



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

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 24TH JUNE 2021 AT 19:30 IN THE SCOUT HUT,
ROTHERFIELD RECREATION GROUND, TN6 3LX**

The meeting will be preceded at 19:00 by a presentation from Iona Baily of Rotherfield St. Martin regarding the Dementia Charter set out by the 'Wealden Dementia Action Alliance' (WDAA).

PRESENT

Cllr. L. Henrick (Vice Chair)
Cllr. L. Buck
Cllr. J. Cahan

Cllr. P. Kember
Cllr. J. Kitchenham

Cllr. A. Martin
Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

Cllr. Hiles.

ALSO PRESENT

- Trevor Thorpe, Parish Clerk, and Adam Hardy, Assistant Clerk.
- Cllr. K. Obbard (WDC).
- Iona Baily from Rotherfield St. Martin in connection with item 3ix).

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public forum.

None.

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

Cllrs. Harris, Glynn, Richardson, and Watson-Smith. It was **RESOLVED** that the reasons 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. 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. Councillors who are receiving payment for work undertaken on behalf of the Council are reminded to declare a personal and pecuniary interest.

d) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr. Standley had advised the Clerk that, due to a clash of meetings, he was unable to attend but had submitted a summary written report regarding ESCC matters which was circulated to the Councillors. Key points of Cllr. Standley's report were as follows:-

Covid 19

- The council continues to deliver services as the pandemic, hopefully, recedes and we can all get back to as normal a life as possible. The postponement of the lifting of restrictions was disappointing especially given the low number of cases in Wealden. Cases have risen in the last couple of weeks but with the vast majority of residents having been vaccinated the risk of hospitalisation is much reduced.

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- The postponement of the lifting of restrictions was disappointing especially given the low number of cases in Wealden. Cases have risen in the last couple of weeks but with the vast majority of residents having been vaccinated the risk of hospitalisation is much reduced.
- The uptake of vaccinations across East Sussex has been good although Eastbourne, Hastings and Forest Row have a lower uptake.
- The local authorities are working together to assist the recovery in the economy. Tourism is an important part of the economy of East Sussex and staycations will assist in that recovery.

Council Monitoring 20/21

- The monitoring report goes to Cabinet next Tuesday with 69% of the targets met with 9 not met although 7 of those were due to the pandemic.
- The budget outturn was an underspend of £26.9m although £15.132 related to Covid which will be spent in the current year. The Council is continuing to lobby for a 3 year settlement, rather than the 1 year settlements in recent years.
- The fair funding review is unlikely to be completed till 2024 but it is hoped for a 2 year settlement to cover 22/23 and 23/24.
- For members wanting more information the Cabinet papers are on-line.

Adult Social care

- Also coming to Cabinet is a report enhancing the integration between Social Services and NHS. In line with the NHS white paper "Integration and Innovation" the Council will be a member of the Integrated Care System (ICS). The White paper regarding Adult Social Care funding is still awaited.

Kings Arms

Cllr. Standley was disappointed that ESCC did not inform him of the meeting between East Sussex Highways officers and Parish Councillors on progressing solutions to the long vehicles issue. Cllr. Martin provided an update to him after the meeting, and he will follow up. There are a number of other highway issues minor and more major that he is pursuing with ESCC Highways.

Key points of Cllr. Obbard's report were as follows:-

- All the Town and Parish Councils continue to get fortnightly Covid Pandemic updates from David Plank at the WDC Customer Services, keeping Parish Clerks up to date on the latest situation.
- The Wealden D C website has details at.
- <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/press-and-media/coronavirus-covid-19-latest/community-support/>
- The phone number to call is the usual one; 01323 443322.

Recent Cabinet Meeting

- This was the first Cabinet meeting to be held in person since the start of the Pandemic.
- The leader presented details of the WDC Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023 which has been updated with the changes entailed by the adoption of a Climate Emergency Plan and the effects of the Covid Pandemic.
- The financial performance report for the 4th Quarter of 2020-21 was presented and, considering the global pandemic the results and figures are quite good. Some of the reporting targets have been suspended, for example the relet time periods and the percentage of rents received on the Council Housing, because the pandemic has made it impossible to work normally.
- **Hailsham Aspires project.** The Council has applied for a government grant from the Levelling-up Fund, as Hailsham is a fairly deprived part of the District, and it was decided to see if it was eligible for a Government grant as the project could be delivered fairly quickly because much of the initial stages had been done. The bid is for about £17.6m and the outcome is not yet known.

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- A re-vamped Digital Strategy has been presented. The Council now has over 120 services that can be accessed on the internet and more than 75,000 residents are registered with the Council for online services.
- **Planning Issues.**
There are several planning applications in the Ward and Cllr. Obbard is monitoring these..
- Cllr. Obbard is happy to be contacted by phone or email If there are any specific questions or requests.
- Clerk enquired of Cllr. Obbard as to the outcome of a recent WDC meeting that featured an item regarding provision of electric charging points in the District. Cllr. Obbard updated as follows:-
 - This is considered a “long term” project in two phases. The first would be the installation of points in WDC owned car parks with the second being other public sites.
 - Initial contacts with companies providing and installing these points had been disappointing - 13 companies had been contacted but only 3 had responded and expressed an interest.
 - There are technical challenges, particularly in ensuring that there is good electric supply nearby.

e) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 27th May 2021 and 15th June 2021 for approval as a true record.

It was **RESOLVED** that these both be adopted and signed by the Chair when paper copies are available.

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

- Obstructive sign. Clerk has contacted and also chased Rother DC (who provide licencing and enforcement services to WDC) regarding the sign which is considered a hazard to pedestrians. He has chased for a report and clarity on responsibility as it is claimed that this is an ESCC Highways matter; this appears to contradict information on the RDC website.
- Clerk has contacted Highways regarding installing Deer Warning signs on the B2100 Catts Hill and these will be provided. Highways also commented on the poor state of fences in this area.
- Rec. & Burial to please investigate requirements for additional signs in the recreation ground, also any that still feature the old email contact address for the Council. Once Clerk has this information he will obtain quotes. If Councillors have suggestions for further signage for Council land please advise the Clerk.

2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT END OF MAY 2021, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND NOTE OR AUTHORISE PAYMENTS.

Budget, other financial reports, and actions arising.

Approval of payments.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments be approved and paid. Information on funds received is included for information; there were no actions required relating to the Budget.

PAYMENTS AUTHORISED OR AGREED AT THIS MEETING

Payee	Details of transaction	Amount
Unity Trust Bank	Bank charges (manual credits) - 5th March - 3rd June	£2.70
Phil Ireland	Street sweeping and litter picking	£480.96

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Tollwood Garden Services	Grass cutting	£2,127.50
Teambase	Stationery	£47.98
Cllr. Richardson	Reimbursement of "Bloomin' Marvellous" expenditure	£71.01
Wealden DC	Dog bin emptying	£546.00
Satswana	Annual fee for GDPR and online security support	£180.00
Computer Studio	Projector and screen purchase	£674.00
Sports Club	Grant to the Sports Club	£1,800.00
Peter Mannington	Pitch overseeding work (total of 2 invoices)	£900.00
Burslem	Cleaning of War Memorial	£474.00
Sussex Primary Care	Surgery cost contribution for June	£583.33
Lloyds payment card	May Statement	£95.30
SPC	Contribution to Surgery Costs for April and May	£1,166.66
Staff costs	Salaries, expenses, NI and mileage claims	£2809.44
NEST	Pension contributions	£140.63
		£12,099.51

Receipts for June

Rotherfield Sports Club	Sports Club reimbursement of seeding costs	£750.00
ESCC	Contribution toward cost of "Urban Cut" of roadside grass	£288.00
Burslem	Memorial Fee N13	£170.00
SPC	Surgery Rent for May	£2,703.33
		£3911.33

Councillors will review the entries relating to the receipts and payments for the Sports Club seeding work to ensure that they appear under the correct budget headings.

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

- i. • **Resolution to Approve and adopt the Council's final accounts for 2020/21 and any adjustments required to the 2021/22 budget:**
 - Chair has cross checked the figures and is satisfied that all is in order. With regard to the carried forward balances to 2021/22 these include payments totalling £26,897.23 authorised at the end of 2020/21 but not debited to the Council's bank accounts until the start of 2021/22; A journal entry, ref. 152, was made to reflect reallocation of costs between Court Meadow Green maintenance and tree work adjacent to the Village Hall car park.
 - It was **RESOLVED** that the Council's account for 2020/21 be approved and that the Annual Return Sections 1 & 2 be signed by the Vice Chair and Clerk. Cllr. Martin requested that additional training should be investigated to assist the smooth running of the end of year accounts as both this year and last year's had required input from Councillors. Clerk also suggested that the cost of engaging our accounts software provider to run the process should be investigated as they had dealt with it in previous years.

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ii. Broadband project update.

Information regarding the funding available from the Department of Digital Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) is awaited. Cllr. Buck reported that a sufficient number of residents had expressed an interest in upgrading to make the project viable. As soon as the funds are released a “pledge page” will set up for residents.

iii. Annual review and renewal of the Council’s Code of Conduct.

The document had been made available to the Councillors and it was **RESOLVED** that no changes were required and that it be adopted for a further year.

iv. Consider arrangements for the 2021 Parish Christmas Lights.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk will contact the company who have been used for recent installations to enquire if they are available for the 2021 installation. Cllr. Kitchenham is to contact Mark Cross Community Centre to enquire if they have a request regarding Christmas Lights..

An item will be added to the agenda of the 20th July 2021 Highways Committee meeting.

v. Adoption of an Equality and Diversity Policy for the Council.

A draft copy had been made available to the Council prior to the meeting and it was **RESOLVED** that this be adopted without change; **DEPUTY CLERK** to please publish on the Council’s website and add the policy to the diary list for annual review.

vi. Request for grant support for the Powder Mill Trust to support their nature reserve in the Parish.

The application form had been made available to the Councillors and it was **RESOLVED** that a grant of £240 be made to cover emergency tree work required in this local reserve.

CLERK to advise the Trust and arrange payment to them.

4. TO NOTE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES PUBLISHED SINCE THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING.

- 1st June - Planning & Building Committee (informal meeting).
- 15th June - Council Meeting including Communications and Social Media Committee meeting.
- 22nd June - Planning & Building Committee.

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

a) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Cllr. Martin has held numerous meetings regarding the Recreation Ground CCTV.
- Cllrs. Kitchenham and Martin had attended a site meeting with East Sussex Highways officers regarding measures to discourage long vehicles approaching from the Mark Cross direction. Funds may be available to modify the junction as a temporary measure to see if this affects long vehicle flows. The report from the meeting is awaited.
- Cllr. Kember has met with the Parishioners who have petitioned for speed limit changes on the B2100 Rotherfield Hill. He is investigating ways that they may raise the profile of the issue via social media and local press.
- Cllr. Buck has been making daily visits to view progress with the installation of the new play equipment . Removing the large amount of concrete beneath the old roundabout had slowed progress,
- She had also visited the Forest Garden area to see progress and Cllr. Martin is arranging padlocks and bollards.

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- The preschool would like the spoil from excavations to be placed in the pond. Cllr. Wickenden has offered to deal with this and ensure that it is properly profiled.
- **CLERK** to please obtain four additional padlocks for the storage area under the Pre School.

b) Clerk's updates and issues.

- Co-option of new Councillor. Clerk is enquiring as to the availability of the three applicants so that he may add an item to the agenda of the meeting at which the successful applicant will be chosen. The meeting will need to be either a Full Council Meeting or redesignated as such. Clerk will update the Council once a date has been chosen.
- Clerk is to write and thank Iona Bailey for her presentation prior to the start of the meeting.
- North Street junction with the Square. Parishioner who suggested this has asked for a progress update. **CLERK** to add an item to the agenda of the forthcoming Highways Lighting and Transport Committee meeting.
- Deputy Clerk has already been approached regarding evens to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee next year and suggests that the Committee that had begun planning the aborted VJ day event last year be reformed to arrange this event.
- Deputy Clerk to write to Millwood Homes thanking them for sharing their plans for additional houses at the recent Planning and Building Committee meeting.
- Cllr. Martin has received the equipment and guidelines for "Speedwatch". He has now been trained in its use and will now train the members of the group.

c) Items for the next Parish Magazine column.

- As there is a new editor the monthly deadline for submitting articles for publication will, in future, be the 15th of each month ; an article on the new play equipment is to be included.
- Discussion during this item also covered the wish for the installation of a sign on the grass triangle on the Eridge Station approach to draw attention to the car park. It was agreed that Cllr. Kitchenham would produce sample wording for this and that funding of the sign from the Highways budget was to be agreed under delegated powers.

d) Training information and updates.

- Clerk has circulated details of forthcoming training sessions available to Councillors from both ESALC and Mulberry and Co.
- Deputy Clerk has attended a training session regarding Policies and Governance documents. In September he will attend further courses.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

None requiring action.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

- No items requiring urgent attention have been identified. Deputy Chair to please investigate issues with the communication of Cllr. Richardson's reports. Cllr. Kitchenham expressed concerns at the number of items being placed on graves in the Cemetery; Clerk reminded the meeting that there is an agenda item on the above matter for discussion at the forthcoming Recreation and Burial Committee meeting.
- Pre school gutters have been cleared by our grass cutting contractor who will deal with these in future as required.

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8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

Meetings for July. All commence at 19:30.

- 6th - Recreation & Burial Committee - Mark Cross Community Centre
- 13th - Planning & Building Committee - Mark Cross Community Centre
- 20th - Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee - Mark Cross Community Centre
- 29th - Monthly Council Meeting - Rotherfield Scout Hut

Cllr. Buck advised that she would not be able to attend the July Council Meeting.

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

- Cllr. Wickenden advised that, in his capacity as a Tree Warden, he will write to the owners of a tree in the Parish that he considers to be a potential serious hazard for vehicles. He will also make ESCC aware of the issue.
- Cllr. Henrick had agreed for the "Rotherfield in Bloom" planters to have drainage holes installed.
- On behalf of a concerned Parishioner the "Parish Pals" have posted a Social Media item to remind gardeners to take care when cutting hedges or having bonfires as they may disturb nesting wildlife.
- Working parties have yet to commence in the Old Burial Ground due to weather conditions on the days chosen.
- Concerns have been received regarding the bees at the bottom of this area. It was suggested that a laminated sign be placed near the area – **DEPUTY CLERK** to please arrange.
- Our contractor is working hard to keep to schedule due to recent weather conditions being very favourable to grass and nettle growth, particularly by the path running alongside the Village Hall.
- Cllr. Buck reported that the benches in the recreation ground have been power washed.

Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:15.

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

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