



**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 5th JULY 2022 AT 19:30
IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL TN6 3LX**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Buck. (Committee Chair)	Cllr. B. Johnstone	Cllr. J. Cahan
Cllr. R. Harris	Cllr. A. Martin	Cllr. J. Richardson
Cllr. J. Kitchenham	Cllr. N. Wickenden	Cllr. D. Hiles
Cllr. P. Beach		

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

Cllr. Watson Smith

ALSO PRESENT

Trevor Thorpe, Deputy Parish Clerk, and 7 members of the public in connection with item 3d) on the agenda.

a) Moons Yard wall retaining wall issues.

This matter was dealt with as the first item on the agenda under 1a) Public Forum as residents of this area were present to raise concerns. Key concerns are as follows: -

- Trees on land owned by the Parish Council were creating a nuisance by blocking light to the properties.
- Debris falling from them landed in residents gardens and required clearing up.
- There were concerns that high winds could bring down branches and cause property damage.
- Residents claim that tree roots emanating from the Churchyard/Old Burial Ground are undermining the wall.
- Residents would prefer to see the tree, a Western Red Cedar, removed and replaced with something smaller.

The Council responded as follows: -

- They have reduced the tree twice in the past two years.
- It is believed that the tree is around 30 years old and dates from the conversion of Moon's Yard for residential use. Also, there were no planning conditions attached to the trees when the planning permission for the site was granted, and they are not covered by a Tree Protection Order.
- With regard to the wall, the Council tree warden Cllr Wickenden confirmed that the roots were not undermining the wall however the Deputy Clerk has spoken with a Wealden tree officer who stated that the onus is on the complainants to demonstrate that any damage caused is attributable to the tree; this would require a professional site investigation and monitoring. It was agreed that the wall was not the problem but the lack of light.
- It was agreed that further reduction to the tree could be considered but this would need further investigation with a contractor.

- Concerns were also raised regarding the condition of lime trees in the area, which are not the responsibility of the Parish Council but of Wealden District Council.

The Committee **RESOLVED** the following: -

- Site meeting to be arranged with a tree contractor, Chair and Vice Chair of Council, Cllr. Wickenden (Parish Council tree warden) and residents of Moon's Yard. This will consider if there is any scope for further reduction to the tree. **Deputy Clerk** to arrange.
- **Deputy Clerk** to contact Wealden District Council regarding cutting back the lime trees in the Churchyard next to the Old Burial Ground. It was also suggested that residents approached Wealden District Council. Clerk to furnish residents with the contact details of the tree officer.

DEPUTY CLERK to note/action.

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 declared.

d) To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 12th April 2022 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

These had been circulated to the Councillors in advance of the meeting and it was **RESOLVED** that they be adopted and signed by the Committee Chair as a true record of the meeting.

e) Update regarding matters arising and action items from previous meetings.

12th April meeting.

- Village Hall Bin collection issues – Cllr. Beach will report at this meeting.
- Spoil bin emptying – item on this agenda.
- New picnic bench on Mark Cross Millennium Green. Purchased and installed, plaque provided for attaching.
- Grass bin behind the clubhouse. A quote in excess of £3K has been received for work to improve this. Cllrs. Harris and Martin are to undertake a site visit to agree a specification for the surfacing of this area, and improving the drainage underneath, with a view to identifying how improvements can be achieved at lower cost. Clerk has spoken to our contractor to remind him that we wish the bin to be emptied so that this project can progress.

f) Review and comment on the Recreation and Burial Committee workplan.

Chair advised that there was nothing to update regarding this.

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

The matter of allocation of costs for the CCTV work was again discussed. Clarification is sought regarding as to how costs should be apportioned between Recreation and Burial, and Highways, Lighting and Transport, also whether CIL money is to be used to fund all or part of the project. Information from the Government website on the subject identifies a wide range of items/projects on which CIL funds may be used including “.....police stations and other community safety facilities.....” **CLERK** to add an item to the July Parish Council Meeting agenda to agree arrangements for allocation and CIL funding expenditure on this matter.

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No other items in the budget were identified as requiring action. Chair requested, that for future meetings, the nominal ledger report be included with the information circulated prior to the meeting.

h) Review the Terms of Reference for this Committee.

These were reviewed and a minor grammatical error was corrected, and no other changes identified. **DEPUTY CLERK** to amend paper and upload onto Council website.

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

1. RECREATION GROUND, CAR PARK AND VILLAGE HALL

a) Receive report regarding issues with waste collections from the commercial waste bins in the Village Hall car park and review current arrangements.

There is dissatisfaction with the current contractors with the main issue being that the bins are frequently not returned to their storage area and obstruct parking spaces, including those marked as for disabled users. This has not improved despite Cllr. Beach raising the issue with the contractor used by Direct365, Biffa. It was **RESOLVED** that **DEPUTY CLERK** is to obtain copies of the contracts for this work to understand when the contract would come to an end, and information gathered regarding the bin emptying for the Pre School and Scout hut. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Beach would put together a scope of work for the tender and **DEPUTY CLERK** would put a tender out for undertaking this work in future. **DEPUTY CLERK** to enquire of other Wealden parishes of their experiences and recommendations for alternative providers of this service.

2. ROTHERFIELD PARISH CEMETERY AND OLD BURIAL GROUND

a) Review volunteer actions, tasks, and aims in the Old Burial Ground.

Cllr. Buck reported that volunteer activities had ceased for the present. It was suggested and agreed that these tidying activities resume on Monday evenings at 18:00, **Cllr. Buck** to please contact the volunteers with this information. Volunteers will only work on site when a Councillor is present. Cllr. Beach regularly inspects the memorials and considers that none currently require work or present a hazard. It was **RESOLVED** that an inspection by Burslem was not required.

b) Consider fencing repairs to 26 Court Meadow border with Old Burial Ground.

Cllr. Harris reported that this matter can now be closed.

c) Discuss and consider options for emptying spoil bins at the Parish Cemetery.

It was considered that this could be dealt with "in house" with the hiring of a mini digger. **DEPUTY CLERK** to liaise with the Councillor's concerned to arrange for this to be undertaken by either Councillors or a contractor. It was agreed that the bottom field be left in an un-flailed state but that this should take place before thistles grow.

3. RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE

11th October 2022 19:30 to include agreement for budget and precept requirements for 2022-23.

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

- The British Legion have again raised the matter of a concrete base for the bench in the Court Meadow Green. They wish the matter to be considered at a Council, rather than a committee meeting and the Clerk has added an item to the July PCM agenda.
- A Mark Cross resident has requested that the cutting of the Millennium Green be deferred until later in September to allow wildflower seeds to distribute. Cut list currently states

“Cut twice, not before 14th July and start of September”. This area is the responsibility of the Highways Committee and Cllr. Kitchenham agreed that the mowing of the area should be moved to late September to allow seeds to be distributed. An item is on the agenda of the forthcoming Highways Committee meeting to consider requesting ESCC to designate certain suitable verges in the Parish as “Wildlife Verges”.

- Cllr. Martin has offered to install the newly acquired “Speedwatch” signage.
- Cllr. Richardson suggested that an information board be installed by the steps from Court Meadow Green to the Old Burial Ground to give information on the site.
- It was reported that the Clubhouse and tractor shed in the recreation ground had suffered vandalism.
- Deputy Clerk requested that the large “Football Foundation” sign was cleaned as it is an eyesore at the Rec. entrance. It is understood that a smaller sign is in the possession of the Sports Club, **DEPUTY CLERK** to enquire of them.
- Hard copies of minutes are no longer retained by Rotherfield St Martin. Deputy Clerk to remove mention of this from agenda templates.
- Concerns raised that that brambles in the Rec could constitute a hazard. Cllr. Harris offered to inspect,
- “No dogs...” sign at entrance to Rec. has been noticed as damaged. **DEPUTY CLERK** to investigate and order replacement if required.

The meeting closed at 20:55.

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