



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

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ON
28th OCTOBER 2021 AT 19:30
IN THE SCOUT HUT ADJACENT TO ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

PRESENT

Cllr. R. Harris (Chair)
Cllr. L. Henrick (Vice Chair)
Cllr. L. Buck
Cllr. P. Beach

Cllr. D. Hiles
Cllr. P. Kember
Cllr. J. Kitchenham

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

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

Adam Hardy (Deputy Clerk), Cllr P Dixon (Wealden District Council),
Cllr K Obbard (Wealden District Council), Cllr B Standley (East Sussex County Council) &
3 members of the public.

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public forum.

None

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

Apologies had been submitted by Cllr J Cahan, Cllr J Richardson & Cllr B Johnstone.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the reasons for these apologies.

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

None

d) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr B Standley (East Sussex Country Council):

- The Budget had been received as good news by the County Council. We await further information on funding.
- Match Funding for the Speed Restriction awareness measures to Rotherfield Village had been agreed. Cllr Standley attended the meeting where the transport lead made the decision.
- It has also been agreed that a trial of narrowing the entrance on the junction of the B2100 to the A267 at Mark Cross will be put in place.
- Cllr Martin asked if Cllr Standley could investigate the difficulties the council are having regarding the re-installation of a finger post following East Sussex Highways works. **Deputy Clerk** to send email history to Cllr Standley.
- Cllr Kember asked a question about the land ownership of Crowborough Hill – following research Cllr Kember had found documents showing East Sussex ownership. Cllr Standley asked for a copy of the documents to be sent to him. **Deputy Clerk** to send maps and documents to Cllr Standley.

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Cllr P Dixon (Wealden District Council):

- Cllr Dixon reported that there had been little change in enforcement matters since his previous update. The Caravan at Trebblers has been moved and the path restored. If further enforcement action is to be taken, then evidence of 24hour occupation would be required.
- The Cottage Hill entrance, although not clearly maintained as such, has always been an entrance and therefore enforcement is not possible. There is some confusion over the ownership of the land concerned.
- The other enforcement matters are all in the process of awaiting retrospective planning applications.
- Cllr Dixon has received a large amount of correspondence regarding the proposed development on Land at Court Farm. Wealden have decided that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required. It will be necessary for all those who have written to write again when the full application is received as previous objections will not be considered. Cllr Dixon warned against sending multiple copies of "template letters" to planning officers. It is not a question of number of objections but of the quality of objection and bespoke objections are better received in this respect. Cllr Dixon also reminded the Council that they should not school the public in how to write planning objections.
- Wealden District Council have also agreed that no EIA would be required for any application submitted for the Glebe Field off of Mayfield Road.
- The next Parish Cluster meeting will be on the 26th November and Cllr Kember has agreed to attend.

Cllr K Obbard (Wealden District Council)

- Cllr Obbard was pleased that the budget had included money for grants to upgrade boilers.
- Cllr Obbard drew the attention to the council of a consultation by Ashdown Forest Conservators about paying for parking at Ashdown Forest. This has come about because their funding has reduced rapidly over the past three years.
- Cllr Kember asked for a progress report on the roll out of electric car charging points. The council are still looking for a partner to manage the delivery of the project. It is hopeful that this would take place early in 2022.

e) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 30th September 2021 for approval as a true record.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the following factual changes to the minutes of the 30th September meeting:

Under section 8:

Replace:

"Labour costs had been underestimated by the Pre School and additional costs had been incurred by provision and installation of "kick boards" to surround the area."

With:

"Labour costs had been underestimated."

Under Section 1a:

Replace:

"Cllr. Standley raised concerns at the statements made by the Parishioner, and the Chair closed this section of the meeting."

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With:

“Cllr Standley stated that the information presented by the parishioner was incorrect but due to the current legal issues between the parishioner and WDC he was not prepared to discuss the issues in more detail.”

Cllr Obbard asked that the following be amended:

This has prompted me to let you know that there is an error in the report of my reply to Cllr Henrick. It should read WDC Local Plan, not neighbourhood plan.

Under Section 1a:

Replace:

“Cllr. Obbard reported that this assessment would form part of the neighbourhood plan.”

With:

““Cllr. Obbard reported that this assessment would form part of the Wealden District Council Local plan.”

The **Deputy Clerk** will make changes to the minutes and these will be approved at the next Parish Council Meeting.

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

- Cllr Henrick reported that progress was continuing with regard to appointing a Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer and interviews were being held next week..
- Cllr Harris reported that unfortunately some of the planters purchased for Rotherfield In Bloom had been stolen from New Road.
- Deputy Clerk reported that the wreaths and new Tommies had been purchased from the Royal British Legion.

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

i. Budget, other financial reports, and actions arising.

Cllr Henrick had reviewed the budget and was happy to propose it as an accurate position of the council's finances. **Committee Chairpersons** should check the allocation codes and let the Clerk know of any changes required.

ii. Approval of payments.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:

Invoice/payer details	Ledger code	Cost centre code	Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters	Amount - VAT included where applicable
Xtraspace (Go Cardless)	4110	101	Document storage	£91.00
Sports Club	4340	302	Sports Club Maintenance	£325.00
Phil Ireland	4252	203	Street sweeping	£204.86
Phil Ireland	4364	302	Litter picking	£102.42
Total for this invoice				£307.28
Teambase	4110	101	Hole punch for Assistant Clerk	£19.58
Teambase	4110	101	Printer paper	£19.14
Teambase	4110	101	Ink cartridge	£23.99
Teambase	4110	101	Document wallets	£16.42
Total for these invoices				£79.13

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Wealden District Council	4256	203	Dog bin emptying - Hornshurst Road and Mark X June - Sep.	£312.00
	4363	302	Dog bin emptying Millennium Green June - Sep.	£234.00
				£546.00
Wealden District Association of Local Councils	4110	101	Annual subscription	£32.00
Tollwood - grass cutting and other groundworks	4389	302	Court Meadow	£31.00
	4341	302	Tennis Court	£0.00
	4341	302	Children's play area x 2	£83.00
	4380	303	St Denys' Burial Ground x 1	£291.00
	4381	303	Parish Cemetery hedges	£347.50
	4381	303	Parish Cemetery grass x 1	£52.00
	4341	302	Village Hall grass hedge/cutting items	£170.00
	4393	303	Ashes interment at Cemetery G18	£100.00
	4250	203	St Cheron twitten weeding, hedgecutting and grass	£200.00
	4407	302	Millennium Green Mark Cross	£104.00
			Total payments for this invoice	£1,378.50
	4105	101	ESALC - 2 x training courses	£96.00
Rotherfield Village Hall	4125	101	September Hall Hire	£21.00
Cllr R Harris	4140	101	Meeting Expenses	£20.80
			Lloyds payment card	
Zoom	4125	101	"Zoom" sub	£14.39
Zoom	4125	101	"Zoom" sub	£14.39
Unity	4110	101	September card fee	£3.00
Amazon	4389	302	Padlock and chain for CMG bench	£12.99
CPRE	4110	101	Annual Subscription	£36.00
			Total payments	£80.77
Royal British Legion	4150	101	Poppy Wreath donation	£100.00
Trevor Thorpe - insufficient balance on Council's card	4150	101	2x "Tommys" for remembrance	£170.00
Trevor Thorpe - insufficient balance on Council's card	4225	202	Licence for Christmas Lights	£60.14
				£230.14
	Ledger code	Cost centre code	Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters	Amount
Sussex Primary Care	4399	305	Contribution to Surgery Costs	£583.33
				£583.33
Staff Costs reported separately			Total figure reported separately	£2,844.47

RECEIPTS FOR OCTOBER 2021

SPC (Barclays)	4398	305	Surgery Rent	£2,688.33
Rotherfield Allotment Association	1321	302	Annual rent	£1,000.00
Wealden District Council	1081	100	Community Infrastructure Levy	£9,844.83
				£13,533.16

It was also **RESOLVED** to accept an estimate from Sussex Trees for the sum of £867.61+VAT for the Christmas Trees for the Christmas Lights display.

iii. Note spending and justification of any payments agreed under delegated powers.

- Mole Drain of Hornshurst Burial Ground £135.00. Authorised by Cllr Buck & Cllr Watson-Smith. Approved by Clerk – 19th October 2021

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iv. Consider increase of Council debit card limit.

The Deputy Clerk reported that currently the limit is £250. Card is useful for medium sized expenditure but recent transactions such as those for the “Tommy” and the licence for the Christmas lights have been funded by Clerk (reclaim on the payments list for this meeting) as there was insufficient limit available.

It was **RESOLVED** that the limit on the council card be extended to £500.00. **Clerk** to make necessary arrangements.

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

i. Resurrection of V.E. committee for the Queen’s Jubilee.

The Deputy Clerk reported that members of the V E 75th Anniversary Working Party had been contacted about holding a meeting to discuss the parish’s arrangements for the Platinum Jubilee. **Deputy Clerk** to place an item on the next agenda of the Communications & Social Media committee for an update.

ii. Improvements to parking in North Street/Eridge Lane by the recreation ground.

Cllr Harris reported that he had contacted Mark Wakelin to discuss the plans and detailed specifications required by Wealden District Council. **Cllr Harris** to arrange a site meeting.

iii. Agree purchase of laptop and user training for chair of Personnel.

The Deputy Clerk presented a quote for a new laptop for Cllr Richardson at the cost of £400+VAT. A further request for a laptop had been received from our newly co-opted councillor, Cllr Johnstone. It was **RESOLVED** to purchase two laptops for councillor use.

It was also reported that Cllr Cahan’s laptop required a new battery. A quote had been received for this at £80.00+VAT including labour. It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the Battery replacement.

Deputy Clerk to arrange purchase and invoicing of new laptops and coordinate laptop repair.

iv. Agree meeting frequencies and venues for 2022/23.

The Deputy Clerk presented the proposed meeting schedule for 2022/23. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the meeting schedule for 2022/23.

Deputy Clerk to share with all councillors and update website.

- v. **Response to South East Water's draft Climate Change Adaptation Report consultation.** This link will take you to the report.

<https://corporate.southeastwater.co.uk/about-us/adapting-to-a-changing-climate-have-your-say/>

It was **AGREED** that Cllrs Henrick & Martin will complete the consultation on behalf of the council.

- vi. **Update on progress with Christmas lighting and expenditure, and arrangements for "Switch On".**

The Clerk had provided the following updates ahead of the meeting:

- Licence application has been submitted to ESCC together with the paperwork and required by them prior to granting permission.
- Ultralite are submitting their application for use of a "Cherry Picker" to assist the installation.
- Nicola Glynn has kindly offered to assist with contacting householders to renew their permission to have lights attached to their properties.
- This is the tenth anniversary of the Rotherfield Lights. The light up ceremony will be on the 28th November.

Cllr Harris reported that the Bonfire Society will be organising the "Switch On" event.

- vii. **Discuss proposal and notification from Rotherfield Memorial Institute to merge with Rotherfield St Martin.**

A letter outlining the proposal and calling for an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Rotherfield Memorial Institute (RMI) Committee and Trustees for the merging with Rotherfield St Martin (RSM) had been circulated in advance to councillors.

Two members of the public addressed the meeting regarding this. A summary of the points are as follows:

- The proposed merger has come about by the desire of the managing committee and trustees of the RMI to stand down. They wish to hand over the reigns for managing the building and raising the necessary funds for refurbishment and repair of the hall.
- There had previously been a drive to find new trustees but only two people across the parish expressed an interest.
- The Trustees feel that RSM have the expertise and operation that would be successful in gaining funding for the necessary works.
- The merger seems logical because of how similar the Charity Objectives of both RMI & RSM are. On these grounds it is hoped that the Charity Commission would be favourable to such a merger.
- The whole process and proposal has been advised and managed by Action in Rural Sussex who have legal experts and advice for Village Halls.
- Cllr Kember asked if RSM were fully cognisant of the risk they could be taking on through this merger. RSM are aware and will use their best efforts to raise the necessary money for repair and refurbishment.
- If RSM can not raise the funds then it would look to sell the building and the land the proceeds would then go to RSM to continue the work of the charity and to find a new home.

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- Concerns were expressed that the public might be cut out of a decision regarding a building that to many had been left for the benefit of the community. It was explained that the custodian trustees run and manage the building for the benefit of the community. No public referendum would necessarily be required in order for a decision to be made just a majority vote of RMI Trustees. More information on the history and ownership of the Memorial Institute would be helpful.
- RSM would run the hall allowing other groups and organisations to book it for use.
- Cllr Harris asked what his position as an “Ex Officio” member of the management committee would mean. Under charity law Cllr Harris acts as an individual and not as the whole council but it would be natural to take advice and opinions from other councillors.
- Further information on the proposal would shortly be published on the RSM website.
- Councillors voiced concern about what would be required to fundraise for the necessary repairs and what impact that would have on the day to day running of RSM.
- Cllr Harris asked what had changed in RSM’s mind as when originally approached they did not want to take over the running of the institute. It was clarified that RSM would not take it on as tenants but would take it on if the RMI became an asset of RSM.
- Cllr Martin asked why this option had been suggested rather than approaching the council to take over the building as Sole Charity Trustee? It was not correct to say there were no other options available to RMI Trustees.
- Cllr Wickenden was not in favour of the merger and felt that the village would be losing the institute as a community building.
- The Extraordinary Open General Committee and Trustees meeting will be held on 19th November at 7:30pm in the Rotherfield Memorial Institute.

viii. Sweeping of footpath adjoining Station Road.

It was **RESOLVED** to add this to the regular work list of the contractor.

ix. Update and reminder regarding the December Parish Newsletter

The Deputy Clerk reminded councillors that the deadline for content for the Parish Newsletter was coming up in two weeks’ time. Committee Chairs should send an outline of their committee’s accomplishments across 2021. The Chair of the council will also provide a brief article. All material will be required by the 14th November.

x. Agree details of work and costs for tree work adjacent to Moon’s Yard

Cllr Wickenden reported that a site visit had not yet taken place for this. It was **RESOLVED** that this matter be delegated for decision at the 9th November Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee. **Clerk** to add item to the agenda.

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

- 6th October - Planning and Building Committee
- 19th October - Communications and Social Media Committee

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

a) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Cllr Kember reported that he had attended a site meeting with East Sussex Highways, Cllr Kitchenham and Dr Stephen Hall regarding the North Street Junction reconfiguration. A full

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report will be discussed at the Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee meeting on the 9th November. **Clerk** to ensure item is on the agenda.

- Cllr Henrick & Cllr Watson-Smith reported that they had attended the Rotherfield Village Hall management committee meeting.
 - The bins had not been emptied for two weeks now and were overflowing. Cllr Beach will arrange to meet the waste contractor on-site to get a better idea of why this is.
 - The hedge down the side of the Village Hall is still overgrown and requires cutting back.
 - Works are proceeding on bringing the emergency slope up to standard.
 - It was confirmed that a new projector would be purchased for use in the Parish Council Room.

b) Clerk's updates and issues.

- Deputy Clerk asked if the Chair wanted to include a social event following the December Parish Council meeting. Chair confirmed this is the case and he would arrange a venue.

c) Items for next Parish Magazine column

- Christmas message from the council.
- Christmas Light Photographs
- Platinum Jubilee Celebrations update.

6. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

Deputy Clerk reported that we had received the following from the sports club:

"In the last 10 days i have applied controlled release Autumn fertiliser, an organic soil conditioner that will assist with disease resistance for the grass & today the ground has been deep spiked (vertidraind). Next week I intend to submit a Pitch report to the Football Foundation to show the results from the grants & as a precursor to applying for a 4 year pitch maintenance grant to assist financially with the cost of routine maintenance."

The Chair wished our thanks to Mr Peter Ford for the upkeep of the pitch to be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

7. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

Inspection Reports had been completed and results will be circulated to Clerks and relevant committees.

8. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 9th November - Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee – Rotherfield Scout Hut
To agree 2022-23 Budget and Precept
- 16th November - Planning and Building Committee – Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.
- 25th November - Monthly Council Meeting – Rotherfield Scout Hut
- 30th November - Communications and Social Media Committee – TBC

All meetings start 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.

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- Cllr Buck asked about the common land at Town Row Green and its history in the Parish. Cllr Wickenden agreed to update Cllr Buck about the area and share council documents relating to it.
- Cllr Buck had been approached about cutting back in New Road & the Mirfield turn verge. It was agreed that this could be done. **Cllr Martin** to inform Will Clark to undertake the work.
- Cllr Harris asked councillors to share their views about the proposed Rotherfield Memorial Institute and Rotherfield St Martin merger with him before the meeting planned for the 19th November.

Meeting was declared closed at: **21:29**

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