



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 27TH AUGUST 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 "Zoom".

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Henrick (Vice Chair)	Cllr. D. Hiles	Cllr. J. Richardson
Cllr. L. Buck	Cllr. J. Kitchenham	Cllr. K. Rignall
Cllr. N. Glynn	Cllr. A. Martin	Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. R. Harris	Cllr. A. Moore	

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Trevor Thorpe, Parish Clerk, Adam Hardy (Administrative Support),
Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC), and Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC).

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public forum

No issues raised.

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

Cllrs. Kember and Watson-Smith had submitted these, and it was **RESOLVED** that the reasons given for their absences be accepted.

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. K. Obbard (WDC) had advised that he was unable to attend.

Cllr. R. Standley (ESCC) reported the following: -

- Work is being focussed on the final arrangements for all pupils to return to school in September.
- There had been some delays in resurfacing work in the Wadhurst, Wallcrouch and Ticehurst areas. Cllr. Standley had arranged for overnight closures in Wadhurst to hasten completion of the work in the village centre, the other resurfacing in this area had been dealt with during daytime.

Cllr. Dixon (WDC) reported the following: -

- Acknowledged concerns and communication issues arising from the recent water main issue affecting the Parish and parts of Crowborough.
- There appeared to be a delay in South East Water acknowledging that the burst was a major incident.

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- Information held and provided by South East Water had been out of date. Staff “in the field” had been good but they too suffered from information problems.
- There are two consultation documents issued by Central Government proposing some fundamental changes to the current planning laws;
- The key document for the changes is “Planning For The Future”, and it is considered that these proposals could be the biggest change to planning laws since 1948. Cllr. Dixon recommended that the documents be viewed, and that the Council consider submitting a response to them.
- This document invites public comment and the deadline for these is 29th October 2020. Links to the document will be added to the Parish Council’s website.
- Cllrs. Glynn and Martin raised issues regarding lack of enforcement progress in dealing with planning breaches, and also advised that the rubbish skip on Rotherfield Hill had reappeared after several months’ absence. **CLERK** to report the skip issue to ESCC.
- Cllr Henrick relayed the outcome of the Planning meeting discussion re: the recent listed building application for a staircase to Cllr Dixon.

e) Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30th July 2020 for approval as a true record.

These had been circulated to the Councillors and it was **RESOLVED** that they be adopted and signed when circumstances allow.

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

Several items have been carried forward to this agenda for further discussion, with the remainder having been dealt with.

g) Review possibility of returning to “physical” or “hybrid “Council meetings.

Cllr. Standley reported that there is no indication of any change to the current situation regarding holding meetings on a “remote basis”. It is understood that Rotherfield Village Hall are investigating re-opening on a limited basis with the Parish Council Room remaining closed and hirers responsible for cleaning and sanitising. Eridge Community Centre and Mark Cross are still reviewing the situation.

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

- Clerk reported that he was still investigating a £100 difference in the Unity Trust reconciliation report.
- Financial reports had been made available for Councillors to view prior to the meeting.
- Cllr. Buck queried a £320 payment from the Communications budget relating to provision of a grant to St. Denys’ Church so that they could offer a public WiFi facility. It was agreed that this cost be reallocated to the Grants budget. **CLERK** to arrange correcting entries.
- Cllr. Henrick requested that the “pre meetings”, previously held on the Monday prior to the monthly meeting, be reinstated from the September meeting and conducted via “Zoom” so that financial reports and payments can be reviewed in advance. **CLERK** to note.
- A cheque had been raised on the Barclays account to reimburse the Council’s Unity account for the surgery expenditure.
- It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments be authorised: -

List of Payments made or authorised between 1st - 31st August

Payee Name	Transaction Detail	Amount Paid
Agrifactors (Southern) Ltd	Pitch drainage - balance	£22,967.10
Xtraspace	Storage fees for July 2020	£84.40
Rotherfield Sports Club	July pitch maintenance	£325.00
Lloyds Bank Card Services	Monthly payment card bill	£108.45
Phil Ireland	Street sweeping/litter picking	£527.72
Adam Hardy	Admin. support August	£775.00

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TN6 Electrical	St. Denys' broadband	£320.00
Burns Guthrie & Partners	Stage and design work	£3,525.56
KPS Contractors Ltd	Gravedigging cost P14	£526.54
Teambase	Card album for Square Kiosk	£27.50
Tollwood Garden Service	August invoice	£2,058.50
Trevor Thorpe	August Salary	£1,602.43
H M R C	August Tax & N I	£470.12
Trevor Thorpe	Clerk's expenses and mileage	£25.83
A. Martin	August Invoice	£204.00
Dual Energy Direct Ltd.	July 2020 Surgery electric bill	£203.19
Total Gas & Power Ltd.	July 2020 Surgery gas bill	£63.67
Rotherfield Surgery	August bill reimbursements	£800.89
Total payments		£34,615.90

List of receipts between 1st - 31st August

Payer Name	Transaction Detail	Amount Received
Dignity Funerals Ltd	Interment fees	£285.00
Dignity Funerals Ltd	Interment and gravedigging fees	£780.06
Tester and Jones Ltd	Interment and gravedigging fees	£938.78
Trevor Thorpe	Correction for erroneous purchase	£31.98
Rotherfield Surgery	Monthly rent	£2,673.33
Total receipts		£4,709.15

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

i. Adoption of updated grants policy.

Cllrs. Henrick and Buck have reviewed the policy and recommended that it be adopted. It was **RESOLVED** that the policy be adopted and published.

ii. Decision regarding quotes for CCTV to monitor the Village Hall and Rec. areas.

Cllr. Martin declared a personal interest in this item as he is a former director of one of the companies who responded to the invitation to tender. It was **RESOLVED** that the quote of £7430 plus VAT submitted by Total Support Services (Security) Ltd. be accepted and that the cost of the installation be funded by Community Infrastructure Levy funds. It was noted that TSS had installed the existing CCTV system in the Village. **CLERK** to advise TSS that their tender has been accepted.

iii. Identification of issues to raise with South East Water and ESCC re: recent water main burst.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the following key points be raised with South East Water.

- Mixed messages were received from South East Water regarding progress with the repairs.
- The lack of a water station at Jarvis Brook to serve that part of Crowborough led to extra pressure on the Rotherfield Village Hall water station.
- The South East Water teams dealing with the repairs, and those running the water stations, should be complimented for their efforts. It was disappointing to learn that they had received abuse from some of the public at the water stations and elsewhere.
- On the request of the Parish Council a bowser was provided to serve Mark Cross thus relieving pressure on the Rotherfield and Mayfield water stations and this had been welcomed.
- The delivering of water to those registered as a priority had worked well.
- The road signage for the diversion has been inadequate. There were no signs at the junction of Horleigh Green Road and the A267 or Mayfield Road/High Cross warning people of the road closure.

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iv. **2020 Parish Christmas Lights arrangements update.**

- Cllr. Glynn reported that she has spoken to residents in Rotherfield Village Centre regarding the Christmas Lights and has delivered letters seeking permission for attaching lights and Christmas Trees to their properties. Reactions were very favourable.
- Cllr. Harris will speak with the contractors who installed the lights last year to discuss arrangements.
- Cllr. Richardson suggested that an individual who had given service to the Parish be identified and invited to undertake the "Switch On".
- With regard to Mark Cross they have requested further solar powered "fairy lights" – cost estimated at between £500-£600. The Parish Council wish to support lights in Mark Cross, and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllrs. Buck, Watson-Smith, Kitchenham and Kember meet with the Mark Cross residents organising these to discuss and seek further information as to where they propose for them be located. An item is to be added to the 22nd September Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee meeting agenda for final agreement of expenditure on Christmas lights and other decorations in both communities, **CLERK** to note.
- "Lighting up" date is suggested as 29th November, the first Sunday of Advent.

v. **Use of traffic cones to support parking restrictions.**

A resident in the centre of Rotherfield Village has had some success in deterring illegal parking on double yellow lines by deploying traffic cones on them. Cllr. Hiles advised that to place cones on the Highway requires Licencing by the Highways Authority and should not be supported by the Parish Council. Cllr. Martin will discuss this with the resident concerned. Permanent bollards have also been suggested but it is considered that there is insufficient clearance for pedestrians for this to take place. There is an active feasibility study being undertaken by East Sussex Highways, on behalf of the Parish Council, regarding the issues at this junction.

vi. **Annual Council meeting – consider if it is wished to hold one in the current circumstances.**

Clerk advised that there appeared to be nothing to prevent holding this meeting on a virtual basis. It was **RESOLVED** that the 24th September Parish Council meeting be redesignated as the Council's Annual meeting at which the Chair and Vice Chair are elected.

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

- 4th August - Planning and Building Committee
- 11th August - Communications and Social Media Committee

Draft minutes of these meetings have been circulated to the Councillors and it was **RESOLVED** to receive these minutes, to approve and confirm recommendations therein and, as far as is requisite, the actions 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 has spent time with surveyors and builders at the Pre School. The repair work has been completed and those involved with the work are confident that this will resolve the damp issues. He had also spent time with those dealing with the recent water main issue.
- Cllrs. Rignall and Wickenden attended the VJ day commemoration at the War Memorial.
- Cllr. Buck had attended a meeting of the "Social Prescribers". These who link Community Groups and organisations to jointly support those in need. There is a new Prescriber, Helen, for Rotherfield and Cllr. Buck suggested that a meeting be organised between her, the Surgery and Councillors. Social Prescribers are employed by ESCC and operate under the guidance of Age UK.
- Cllr. Buck offered to take videos of Councillor and Village activity; the recent video of Cllr. Wickenden undertaking work on the Rec. had been well received.

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- Clerk reported that he had attended a SSALC virtual meeting with other Sussex Clerks.

b) Clerk's updates and issues.

- Our contractor has dealt with the overhanging branch in the play area and has removed the log resulting from this. He has also suggested the removal of the dead tree at the top of the bank to Eridge Lane, Cllr. Wickenden to please liaise with him regarding this and inform Clerk of the actions agreed
- Clerk is to also enquire regarding when the trees adjoining the Cemetery parking area are to be removed.
- Surgery door. Comments have been made that the heavy door at Rotherfield Surgery can be difficult for some to open. It was agreed to add an item to the September Council meeting to discuss this and Cllrs. Henrick, Kitchenham and Harris to visit Surgery to discuss this. **CLERK** to add item to the agenda.
- Adam Hardy informed that an accessibility statement is required on our website and a draft has been circulated by him for consideration.
- St Denys' Church will be holding a Remembrance Day service in some form and on a "scaled down" basis with "live streaming".
- In response to a query from Cllr. Henrick, Clerk advised that the issue raised recently by the External Auditor related to the incorrect transcription of a figure to the Annual Return Document. This had been corrected and the amended form returned to them.
- Parish Newsletter arrangements and responsibilities are as follows: -

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parish Report for Newsletter - Covid 19 and the Council - Highways Lighting and Transport - Recreation and Burial - Communications and Social Media - VE Day – cancelled event - Recent water issues - Rotherfield Surgery - Grants - The next six months - Recreation Ground Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vice Chair - Cllrs. Moore and Richardson - Cllr. Kitchenham - Cllr. Watson-Smith - Cllr. Moore - Cllr. Rignall - Cllr. Richardson - Cllr. Henrick, Harris and Kitchenham - Information to be taken from the minutes. - Send plans to Adam - Separate flyer for the survey – Cllr. Buck to please provide a brief note for the newsletter. Cllr Buck to design a page concerning strategic issues and circulate to councillors for comment.
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- Second page of the above flyer

c) Items for next Parish Magazine column.

Deadline has passed for the September issue. Items for October please pass to Adam.

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6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- No items requiring action, or a response had been received. Clerk will deliver circulars and magazines received since "lockdown" to Cllr. Wickenden.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

No items requiring urgent action were identified in these. The Wicksteed inspection has recently taken place and the report is awaited. Cllr. Wickenden accompanied the inspector and a full

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report is to be produced. An item will feature on the agenda of the next Recreation and Burial Committee to agree actions on matters identified. **CLERK** is to update the weekly checklist for the play area to take into account comments in the report and our litter picker will be asked to undertake this in future. Cllr. Richardson will scan and submit her recent inspection reports to the Clerk.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 15th September - Planning and Building Committee
- 22nd September - Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee
- 24th September - Monthly Council meeting

These meetings will start at 19:30 and will be held on a "Virtual" basis via "Zoom" unless otherwise advised.

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

- Cllr. Henrick congratulated Cllr. Buck on her appointment as the Rotherfield representative to the Wealden District Association of Local Councils. In addition to Rotherfield, Cllr. Buck will represent five other Parishes.
- Cllr. Wickenden reported that all the surplus soil had been removed from the area of the Recreation Ground which is to form the new "Garden Area" for the Pre School.
- Cllr. Henrick had visited the Old Burial Ground and raised concerns regarding the "Wild Area". **CLERK** to add item to the agenda of the 13th October Recreation and Burial Committee meeting.
- Clerk confirmed that, whilst interments in the Old Burial Ground are rare, it is still possible for burials to take place in existing plots there should there be space in them.
- Wreathes for Remembrance Sunday. Cllr. Wickenden advised that four are required, **CLERK** to order.
- Cllr. Wickenden reported that the Cuckoo Line Stores are willing to allow installation of a larger noticeboard. **CLERK** to investigate costs.
- Congratulations were given to Cllr. Buck on her recent marriage.

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

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