

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 29TH OCTOBER 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. R. Harris (Chair)
Cllr. L. Buck
Cllr. J. Richardson
Cllr. L. Henrick (Vice Chair)
Cllr. A. Moore
Cllr. A. Martin
Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. P. Kember
Cllr. N. Glynn

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

Adam Hardy (Council Administrator)

Cllr B Standley (ESCC), Cllr Francis Whetstone (ESCC), Cllr P Dixon (WDC),

Cllr K Obbard (WDC).and 5 members of the public.

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public forum

None

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

Cllr Kitchenham submitted a retrospective apology for the meeting.

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

Cllr Kember declared an interest in planning application: WD/2020/1623/MAJ - Land at Forge Wood/Great Robbins Shaw, Sham Farm Road, Eridge; which the Chair had agreed could be considered under item 9 of this meeting. Cllr Kember was a former neighbour and a former director and senior partner of Kember Loudon Williams, the company advising the Neville Estate.

d) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr Standley (East Sussex County Council):

- Cllr Standley reported that the Council are working hard to avoid a large rise in Coronavirus cases. An anomaly in data had been detected regarding university students who may now not live in the area but still be registered at a local medical practice if testing positive would count in the Wealden figures.
- Cllr Standley corrected reports in the media that money had been given to ESCC for helping families dependent on Free School Meals. This money had been provided much earlier in the year and allocated to other support services.

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Cllr Whetstone (East Sussex County Council):

- Cllr Whetstone reported that social services in West Sussex were now being run by East Sussex as well.
- Cllr Whestone was pleased to inform the council that the Ashdown Forest were now seeking to appoint a new CEO.

Cllr Dixon (Wealden District Council):

- Cllr Dixon reported that the Wealden Community Hub set up to support those affected by Coronavirus was still operating at a low level.
- The District Council continue to work on the new local plan and the recent "call for sites" SHELAA has been completed and sites put forward would now be considered for viability. Cllr Dixon thought it unlikely that the majority of the sites would be approved.
- Cllr Henrick asked about the Conservation Officer's involvement in planning application: WD2020/0253F – Looking West, Monastery Gardens which is outside of the conservation area and has no impact on listed buildings.
 - Cllr Dixon reported that it was not unusual for the Conservation Officer to comment on an application where the property boundary abuts the conservation area although, the Conservation Officer had not viewed the site before making her recommendations. Cllr Dixon agreed to visit the site and suggest that the Conservation Officer also visit the site to see how little the impact of the property has on the surrounding areas.
- Cllr Henrick expressed the concern felt by the council that Wealden planning were discontinuing the practise of writing to residents about new applications. Cllr Kember felt that the withdrawal of this service would disenfranchise those who do not have internet access.
 - Cllr Dixon replied that it is not a legal requirement for the District Council to write to neighbours, only a site notice is a legal requirement. However, he understood the council's concerns and would report them back to Wealden Planning.

Cllr Obbard (Wealden District Council):

Cllr Obbard had circulated a report to councillors ahead of the meeting.

- Cllr Obbard reported that some leisure centres across the district will receive improvement grants including Crowborough.
- Cllr Obbard reported that as part of the Climate Emergency Action Plan the Council has co-ordinated a project called Solar Together, which is a group bidding project for domestic solar panels. Over 900 Wealden residents have signed up for quotes, and the participants will soon be getting their offers. After which they have about 6 weeks to decide whether or not to sign up.
- e) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 24th September 2020 for approval as a true record.

Draft minutes have been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be adopted as a true record and they will be signed when circumstances allow.

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

- The Council Administrator confirmed that the Chair and Vice-Chair have forwarded the signed originals of their acceptance forms to the Clerk. In the current circumstances Wealden District Council are happy for scanned copies to be sent to them and this has been dealt with.
- Clerk had reported ahead of the meeting that the process has been started to add Cllr Harris as a signatory to the Unity Trust Bank account. The Clerk has asked if Cllr Watson-Smith was happy to be removed as a signatory dure to lack of activity on his user account. Cllr Watson-Smith confirmed he is happy to be removed from this account.
- Clerk had reported that enquires to Barclays regarding the issue of card readers and cards to enable online payments. Reply awaited.
- Clerk had reported that no progress had been made in the search for the missing SID bracket.

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

Financial reports, invoices and details of payments had been made available to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the budget and bank reconciliation reports be approved, and the payments shown below authorised. It was noted that the clerk's salary, expenses and pension payments were added to the list, circulated prior to the meeting,

List of Payments made or authorised between 1st – 31st October 2020

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Payee Name	Transaction Detail	Amount
Xtraspace	Storage Costs	£84.50
Rotherfield Sports Club	Pitch Maintenance	£325.00
Lloyds Bank Card Services	Charge card May payments	£104.33
NEST Pension Contribution	September Contribution	£136.94
NEST Pension Contribution	October Contribution	£140.63
W.D.A.L.C	Annual Sub	£32.00
The Royal British Legion	Donation for Poppy Wreaths	£100.00
PowerBee	Solar Fairy Lights x15 – Mark Cross	£404.85
KPS Contractors Ltd	Grave digging P33	£526.54
Sussex Trees	Additional Christmas Trees Rotherfield	£126.00
lan Bassett	Rec Noticeboard Refurbishment	£242.00
T C Woodgate	Mole Catching, Cemetery Trees, Trees bottom of Rec	£1,020.00
Rotherfield St Martin	Lease Cost Reimbursement – Franking Machine	£144.00
Adam Hardy	Hours for October	£575.00
Tollwood Garden Service	Grass Cutting	£1,621.00
Phill Ireland	Street Sweeping/Litter Picking	£480.96
Trevor Thorpe	Reimbursement – Print Purchases	£202.68
T D Thorpe	October Salary	£1,669.89
HMRC	October Tax & NI	£515.51
Trevor Thorpe	October Mileage, Home as Office	£39.24

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List of receipts between 1st – 31st October 2020		
	Total Payments	£18,698.66
Rotherfield Surgery	Bills Reimbursed – Cleaning, Intruder Alarm Annual Charge, Fire Alarm Maintenance and Waste Collections	£519.38
Total Gas & Power Ltd	Gas Bill for September	£51.38
Smartest Energy	September Electric Bill	£204.31
Public Works Loan Board	September 2020 Loan Payment	£9,390.59
Teambase	Paper & Laminating Pouches	£41.93

List of receipts between 1st – 31st October 2020

Rotherfield Surgery	Rent for October	£2,673.33
E. R. Hickmott & Son	Burial Fee – M31	£300.00
CIL Wealden District Council	CIL October Payment	£21,787.49

Total Receipts £24,760.82

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

To appoint Cllr Watson-Smith to the Recreation & Burial Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Watson-Smith to the Planning & Building Committee.

• To confirm Cllr Watson-Smith's roles as suggested at the September Council Meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Watson-Smith to the following committees:

- Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee
- Planning & Building Committee
- Finance & General Purposes Committee

To elect a Vice Chair for the Recreation & Burial Committee:

Cllr Adrian Martin & Cllr Graham Watson-Smith were nominated for the position of Vice Chair to the Recreation & Burial Committee. On a vote of 7 to 5 Cllr Watson-Smith was elected as Vice-Chair of the Recreation & Burial Committee.

ii. Review of Staff Committee terms of reference and CCTV Policies:

It was **RESOLVED** to make no changes to the Staff Committee Terms of Reference and adopt them for a further year.

The Council Administrator reported that changes still needed to be made to the CCTV policy once the installation of the new cameras at the Recreation Ground had taken place.

It was **RESOLVED** to carry this item over to the next full council meeting. **Clerk** to place item on the agenda of the November Parish Council Meeting.

iii. Review of Committee Structure, meeting frequencies and agenda formats:

It was agreed that this could not take place effectively until physical meetings could be resumed. At which point, a working group would be formed to produce recommendations for council to consider.

It was agreed to proceed and create the meeting schedule for 2021 under the current scheme. **Council Administrator** to produce 2021 meeting schedule,

iv. Consider renewal of the current entry on the register of Assets of Community Value and Right to Bid, and if there are other Parish properties to nominate for inclusion on the register:

One member of the public addressed the council on this item with the suggestion that the, Mark Cross Inn be considered an 'Asset of Community Value' due to the diverse role it plays in the Mark Cross community.

Discussions also took place to agree that the Catts Inn should be renewed as an 'Asset of Community Value'.

It was **RESOLVED** to apply for both the Catts Inn and Mark Cross Inn to be included on the Assists of Community Value register. **Clerk** to make appropriate applications to Wealden District Council.

v. Finalise arrangements for installation of Christmas Lights and "lighting up":

A quote had been received by the Council from Ultralite for the Christmas lighting in Rotherfield Village centre. This included the additional lights to extend the decorations towards South Street. The quote is £3,384.00+VAT

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote and proceed including the extra lights. **Clerk** to instruct Ultralite to proceed with the installation.

A quote had also been presented from PowerBee for additional lights at Mark Cross that had been requested at a cost of £404.85.

Cllr Martin referred to the following resolution made at the 27th August Parish Council Meeting:

"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,"

Cllr Martin explained that as far as he was aware no meeting had been held with representatives of Mark Cross but a decision had been issued under delegated powers to approve the lighting expenditure. Cllr Martin felt that in light of the resolution, this was an inappropriate use of delegated powers and did not authorise the payment.

Further discussion took place, and it was agreed that the council should agree to the additional lights this year but next year would ask Ultralite to prepare decorative festival lighting for the centre of Mark Cross village.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the PowerBee quote for additional lights in Mark Cross. **Clerk** to arrange for payment and delivery.

vi. Information regarding the maintenance and future management of the Memorial Institute:

Prior to the meeting the following documents had been circulated to Councillors:

- Rotherfield Memorial Institute Dilapidation Report
- Minutes of Meeting to discuss the Memorial Institute Building Requirements 6th October 2020
- Statement from the Memorial Institute 'Rotherfield Memorial Institute Hall The Future'
- Rotherfield Memorial Institute Flyer for Parish Council Newsletter DRAFT
- High Cross Building Contractors Ltd Quote for repair of floor joists

Two members of the public attended to speak regarding this item and addressed the committee.

Councillors understood the position the Memorial Institute was in and recognised its importance as the home of Rotherfield St Martin. The council felt that it could not support the draft flyer in its current format as the council had insufficient time to consider its position.

It was **RESOLVED** that the flyer be edited to simply alert parishioners to the condition of the Memorial linstitute and outline three possible courses of action. **Clirs Henrick & Richardson** to edit the flyer, circulate to councillors for approval ready for distribution with the November Parish Newsletter.

It was **RESOLVED** to form a Working Party to work on the future of the Memorial Institute. The working party would initially consist of five councillors reporting to Full Council. Terms of Reference will be prepared for consideration at the November meeting of the Parish Council. Working Party to consist of:

- Cllr Adrian Martin (Chair)
- Cllr David Hiles
- Cllr Peter Kember
- Cllr Kate Rignall
- Cllr Lucy Buck

Clerk to add item to November Parish Council Meeting agenda for update and adoption of Terms of Reference.

In order to tackle immediate repairs to secure the building for continued use by Rotherfield St Martin and other organisations, it was agreed to provide a sum of money for immediate repairs.

It was **RESOLVED** that a sum of £1,000.00 be made available to undertake emergency repairs. Vicky Cheeseman (Charity Manager of Rotherfield St Martin) will arrange for the works to take place and invoice the Parish Council.

vii. ROTHERFIELD SURGERY:

a) Receive information regarding cost and feasibility of power assistance for the Surgery main door.

No information had been received in time for this meeting and it was agreed to hold this item over until a future time.

b) Review and report plan for Surgery improvements and repairs

Two quotes had been received to attend to the lighting and electrical work at Rotherfield Surgery.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the quote for £2,282.64 provided by B & W. **Council Administrator** to contact B & W and ask if the work can be done ASAP.

Three quotations had been received for the replacement and renovation of the rundown windows at Rotherfield Surgery.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the quotation from Insulation services for £11,167.00. **Clerk** to contact Insulation Services and Rotherfield Surgery and arrange for the installation of the new windows.

Clerk to write letters of thanks to all who quoted but were unsuccessful.

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

Tuesday 22nd September Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee

Tuesday 6th October Planning & Building Committee Tuesday 13th October Recreation & Burial Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of these meetings, 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 Buck reported that she had attended the opening of the new platform bridge at Eridge Station. She met members of the Passenger Benefit Fund who are helping with the renovation of the platform waiting room for use by the community. In January works will begin to install a lift at the station.
 - Cllr Buck had attended a meeting of the Wealden District Association of Local Councils.

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- Cllr Kember reported he had attended a public meeting on the B2100 at Rotherfield Hill to gauge local opinion on a petition to lower the speed limit to 40mph.
- Cllr Martin attended site meetings with CCTV engineers installing cameras at the Recreation Ground. Further discussions need to take place, but it is hoped they will be installed in the next month.

b) Clerk's updates and issues.

The Council Administrator read out the following communication from the Clerk:

"Please can any future "procedures" agreed reiterate that Councillors should not commit to a particular line of action without:-

- a) Ensuring that the Parishioners "need" is for something that the Parish Council has powers (and funds!) to deal with and.
- b) Checking with Chair/Vice of Council or Committee concerned whether the matter requires discussing and agreeing action at Council/Committee level before acting or, if involving modest expenditure, delegated spending powers can be used."

The Council Administrator also reported on Health & Safety information received from the Council's Insurers concerning risk assessments, works undertake by councillors and ages of councillors insured.

Concern had also been raised about the use of delegated powers to make decisions without reference to committee or council.

It was **RESOLVED** that an item be placed on the November Parish Council meeting agenda to review correct action procedure, delegated spending powers and the Council's Health & Safety responsibilities when Councillors carry out works. **Clerk** to add item to the November Parish Council meeting agenda.

The Council Administrator reported that someone had removed all the Covid-19 signage and warning notices from the playground in the recreation ground and binned them. Cllr Buck kindly replaced the notices.

c) Items for next Parish Magazine column.

Deadline for next edition is 17th November. Suggestions for features to be passed to Council Administrator please.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

No other correspondence received.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

Cllr Harris reported that he had received inspection reports from Cllr Richardson and will pass these to the Clerk or Council Administrator as well as share any actions identified with the Chair of the Recreation & Burial Committee. Cllr Martin had carried out inspections of the Recreation Ground and communicated concerns to the Clerk and Chair of Recreation & Burial. He was

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particularly concerned that it appeared the Pre-School roof was still leaking and will continue to monitor.

The Council Administrator reported that he hopes to have the inspection report digitalised by the November Parish Council meeting.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

Tuesday 10th November 2020 Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee

Planning & Building Committee

Tuesday 17th November 2020 Thursday 26th November 2020 Parish Council Meeting

These meetings will be held on a virtual basis starting at 19:30.

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

Called in Planning Application:

WD/2020/1623 - Land at Forge Wood/Great Robbins Shaw, Sham Farm Road, Eridge Use of Land for Camping (up to 100 pitches) on a permanent basis, excluding open fires. Erection of ancillary buildings to accommodate toilet, shower, changing, washing and storage facilities, together with the retention of the existing building reception/office/storage purposes. Provision of on-site walking routes for use by campsite patrons. Associated works and landscaping?

Documents related to this application had been circulated to councillors in advance. Two members of the public addressed the Planning & Building Committee members and confirmed that the applicant intended to reduce the number of camping pitches to 75.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommended to Wealden District Council that this application be **APPROVED** with the following conditions:

- 1) The number of camping pitches to be no more than 60.
- 2) A sign shall be erected on the exit road to Sham Farm Road to require vehicular traffic upon leaving the site to turn right towards the A26.
- 3) That the gates shall be locked and no vehicular traffic shall arrive at or leave the site after 2300 hrs except in an emergency.
- 4) That there should be no open fires other than enclosed BBQs at any time.
- 5) That there shall be no playing of recorded, radio, internet or live music other than within enclosed places i.e. tents or the café and then at levels that would not cause a public nuisance.
- 6) The site be purely used for camping in tents with no caravans or motorhomes to be allowed on site.

Council Administrator to communicate revised recommendation to Wealden District Council.

Cllr Wickenden reported that Conway had been unable to clean all the drains in Spout Hill due to overgrown hedges and this had resulted in flooding for properties during the recent heavy rains. Cllr Wickenden requested that a site meeting be held with the Highways Steward.

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Cllr Henrick reported that Cllr Kitchenham was already in the process of organising a site meeting following similar complaints as a result of flooding. **Clerk** to add item to the 10th November Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee agenda for an update.

Cllr Henrick recommended parishioners be thanked for clearing drains during the recent heavy rains via social media etc. Parishioners should be encouraged to report drainage issues they experienced to East Sussex Highways. It was also suggested that parishioners could be encouraged to wear High-Vis jackets during such operations. **Council Administrator** to publicise online and in the parish magazine.

- Cllr Wickenden confirmed that Les Pike had completed the cutting of the Lime Trees in Rotherfield village square. **Clerk** to write and express the council's thanks to Les.
- Cllr Henrick had met with a parishioner who wanted changes made to the Twitten at the Millenium Green end for mobility scooter access. It was agreed that it was a matter for the Millenium Green Committee and Cllr Henrick will raise it with them but that ESCC should be asked to consider disabled access when the gate was replaced on the Twitten.
- Cllr Buck had been approached by a parishioner who had an outdoor Table Tennis table
 that could be offered to the parish free of charge. Cllr Buck had arranged for temporary
 storage in the scout hut where she will inspect it and report back to the council.
- Cllr Glynn reported that the manure pile at Lime Kiln had returned following enforcement last year. **Clerk** to contact Wealden District Council enforcement to make them aware.
- Cllr Harris had been contacted by a parishioner who claimed that the hedges outside of Harvest Moon House were encroaching on the highways forcing pedestrians into the road. It was agreed to discuss this further at the next Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee meeting. Clerk to add item to the 10th November Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee meeting agenda.

Chair declared the formal business of the me	eeting closed at: 21:38	
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:611	Chair	Date