting and groundwork
The Fascia Place	£651.41	Fascia boards for Surgery
Rotherfield Village Hall	£240.00	Village Hall broadband share
Adam Hardy	£477.12	Dec. Clerical support /mileage
Phil Ireland	£280.56	Street sweeping/litter picking
JAKK/Hitachi invoice finance	£5,558.16	Fingerpost & village sign work
The Fascia Place	£505.42	Surgery guttering replacement
R. Butler and Sons	£9.00	Gravedigging overcharged L34
Diocesan Registry	£138.00	Defibrillator install - Mark X
Coppard Plant Hire Ltd	£58.21	Barriers by Pre School
X2 Connect Ltd	£117.00	Signage for phone kiosk by the school
Wealden District Council	£375.00	Dog bin emptying
East Sussex County Council	£4,751.54	Replacement lamp column 63
Rotherfield St Martin	£500.00	Support grant 2nd instalment
British Heart Foundation	£600.00	Defibrillator contribution
Rotherfield Bonfire Society	£500.00	Support grant
David Peacock	£160.00	Direction sign replacement
The Computer Studio	£60.50	Outstanding invoice/Cr note
Rotherfield Surgery	£459.04	Waste collection reimbursement
Rotherfield Surgery	£625.00	Surgery Cleaning
Rotherfield Surgery	£448.15	Phone call charges
Trevor Thorpe	£1,593.67	December salary

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H M R C	£480.68	December Tax and NI
Trevor Thorpe	£36.50	December mileage/expenses
Unity Trust Bank plc	£2.40	Transaction charges Sep - Dec
Rotherfield Sports Club	£325.00	Pitch maintenance December
Dual Energy Direct Ltd.	£220.19	Surgery electric bill - November
Total Gas & Power Ltd.	£215.41	Surgery gas bill November
	<u>£19,967.86</u>	

### RECEIPT DETAILS FOR INFORMATION

Rotherfield Surgery	£2,673.33	Rent
H M Revenue & Customs	£2,469.11	VAT reclaimed
November bank interest	£22.24	
	<u>£5,164.68</u>	

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

#### i. Demonstration of the updated website which is to “go live” at the start of the New Year.

- Adam Hardy demonstrated the new website which had been designed after discussion with the Vice Chair.
- Content currently replicates that which appears on the current site but in a new format.
- Subject to approval there is capacity to include community information on the site.
- There will also be the capability to upload the papers issued to Councillors prior to meetings; this will deal with issues raised by the Internal Auditor regarding transparency.
- A Parishioner has offered to take new photos of Councillors to replace those currently on the site; District and County Councillor images can also be included, either by way of fresh photos or by copying those on the relevant authority's site.
- Finance documents and policies await uploading.
- Current copy on the site closely follows that on the old site and can be modified subject to Council approval.
- Cllr. Buck has separately undertaken work on new copy to assist Adam; this is similar to the current copy with some modifications, mainly by way of additional images to highlight work that the Council has undertaken in areas such as the Burial Grounds.
- Information can be added regarding Village Hall and Recreation Ground if the Council so wish.
- Adam enquired whether these items should be added, and the site published or did the Council wish to review the site with additions and updates prior to giving their agreement?
- It was **RESOLVED** that the additions be made to the draft site and that links be provided to the Councillors for them to review it prior to publication.
- In response to a question raised by Cllr. Kember the Clerk advised that the addresses of Councillors are not published unless they so wished.
- It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Buck be made an editor of the site with Adam Hardy continuing in the administrator role. Changes to the site are subject to review by the Councillors. The aim is for the site to go “live” in the New Year once the requisite 30 days' notice has been given to the current supplier. “WordPress” will then take over the site and Adam will liaise with the Clerk regarding the payment to them. Chair thanked Adam for his work on the new site.

**CLERK** to add item to agenda of the January Council meeting to consider final approval for the site to be released for public view.

**ii. Review format/order of meetings to encourage public attendance.**

Cllr. Richardson has suggested that the "Public Forum" item on the agenda be moved to the beginning of the meeting, this to encourage public attendance. In response to a question posed by a Councillor, Cllr. Standley advised that Rotherfield is the only Council of which he attends meetings that has the Forum at the end.

**RESOLVED** that future agenda have the Forum at the beginning.

**iii. Rotherfield Village Pre School – update regarding undercroft water incursion issues.**

Cllr. Martin reported that ESCC are to undertake investigation and remedial work during the February half term, this subject to formal confirmation. The Chair thanked Cllr. Martin for work on this matter.

**iv. Rotherfield Surgery – update regarding current improvement works and further work which may be required.**

- Cllr. Watson-Smith, together with a Parishioner, have installed most of the new UPVC fascia boarding to the building and will be replacing the guttering shortly. The meeting thanked them for their work.
- The roof is to be cleared of moss growth prior to the gutter replacement and some tile replacements are to be made.
- Quotes have been sought for marking of parking bays to maximise use of the space available. It was confirmed that at least one disabled parking bay, adjacent to the surgery front door, will be included.

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

- 3<sup>rd</sup> December - Communications and Social Media Committee.
- 10<sup>th</sup> December - Finance and General Purpose Committee.
- 17<sup>th</sup> December - 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) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**

- Cllr. Glynn had attended the Bonfire Society Carol concert.
- Cllr. Martin had attended the site meeting regarding the Pre School damp issues and had also met with a CCTV engineer to discuss provision of a detailed specification for an installation on the Village Hall.
- Cllr. Buck had visited Rotherfield School in her personal capacity to discuss fund raising. She has written a feature for the Parish Magazine regarding how the community can help the School. **CLERK** to add an item to the agenda of the January meeting regarding this.
- Cllr. Rignall attended the V.E. Day commemoration committee meeting. This was well attended, and arrangements have been made regarding entertainment and p.a. systems. She was pleased with the progress being made and that many Village groups are involved. She had also attended the St. Denys' Christmas Fair.
- Cllr. Watson-Smith attended the Village Hall Committee meeting at which concerns were raised regarding the fitness class activity at the rear of the Hall. An item has been added to the agenda of the January Recreation and Burial Committee meeting regarding this.
- Cllr. Richardson attended the Twinning Association meeting and has hosted two "drop in" sessions on behalf of the Council.



- Cllr. Kitchenham gave a reading on behalf of the Council at the well-attended "Nine Lessons and Carols" Service at St. Mark's Church.
- Cllr. Kember attended the V.E. Day commemoration committee meeting.
- Clerk attended the quarterly Clerk's meeting at Uckfield at which presentations were made by Inspector Goss of Sussex Police, a representative of "Friends of the Earth" and a Wealden District Council Officer in connection with the new "Healthy Wealden" website.

**b) Clerk's updates and issues.**

Clerk is on holiday from close of business on 24<sup>th</sup> December, back to work Monday 6<sup>th</sup>. Usual "out of office" messages will be set up and he will liaise with Adam Hardy regarding publication of the agenda for the 7<sup>th</sup> January meeting; this has been redesignated as a full council meeting to enable discussion/agreement of budget and precept for 2020/21 as this cannot be delegated to a Committee. WDC require completed papers regarding this returned to them by Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>.

**c) Items for next Parish Magazine column**

Please send to Adam Hardy.

**6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.**

- Spa Valley Railway - "Starter" Magazine issue No. 72.
- Glasdon - Village Gateways and street furniture brochures
- Fantastic Fireworks - V.E. 75 Brochure
- Wealden Citizens Advice - Annual report 2018/19
- Crowborough Town Council - Christmas Card

**7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS**

No issues of concern had been noted in these.

**8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.**

- 7th January - Planning & Building Committee – this is to be redesignated as a Full Council meeting to enable discussion and agreement of the Budget and Precept for 2020/21.
- 14th January - Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee, Mark Cross Community Centre
- 21st January - Recreation & Burial Committee
- 28th January - Planning & Building Committee
- 30th January - Monthly Council Meeting

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

No issues raised. Chair thanked those present for their hard work during the year.

Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 20:50

**10. PUBLIC FORUM.**

None.

**Adopted and signed as a true record at the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 meeting of the Council**

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

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