



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 18TH JANUARY 2022 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr G Watson-Smith – Committee
Vice-Chair

Cllr. D. Hiles

Cllr. A. Martin

Cllr. R. Harris

Cllr J. Kitchenham

Cllr J. Richardson

Cllr. J. Cahan

Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

Adam Hardy, Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe, Deputy Parish Clerk,
and a Parishioner regarding the Old Burial Ground

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Public Forum

A Parishioner who is a member of the voluntary group undertaking tidying work in the Old Burial Ground addressed the meeting. He had recently visited the site on two occasions with families from outside the area seeking memorials to relatives interred there. Many of the memorials are overgrown and it is difficult to read inscriptions. There is an old paper plan of the site available to view as a digital document. Clerk reported the official burial and grave records for both the Old Burial Ground and Parish Cemetery are recorded in ledgers which cross reference plots with their owners and those interred within; he considered that “digitising” them would be costly and time consuming.

Concern was expressed that bonfires may have been lit over old graves and compost bins installed. Councillor Richardson stated that she had not observed this and that the volunteers took care to respect plots. In the “wild area” brambles and their roots had been dug out and burned; many grave plots had been located and marked

It was suggested that at the appropriate time the whole area be strimmed to a height of 6” and that wood chippings be used to infill sunken grave plots. The group would also welcome any donations of surplus topsoil to level graves.

Council Chair reminded the meeting that grant funding had been given to the Council; this had been used to fund the installation of gateway, steps, and signage and to make the site more attractive to wildlife.

Chair stated that a balance should be struck as there were very few burials plots left unused and that many in the village had no connections with those interred. A balance needed to be struck as to an acceptable of tidiness relative to cost to the Parishioners. Anyone raising a concern as to the condition of a specific plot should contact the Council so that they may arrange for their contractor to tidy it at the Council’s cost.

On Cllr. Buck’s return it was recommended that the specific aims of the voluntary tidying group should be defined. **DEPUTY CLERK** to note and advise her.

Clerk: Adam J Hardy, 3 Trinity Mews, Mill Crescent, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2QU

Tel: 07969512099. Email: Clerk@rotherfieldparishcouncil.co.uk

Parish Council Website: www.rotherfieldparishcouncil.co.uk **Twitter** @rotherfieldpc and on Facebook

- b) **Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85).**
Councillors Buck, Henrick and Beach all submitted apologies and it was **RESOLVED** that the reasons for these absences be approved.
- c) **Declaration of personal, prejudicial, and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda, and updates to members' register of interests.**
None declared. The Committee 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) **To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 12th October 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.**
It was **RESOLVED** that these be signed by the Chair of the Committee.
- e) **Update regarding matters arising and action items from previous meetings.**
Beacon repainting.
Cllr. Watson Smith will deal with this when he is able, and weather conditions allow.
- Concrete base for grass cutting area in Rec.**
Sports Club believe that there is an old septic tank beneath this area. Work to be deferred until drier weather allows further investigation.
- Waste collection issue.**
Secretary and Chair of the Village Hall have been contacted and they confirmed that there had not been further issues.
- Bowls Club.**
CLERK to please add an item to the February Council meeting agenda to update and agree any further actions.
- Cemetery tidiness.**
Chair reported that items were being removed as and when justified.
- Cemetery drainage issues** – Cllr. Martin has dealt with these, together with the salt stored at Kennedy Brothers.
- Update from Cllr. Beach please regarding review of memorials in the Old Burial Ground prior to arranging a safety inspection.**
DEPUTY CLERK to contact Cllr. Beach to establish if he has reviewed the current safety report and arrange for Burslems to undertake an inspection based on the comments in the current report.
- Conifer at foot of New Road**
Wealden have been chased regarding this, and asked for an update as it is considered to be on their land.
- Tree near Moons Yard.**
A quote has been accepted for work to take place on this. **DEPUTY CLERK** to contact residents and advise them when this will take place.
- f) **Review and comment on the Recreation and Burial Committee workplan.**
Cllr Buck was not at the meeting to report on this.
- g) **Receive committee financial reports and agree any actions required.**
Correction have been identified, **DEPUTY CLERK** to update accounts to reflect these and report progress to Cllrs. Henrick and Richardson.
- h) **Review burial ground fees for the 2022-23 financial year.**

CLERK to add item to the February agenda for these to be reviewed and agreed.

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) Consider purchase and installation of an outdoor table tennis table in the Recreation Ground.

Cllr. Buck has investigated this, and the cost is in the region of £5K. Concerns expressed regarding cost, usage, and location; Sports Club have been consulted regarding the latter.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Buck obtains additional quotes for this. **CLERK** to add item to the agenda of the February Council Meeting to discuss alternative suppliers, costs, and location in the Rec.

b) Provision of a concrete base for the bench in the centre of Court Meadow Green.

To improve this facility, it was **RESOLVED** that matting be placed below the bench as this would allow the grass to grow, and that the bench be pinned down so that it can be moved for mowing. Chair and Cllr. Martin to deal with this within a £200 budget.

c) Discuss and agree arrangements for dealing with water below seats in the playground.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllrs. Harris and Martin are to excavate below the two benches affected, that a board surround be placed beneath each bench and infilled with "Type 1" shingle within a £300 budget.

3. ROTHERFIELD PARISH CEMETERY AND OLD BURIAL GROUND

a) Discuss and agree purchase of Grave Plot Markers and arrangements for marking grave plots.

It was **RESOLVED** that **DEPUTY CLERK** is to purchase 4 markers from "Treasured Memories". Grave plots are to be at 4' from plot centres; new plots in the Eridge side of the Cemetery will be spaced at 5' centres as recommended by our gravedigging contractors; this due to the poor drainage in this area.

b) Discuss and agree measures for managing dog walker cars parking in the cemetery car park.

It was agreed that a new and more prominent site be provided for this worded "Car parking for Cemetery users only". Cllr. Martin to please provide a draft sign using his signage software.

4. RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE

12th April 2022 at 19:30 in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall.

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

- Additional "No dogs..." signs have been requested for the Recreation Ground as the issue persists. Size suggested is 600mm x 400mm. **Cllr. Martin** to please circulate suggested design, wording, size, and number of signs that could be produced within a £350 budget; this will be within the delegated spending limit. The smaller green signs will be kept and redeployed.
- Fire inspection is to be arranged for the Scout Hut – Council chair is to contact the person who undertook the previous inspection to arrange this.
- New Road – Town Row end. It is understood that Wealden DC are responsible for the surfacing this end, and this is to take place shortly. Enquiries are to be made as to when this will be so that Social Media posting can request that vehicles do not park in the area to be dealt with.

..... **Committee Chair.....Date**

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