



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

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS LIGHTING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 2ND MARCH 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".

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. J. Kitchenham – Chair.
Cllr. L. Buck.
Cllr. R. Harris

Cllr. L. Henrick
Cllr. P. Kember
Cllr. A. Martin

Cllr. A. Moore
Cllr. G. Watson-Smith.
Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

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

TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public forum.

None.

b) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85)

None.

c) To elect a new Vice Chair for this Committee

Cllr. Martin was proposed for this role and he was elected unopposed.

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

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

e) To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 12th January 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

Draft minutes had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that they be adopted as a true record and that they be signed when circumstances permit.

f) Budget report to date for this Committee and consider any actions required.

Copies had been circulated prior to the meeting and no actions were required.

g) Report and updates regarding matters arising and actions from previous meetings

- £500 contribution has been agreed and paid to support purchase of interior fittings for the refurbished waiting room at Eridge Station. Cllr. Harris has completed a risk assessment so that the Council may be part of the "Station Partnership" scheme.
- New Road. Clerk has had a lengthy telephone discussion with an Environment Agency Officer. We are advised that this issue does not fall under the Agency's responsibilities and it was suggested that Wealden DC as the planning authority be contacted regarding drain queries, also the appropriate water company. With regard to the debris washing down to

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the Station Road junction ESCC as Highways Authority are responsible for removing. The meeting considered that the issue has arisen as, over time, the properties further up the road have been improved and the ditches alongside the road infilled so that the water runs down the roadway. It was agreed that no further action is required by the Council and, in future, East Sussex Highways would be contacted and asked to clear any debris washed down toward the junction.

- Parking area in North St. Project ongoing and, in view of the likely cost, is being dealt with by the Council rather than this Committee.
- Replacement lamp posts. Hornshurst Road and Yew Tree Lane columns have been replaced by ESCC and the B2101 High Cross column awaits straightening. Church Road temporary lantern still requires replacement as the one thought suitable for it would not fit the column.

Cllr. Richardson joined the meeting at this point to discuss proposals for the “Rotherfield in Bloom” project. Key points were as follows:-

- The intention is for this is that it reaches all areas of the Parish.
- Other Parish organisations may be interested in becoming involved in the project and Rotherfield St Martin have been approached. They would like to assist by providing resources to fill pots and for this to be done within the Village Hall.
- Residents, parish businesses and schools/nurseries would be invited to “host” planters or hanging baskets outside their properties and be responsible for watering. There are some planters in store from the planting project that took place in 2019 and it is believed that some households may still have some.
- £800 is in this the Highways Committee budget for this financial year with £3000 in the budget for 2021-22.
- Local garden centres could be approached for plants, compost, and other items.
- Social media and the Parish Magazine could be used to seek volunteers for the project and, dependent on the response from the Parish, aim to start the project in mid May.
- **CLERK** to add item to the March Council meeting to formalise the arrangements discussed above.

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

a) Rights of Way matters requiring action.

No matters requiring action. Clerk reported that the East Sussex rights of way team have installed warning signs at each end of Chant Lane to heighten awareness of motorised vehicle users of pedestrians and horse riders.

b) Highways and Lighting matters

i. Concerns raised regarding roadside litter in the Parish and suggestion to form a volunteer litter picking group to address the problem.

- Enquiries indicate that WDC have litter picking equipment available for volunteer groups.
- The A26 is scheduled for a litter pick on March 8th.
- A parishioner is keen to form a volunteer group to address roadside litter issues.
- Concerns regarding insurance and health and safety issues have been raised.
- “Brighter Crowborough” – the autonomous group who litter pick in and around the town have been approached. They are independent of the Town Council and have their own public liability cover funded by the members. There is a similar group in Heathfield.
- Our insurers have been approached and they advise that the Council cannot endorse or support any such group as it could make it liable.
- The group could contact Wealden DC for equipment to “litter pick”, also to arrange collection of “black bags” of collected rubbish from an agreed pick up point. The group would also be responsible risk assessing their activities.
- A small grant could be made to such a group to support their activities.

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It was **RESOLVED** to contact the group with this information.

ii. Mark Cross. Request for pavement from the garden centre to Brickyard Lane.

In response to social media comments the Clerk has investigated this. Distance involved is 435m and cost, based on that of the path installed opposite the Church, would be in the order of £70K - £80K. No allowance has been made for any ESCC licencing, other costs, land ownership issues or utilities that may lay under the route; these could considerably increase the figure. Cllr. Kember suggested that local fundraising from those that would benefit from such a path could fund the project which. It was also commented that there are now more houses on this side of the A267 and the provision of the path should have been made a condition of the planning permission. Although such developments can be liable for Community Infrastructure Levy payment there are many exclusions to the scheme and currently provision of a path is unaffordable.

iii. Improvements to vehicle signage on the A26 to deter strikes to the Spa Valley Railway overbridge on the approach to Tunbridge Wells.

This regular occurrence has been raised by Sharon Gray at Eridge Station. She is concerned that the warning signs at the Bunny Lane crossroads are not conspicuous enough and that repeated strikes on the bridge could prejudice the future of our local tourist attraction, the Spa Valley Railway. The issue has been raised to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent Highways by her. The majority of warning signs are the responsibility of East Sussex Highways and it was commented that, as with the long vehicle signs on the approaches to Rotherfield, lorry drivers tend to ignore them.

It was **RESOLVED** that a letter be addressed to the Highways Agency, Kent Highways and East Sussex Highways and that Cllr. Whetstone is informed of the concerns.

iv. Receive information from ESCC regarding streetlighting design standards as required by the Construction (Design Management) Regulations.

Eric Ware (ES Highways) attended the recent Wealden Clerks "Zoom" meeting to explain this issue. He explained that they have recently been contacted by solicitors enquiring whether the design standards on certain roads are up to the CBM regs 2015. His briefing is summarised as follows:-

- The majority of the ESCC lighting stock does not meet design standards.
- ESH is warning towns and parishes that their streetlighting schemes are unlikely to meet them. In future whenever a quote is offered, e.g. to change a lantern, the town/parish will be asked to accept the risk that the road does not comply to a design standard.
- Eric explained that if an incident happens then, with the current blame culture, the solicitors might look at whether the lighting contributed.
- On the other hand there is no legal requirement to have streetlighting except if there is a hazard such as a build-out which should be illuminated.
- Eric considers that any risk of councils being held accountable is low, and the lighting (or lack of meeting design standards) would be unlikely to be a stand-alone factor. However, they are making Councils aware of this issue and would be happy to join Council/Committee meetings via "Zoom" to explain this directly if so wished.
- Councils may decide that, based on accident records, their risk assessment is that they need not take any further action. They may wish to undertake design guides (c £1K for a shortish road) to identify what improvements to make, or perhaps remove columns and so have no lighting rather than some that would not meet standards.

It was **RESOLVED** that this information be noted.

v. Update regarding proposed "Village Gateway" speed measures.

East Sussex Highways have responded to our enquiry to advise that matters are slowly moving forward. They seek confirmation that the details of the measures requested in our

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submission for “match funding” remain unchanged. **CLERK** to contact Highways to confirm that these details remain unchanged.

3. TO RECEIVE NOTICE OF DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE.

25th May 2021 at 19:30. Format and venue of the meeting will be advised nearer the time.

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

- Surgery “gutter brushes”. Cllr. Henrick to liaise with Cllr. Watson Smith regarding the quote for these that will assist in keeping the gutters clear.
- Cllr. Henrick reported that the fitness company who use the car park have been conducting “1 to 1” fitness sessions; this is permitted under Covid regulations. Details of further session appear on their website; **CLERK** to contact them to remind them of the current Covid rules governing their activities.
- There have also be concerns raised of group fitness activity taking place in the car park during early mornings. This is not permitted, and a post has been made on the Council’s Facebook page to reiterate this. **CLERK** to contact the fitness company to remind them of the current Covid rules governing their activities.
- Cllr. Moore reported that a Station Road resident has raised concerns regarding vehicle speeds. Cllr. Martin has spoken to them, also accepted the offer of using their land to install a temporary post for “SID” monitoring. Cllr. Martin is to send details of the additional “SID” fixing brackets required so that he may order.
- Cllr. Watson Smith reported a large hole in the Nap Wood layby – **CLERK** to report.
- Cllr. Buck reported that additional posts had been installed at Millhole Wood.
- Speedwatch. Cllr. Moore reported that only two applicants who completed the online training test have passed. She will send reminder emails and liaise with Assistant Clerk to raise the profile of the group and seek further volunteers.
- Clerk reported that he had informed Highways of the broken fence on the bank by the pavement in Church Road. He will also speak to a local contractor regarding filling the surface defects in the drive to the Surgery as this is not an East Sussex Highways responsibility.

Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:51.

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

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