



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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND BURIAL COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH APRIL 2021 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".**

PRESENT

Cllr. L. Buck – Chair	Cllr. J. Kitchenham	Cllr. J. Richardson
Cllr. G. Watson-Smith – Vice Chair	Cllr. L. Henrick	Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. R. Harris	Cllr. A. Martin	.

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

Trevor Thorpe, Parish Clerk and Adam Hardy, Assistant Clerk.

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public Forum.

No public present.

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.

None. Councillors were reminded that they should declare an interest if they became aware of one at any point in the meeting.

d) To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 19th January 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

Copies were made available to the Councillors in advance of the meeting, and it was **RESOLVED** that they be adopted as a true record and signed in due course.

e) Review and comment on the Recreation and Burial Committee workplan

The workplan was shared with the meeting and Cllr. Buck updated as follows.

- Cllr. Wickenden advised that the track to the lower field in Rotherfield Parish Cemetery was being repaired with hardcore and once this was completed it would enable access to remove the large stones from the spoil bin in the lower field.
- The beacon in the Rec. is to be painted.
- Assistant Clerk is to arrange monthly circulation of inspection sheets to the Councillors designated to undertake these.

f) Receive committee financial reports and agree any actions required.

- The financial reports for this Committee were shared with the meeting.
- Cllr. Kitchenham raised the issue of borders and other items surrounding grave plots in the Cemetery as these are not in accord with the regulations for the Cemetery. Clerk suggested that Cllr. Kitchenham photographed the plots in question for consideration at a future meeting; Clerk reported that he had not received any comments from our contractors regarding safety issues created by these in connection with grass cutting.

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- **CLERK** to add item to the agenda of this Committee's next meeting to discuss and agree action regarding this.
- Nominal ledger for this Committee. Clerk requested that Councillors with queries regarding items and their description to please email him with details so he can investigate and amend if necessary.
- Committee Chair queried which cost centre should be used for grass cutting and other maintenance of Court Meadow Green, also clarification regarding turfing costs for grave plots. Clerk requested that these queries be summarised in email so that they may be investigated.
- Cllr Martin suggested that Councillors review the journal correction reports generated by our accounting software. These contain details of corrections and the reasons behind them.
- Cllr. Henrick advised that the £20K allocated for play area equipment required removing from the budget as, if this expenditure is agreed, the funds will be taken from earmarked reserves rather than precept funds. Other items will be reviewed prior to Thursday's and General Purpose Committee meeting for discussion at that meeting.

RECEIVE INFORMATION AND MAKE DECISIONS ON ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE AS REQUIRED REGARDING THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF PARISH COUNCIL LAND.

2. RECREATION GROUND, CAR PARK AND VILLAGE HALL

a) Update regarding fungal disease issue affecting the pitches.

The Sports Club Chair has provided the following report:-

- The initial applications of fertiliser completed 6 weeks ago have eliminated the leaf spot disease & greened up the grass.
- Grass growth has been slow given the cold weather but has been cut once a week for this & last week.
- The penultimate spring fertiliser (controlled release mini granules) was applied yesterday ahead of the forecast rain tomorrow. This should consolidate the improvements achieved & with more warmth the grass should really start to grow.
- The over seeding work is scheduled for 26.04.21 to the top ground & the final spring controlled release fertiliser will be applied in late May when suitable weather conditions occur.

b) Action regarding items belonging to Parish organisations and stored beneath the Pre School.

- Photos of the area were shared with the meeting. Clerk suggests that, when Covid permits, the organisations with items stored within should tidy/remove unwanted items. Currently there is no space within to store the Council's papers that are currently stored "off-site" and incur a monthly charge to the Council.
- Once the area is tidied Cllrs. Harris and Martin will investigate the floor markings made that show the areas allocated to the organisations for whom storage has been agreed so that the Council's papers may be returned to storage here.
- It was acknowledged that Covid had hindered efforts to tidy, also that hiring a skip for items to be discarded would be costly.

RESOLVED that, after Councillor's Harris and Martin have inspected the area.

CLERK is to contact the organisations involved and ask them to tidy their areas and discard unwanted items.

c) Play area. Review and agree location of the new play equipment to be provided.

- Plans of the play area, with the suggested new items included alongside the existing equipment, were shared with the meeting.
- Cllr. Buck has shared details with the School and Pre School of the proposal. Clerk clarified that the £28K cost was beyond the limit for expenditure authorisation by this

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Committee, although it could agree a recommendation to the full council for them to approve the items suggested and the expenditure.

- An item will be feature on the agenda of the April Council meeting regarding this. Cllr. Buck confirmed that details of these proposed additional items had been shared with the Pre School and School.
- Cllr. Richardson suggested that these organisations should be encouraged to attend the April Council meeting where they could share their views, if so wished, under the public forum.
- The old roundabout has not been confirmed as safe by any of the play equipment companies who have visited the site. Cllr. Richardson shared comments made to her by parents that they were concerned at the safety of this item.
- It is hoped that all three of the companies contacted will have submitted costed plans of their proposals in time for the April Council meeting.
- Cllr. Kitchenham had been approached by parents who considered that there was little for children in the 2 - 4 age range.
- Cllr. Wickenden advised that the bearing on the roundabout was wearing out.
- An extension to the tarmac path of around 20m to the play area was suggested, that work be undertaken to improve the drainage the benches as they become waterlogged. It was suggested that these matters be addressed once the new equipment was in place.

The following was **RESOLVED**.

- That this committee were satisfied with the new equipment and layout proposed by Proludic within the existing play area.
- That a recommendation be made to the full council to agree the equipment and layout proposed, and the expenditure required.
- That the **CLERK** is to make the School and Pre School aware of the proposals and **ASSISTANT CLERK** to please share details via social media.

Clerk reminded the meeting that the funding for this project would come from Community Infrastructure Levy funds paid by developers in relation to building projects in the Parish and not from the Council Tax funded precept.

d) Recreation Ground barrier; recommendations re: repairs.

- Barrier work is nearly completed and Cllr. Martin will change the combination and advise Clerk so that it may be shared with the organisations requiring it.
- Cllr. Martin and Assistant Clerk advised that the CCTV system in the Village Hall area is now functioning. Some additional work is required to allow remote access to the images captured by the equipment.

e) Forest School/Garden. Progress update and to consider suggestion to relocate the roundabout from the play area to this location as a “static” feature.

- It was **RESOLVED** that the roundabout is not suitable for relocation and will be disposed of.
- Cllr. Wickenden has removed the logs from this area and attention is now on the sealing of the pond with clay.
- Cllr. Richardson raised safety concerns regarding the pond and considers that a barrier and/or a mesh be installed to protect the pond. Cllr. Wickenden, in his role of Pond Warden, suggested that the Sussex Wildlife Trust be contacted to seek their advice for ponds and safety measures. **CLERK** to action.

3. ROTHERFIELD PARISH CEMETERY AND OLD BURIAL GROUND

a) Agree arrangements for screening the spoil bins in the lower field.

It was **RESOLVED** that this was considered unnecessary.

b) Approve burial and other fees for 2021/22 and review the regulations for the burial grounds.

It was **RESOLVED** to keep the fees at the current level for this period.

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c) **Arrange review of unused grave plots in the Cemetery.**

Clerk advised that this was a straightforward exercise but queried what follow up action would be possible. **ASSISTANT CLERK** offered to devise a spreadsheet record of the used and unused plots and it was agreed that he proceed with this. It was further agreed that this would help in avoiding errors in plot allocations and subsequent distress for families.

d) **Agree arrangements for volunteers working in the Old Burial Ground.**

Cllr. Buck and Assistant Clerk are to review the draft risk assessment. A list of possible jobs has already been devised and these will be reviewed by Chair and Vice Chair of Council for agreement. Assistant Clerk advised that it should be noted in these documents that the area is consecrated ground and that no excavations should be undertaken within the site.

e) **Discuss options for an audit of the Rotherfield Parish Cemetery.**

This item relates to the Old Burial Ground. In 2016 an audit of the memorials was undertaken. Chair advised that work on memorials was expensive and that the urgent repairs had been undertaken by Burslem over the two following years.

CLERK to share the reports and other documentation from this exercise and the work undertaken at that time. This will identify if any follow up is required.

4. **RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, July 6th at 19:30. Venue details will be advised.

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

- Assistant Clerk is to review the process for inspection reminders to ensure that these are received by the Councillors who undertake them.
- Cleaning of the War Memorial. Clerk to investigate and update Cllr. Buck: there are earmarked reserves to fund this.
- 5th – 13th is "Love your burial ground week".
- Cllr. Hardy officially invited the Council to a thirty minute service of remembrance at St. Denys' Church at 11:00 on Saturday 17th to commemorate the life of the Duke of Edinburgh.
- **ASSISTANT CLERK** is to invite our District Councillors Dixon and Obbard to the April 20th meeting of the Planning and Building Committee. As there are few items on the agenda to consider this will be an opportunity to discuss general planning matters and processes.
- Clerk is to send information to Cllr. Wickenden so that he may add them to the newly refurbished noticeboard on the Cuckoo Line Stores.

The Committee Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:10

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

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