



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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 30TH APRIL 2020 AT 19:30**

As permitted by the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392 this meeting was conducted "online" via "Microsoft teams".

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

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

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

T. Thorpe, Parish Clerk, Adam Hardy, Clerical Support, Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC),
Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC).

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public forum

No issues raised.

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

Cllr. N. Glynn.

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

None. Vice 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) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr. Standley (ESCC) was thanked for his comprehensive report covering both ESCC and WDC matters. This will be added to the Council's website.

e) To consider and approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27th February 2020, the notes from the 2nd April 2020 "Virtual Meeting" (which considered items from the cancelled 30th March 2020 Council Meeting) and the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 16th April 2020.

Cllr. Standley joined the meeting at this point and reported the following: -

- Waste collection of bulky items will resume from next week.
- £23m in grants has been distributed in the past three weeks to support businesses in Wealden.
- Cllr. Henrick commented that co-operation between Wealden and local groups had been good, and that those in Rotherfield had given excellent support to residents in the Parish. Information is awaited regarding central government assistance to charities. Cllr. Standley speaks weekly with our MP, Nus Ghani, and will contact her for information.

27th February Council meeting. Cllr. Henrick raised issues with certain items featured in the draft minutes and that she wished them to be deleted. She has listened to the recording of

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the meeting and has suggested certain changes. Cllr. Martin stated that he had also listened to the recording and concurred with Cllr. Henrick's view.

At this point the meeting was adjourned for 15' to allow the Councillors to participate in the public display of gratitude to the health and other key workers who are supporting our communities during the current Coronavirus crisis.

Cllr. Watson-Smith joined the meeting at this point. The delay in his joining was due to technical problems that he had experienced.

- **Minutes of the 27th February 2020 Parish Council meeting.**

Clerk will review these minutes against the recording. He commented that it was the Councillors as a whole who would need to consider whether the draft minutes constituted a true record and that they could listen to the recording of the meeting should they so wish. Cllr. Hiles proposed that a decision on adoption be deferred until the May meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that the **CLERK** review these draft minutes against the recording and arrange for Councillors to have access to it.

- **Notes from the 2nd April 2020 "Virtual Meeting" (which considered items from the cancelled 30th March 2020 Council Meeting).**

It was **RESOLVED** that the notes from this informal virtual meeting be published as a matter of record only.

- **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 16th April 2020.**

It was **RESOLVED** that these minutes be adopted as a true record and they will be signed by the Vice Chair when circumstances permit.

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

- Football Foundation Grant to the Sports Club. This has been approved by the Foundation and the Club are keen for the work to begin. The quote from Agrifactors has been accepted by the Club and it is hoped that work will start on Monday May 11th. "Online" acceptance of the grant is to be made by the Council but there are technical issues with the final confirmation of the grant offer; Clerk is working to resolve these in conjunction with the Club and Foundation. A letter will be sent to Agrifactors confirming quote acceptance and requesting H & S, "Social Distancing" and insurance details, and notices added to the Council's social media to raise awareness of the work.
- Councillor Vacancy – Clerk will compile a notice advertising the vacancy to be filled by "Co-option" which will outline the process involved. The selection will take place when circumstances permit.
- The beehive "compound" has been installed in the Old Burial Ground. Cllr. Watson Smith outlined the suitability of the location as it is away from nearby properties. A location nearer the waste and compost compounds would be unsuitable as it would be close to a gateway to the Burial Ground and the site where bonfires are sometimes held.
- The Church are concerned that the compound has been installed over graves; although Clerk had not had time to investigate but suspected that it was likely that there were plots in this location. Vice Chair had also visited the site and was of the view that the hives should be relocated, preferably within the Old Burial Ground but if not, to the Parish Cemetery in Eridge Lane. The majority view of the Councillors was that the compound be relocated. Cllrs. Wickenden and Watson-Smith will deal with the relocating.

2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT END OF MARCH 2020, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND NOTE OR AUTHORISE PAYMENTS.

Clerk summarised details of the payment for this month. He will arrange a meeting with the Surgery when normality returns to ensure that they have submitted details of all accounts that the Council have agreed to cover. It was **RESOLVED** that the payments listed below be authorised and made.

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PAYMENTS

Payee Name	Amount	Transaction Detail
Xtraspace	£84.50	March document storage fee
H M R C	£470.12	April Tax and NI
Lloyds Bank Card Services	£157.02	Debit card payments
ESALC Ltd.	£1,035.75	Annual subscription 2020/21
Coppard Plant Hire Ltd	£60.98	Barrier hire for Rec.
Direct365Online Ltd	£16.37	Excess weight charge hall bin
M.L. Hammond	£400.00	Bees for Old Burial Ground
A. Martin	£481.80	SID maintenance and wattles
Adam Hardy	£543.75	Clerical support
Tollwood Garden Service	£2,279.50	Groundwork and grass cutting
Trevor Thorpe	£1,602.43	April Salary
The Computer Studio	£1,104.48	Microsoft 365 renewals
Trevor Thorpe	£89.28	Expenses and reimbursements
Rotherfield St Martin	£1,500.00	Grant payment
Wealden Citizen Advice Bureau	£300.00	Grant payment
Samaritans	£200.00	Grant payment
Hospice In The Weald	£250.00	Grant payment
Rotherfield Friendship Club	£200.00	Grant payment
Crowborough First Responders	£100.00	Grant payment
Rotherfield Horticultural Society	£120.00	Grant payment
Burns Guthrie & Partners	£585.90	Asbestos survey
BHIB Insurance	£1,814.08	Council insurance renewal
Kent & Sussex Air Ambulance	£250.00	Grant payment
Total Gas & Power Ltd.	£238.30	Surgery Gas Bill 31/12 - 30/1
Dual Energy Direct Ltd.	£217.01	Surgery Electricity bill 1/3 - 31/3
Total Gas & Power Ltd.	£204.19	Surgery Gas bill 1/3 - 31/3
Rotherfield Surgery	£650.03	Surgery bill reimbursements
TOTAL	£14,955.49	

RECEIPTS

Parishioner	£495.00	Burial fees and costs
HMRC	£5,283.44	VAT reclaim 1st Dec- 29th Feb.
Wealden District Council	£66,078.44	2020 Precept instalment 1
Rotherfield Surgery	£2,673.33	Monthly rent
TOTAL	£74,530.21	

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

i. Approval and adoption of final accounts for 2019/20 and any adjustments to the 2020/21 budget.

- Clerk reported that he had completed the “End of Year” processes and will circulate the final reports for the Councillor’s information. The “Annual Return” document will also be completed and circulated.
- The final accounts for 2019/2020 will be considered at the May PCM.
- Our internal audit for this half year is scheduled for June 1st and will be undertaken “online” with the auditor. Submission of the Annual Return, and display of the associated public notices, has been deferred to the Autumn due to the Coronavirus situation.

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- Vice Chair is concerned at the level of information that the internal auditor suggested we are required to display to the public, Clerk will discuss this with Adam Hardy and review what needs to be published.

ii. Review of the Council's Grants Policy.

Cllr. Buck commented that the current policy was clear and considered that future grant applicants be required to complete an application form. She suggested that the form be expanded to request additional details as to the proposed use of the grant money. It was **RESOLVED** to accept Cllr. Buck's offer to review this policy and make the amendments that she has suggested.

iii. Rotherfield Surgery. Request for replacement flooring in areas of the building, and other suggested maintenance matters.

- Cllr. Henrick reported that much of the Surgery is carpeted and that, in the current Coronavirus situation, it is desirable that this be replaced with a more hygienic surfacing.
- Three quotes have been obtained by the Surgery for this work, each in the region of £9K. Cllr. Henrick has suggested that the Surgery contacts the Friends of the Surgery who may fund some of the areas involved, their response has not yet been received.
- It is estimated that the further work costing in the region of £7K is required to replace the flooring in full. The Surgery cost centre is to be reviewed to establish what surplus funds may be available.
- It has not been possible to meet with the Doctors in the current situation to discuss the Practice's long term plans.

It was agreed that this item be carried forward to the May meeting by which time it is hoped that the level of support available from the League of Friends, and the Surgery account's balance position, will be known, **CLERK** to note.

Cllr. Kember left the meeting at this point.

iv. Appointment of Cllr. Buck as a signatory on the Unity Trust bank account, and removal of Cllr. Richardson at her request.

RESOLVED that these changes be made, **CLERK** to liaise with Unity Trust Bank and the Councillors involved to process these changes.

v. Publication of an Annual Report in lieu of the Annual Parish Meeting.

- As public meetings cannot be held in the present situation the Annual Parish Meeting has been postponed to later in the year. A Parish Newsletter is scheduled for the Autumn and it was suggested that a report could be included in this.
- Cllr. Buck suggested that "Zoom" or similar software would be a way of creating a "virtual coffee morning" for Parishioners to raise matters. Adam Hardy suggested that attendance at these meetings should be on an "invitation only" basis, rather than by publishing a link, once Parishioners had expressed an interest; the content must not be recorded. It was agreed that a "Coffee Morning" conducted via "Zoom" be arranged **CLLR. BUCK** to set up and liaise with **CLERK** should any special arrangements be required. Cllr. Standley indicated that he would be happy to take part in such an event if so wished, also indicated that he would now leave the meeting. He was thanked for his attendance.
- Clerk confirmed that there was a statutory process to publish the formal documents relating to the end of year financial details and that parishioners had the right to view and copy the documents should they so wish.

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

- April 2nd - “Virtual” informal meeting to discuss/review information and agenda items from the cancelled March 26th Council meeting.
- April 7th - Virtual” informal meeting of the Communications and Social Media Committee.
- April 14th - “Virtual” Recreation and Burial Committee Meeting.
- April 16th - “Virtual” Council meeting also dealing with Finance and General Purpose Committee matters.
- April 21st - “Virtual” Planning and Building Committee meeting.

Draft minutes of all these meetings had been circulated to the Councillors and their contents noted.

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

a) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

Cllr. Buck reported that she had attended several “virtual” meetings regarding the setting up of the “Parish Pals” group who are supporting the community in conjunction with Rotherfield St. Martin. The meeting thanked Cllr. Buck for her efforts and excellent work with the “Parish Pals”. She advised that she was “standing down” from the “management” aspect of the “Pals”, which was now being overseen by Rotherfield St Martin, but will continue as a co-ordinator for her area of the Parish.

b) Clerk’s updates and issues.

- It was noted that a “Virtual informal meeting” of the Communications and Social Media Committee had taken place on April 7th. **CLERK** to include in the list in item 4 of the minutes.
- Clerk advised that his Summer Holiday dates would be Friday 24th July returning to work on Monday 10th August. Adam Hardy reported that he is taking holiday from 13th – 20th July. Clerk will cover the minute taking for the Communication and Social Media Committee meeting of August 18th and Adam will cover the role for the July 30th Parish Council Meeting.
- Adam advised that he had been contacted by the Bonfire Society regarding the postponed celebration of the “VE Day 75” Anniversary on May 8th.
 - The Society wished to know if any arrangements had been made for suitable “socially distanced” celebrations to replace this. They intend to tour the Parish from 15:00, including the Eridge Station area, with their “mobile disco” playing music appropriate to the era.
 - Other proposals are to encourage decorating of houses, and communal singing of “We’ll Meet Again” after the 21:00 address by the Queen.
 - St. Denys’ Church will be holding the previously planned VE Day 75th Anniversary Commemoration Service “online” on Sunday 10th May. Cllr. Watson-Smith was asked to raise the Parish flags on Friday.
 - Adam is to confirm details with Robert Harris and Cllr. Rignall and arrange publicity of these events via the Council’s Social Media and the “Parish Pals”.

c) Items for next Parish Magazine column.

- Please pass suggestions for items to Adam by May 21st. Vice Chair reminded the meeting that the magazine is currently “online” only and free of charge.
- Disappointment was expressed that people are using the Old Burial Ground for dog walking and allowing their pets to foul this area.

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- Cllr. Buck suggested that a “round up” of the Council’s achievements over the last year be featured in the next edition; Cllr. Richardson suggested that a summary of the grants made by the Council could also feature and Cllr. Martin suggested publishing details of recent “Speed Indicating Device” activity.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

No correspondence had been received other than a note from Rotherfield St Martin thanking the Council for their recent grant and continuing support.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

None submitted.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- May 12th - Planning and Building Committee
- May 13th - Annual Parish Meeting – **POSTPONED**
- May 26th - Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee
- May 28th - Monthly Council Meeting incorporating the Annual Council Meeting

These meetings will start at 19:30 and, unless the current situation changes, will be conducted “online” via “Microsoft teams”. Parishioners who wish to attend on this basis please contact the Clerk so that arrangements may be made for them.

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

- Concerns had been raised regarding weeds and moss on the gravel path from the entrance of the Old Burial Ground to the area near the spoil and compost bins. Cllr. Martin has offered to deal with this.
- Clerk advised that an interment is scheduled in the Parish Cemetery on Friday May 15th at noon.
- Cllr. Martin has agreed with our road sweeper/litter picker that he may resume duties, suitably “socially distanced”, in the “remote” areas outside of Rotherfield Village Centre. Our grass cutting contractor has been advised that the St Cheron twitten is due to be strimmed and Cllr. Martin has agreed with him that this may be done if he “socially distanced” should pedestrians appear. Clerk suggested that contractor be asked to advise us when this work is to take place so that residents may be given advance warning. **CLERK** to contact him to obtain details.
- Cllr. Kitchenham advised that the surface of the above “twitten” was breaking up at the New Road end. Cllr. Martin will inspect to see if any further work is required, **CLERK** to add item to agenda of the forthcoming Highways Committee meeting.
- Cllr. Watson Smith has noticed that a bollard in the Rec. requires replacing, as does one on the boundary of Mark Cross Millennium Green. Cllr. Martin is to inspect.
- Adam reported that two new Bishops have been appointed to the Diocese, Bishop Will and Bishop Ruth.

Vice Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:36.

**Adopted as a true record at the 28th May 2020 meeting of the Parish Council.
The minutes will be signed when circumstances allow.**

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

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