



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 11TH OCTOBER 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. A. Martin
Cllr. G. Watson Smith	Cllr. J. Kitchenham	Cllr. N. Wickenden
Cllr. R. Harris		

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Trevor Thorpe, Deputy Parish Clerk

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING:

a) Public Forum.

Item 5 on the agenda was moved here as residents were present to discuss this matter.

b) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85).

Cllrs. Beach, Richardson and Hiles had submitted apologies for absence in advance of the meeting and it was **RESOLVED** that their reasons be accepted.

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 5th July 2022 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

It was agreed that these were a correct record of the meeting, and it was **RESOLVED** that they be adopted and signed by the Committee Chair.

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

- Trees in Old Burial Ground – there is an item on this agenda for discussion of the matter.
- Grass bin behind the Clubhouse in the Recreation Ground. Cllrs. Harris and Martin have inspected this and consider that the quote of £3K for replacement is excessive. They recommend that the local contractor who empties the Cemetery bins be asked to deal with emptying these bins as well, and that the cheaper solution to the drainage issue will be to provide a chalk base. **DEPUTY CLERK TO ACTION.**

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

These had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and no actions were identified as being required.

g) Consider and agree the budget and precept of this Committee for 2023-24

It was **RESOLVED** that this was agreed.

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

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2. RECREATION GROUND, CAR PARK, AND VILLAGE HALL

a) **Receive report and recommendations for repair or replacement of the benches situated on Mark Cross Millennium Green, and the bench by Hadlow Down Road.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the bench by Hadlow Down Road would not be repaired until the house building nearby is completed. It was suggested that the developers could then be approached to fund benches in that area. The picnic bench and plaque have been installed on the Millennium Green at Mark Cross and no additional benches were required there.

b) **Consider and resolve the site for installation of a memorial bench on Rotherfield Recreation Ground.**

RESOLVED that the Deputy Clerk approach the family concerned and suggest that, if they so wish, they fund a bench either in the Recreation Ground or Cemetery.

It was noted that many of the benches in the Recreation Ground are old, uncomfortable and in need of repair. It was **RESOLVED** to identify these and engage a contractor able to undertake the work; the families concerned should be contacted before this takes place, and contributions to toward the work invited. **CLERK** to add an item to social media inviting Parishioners who may wish to fund a bench to contact the Council,

c) **Consider request from Rotherfield Sports Club for payment of or donation towards the cost of the Autumn Deep Spiking drainage works at the Recreation Ground.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council will fund 50% of the £800 cost of this work. **CLERK** to add to the payment list for the October meeting, **CLERK** to advise the Club that their request has been agreed.

The Club also wish to cut back trees and foliage on the bank to the lower pitch so that spectators can have a clearer view –. **DEPUTY CLERK** to seek additional quotes for this work from local contractors as suggested by Cllr. Martin, see item 2c) below.

3. TREE MATTERS

a) **Consider a quotation for tree works on the Recreation Ground and resolve on works to be undertaken.**

RESOLVED that Cllr. Martin provides Deputy Clerk with details of three other local contractors and seek quotes from them for this work, also for the work in the Rec; There are currently no safety issues with the trees in the present quotation. **CLERK** to add item to the agenda of the October Council Meeting to consider the quotes, also those for the tree work identified in 2c) above.

b) **Discuss and resolve tree works required behind Rotherfield Surgery.**

Churchyard Trees:

- Wealden's inspection of the trees reported no issues of concern regarding safety. Their responsibility is to maintain the trees so that they are safe, not necessarily tidy. **CLERK** to write to WDC tree officer to advise that they would be responsible for any damage caused to the adjacent surgery by their trees.

4. HORNSHURST BURIAL GROUND

a) **Consideration of an extension to the post and rail fencing at Hornshurst Burial Ground.**

RESOLVED that Councillors who raised this to please obtain quotes for this work to be considered at a future meeting.

5. OLD BURIAL GROUND

a) **Discuss and agree a course of action following the removal of fencing following extension works to a property in Court Meadow.**

CLERK to write to occupier/owner of the property regarding drainage issues, installation of unauthorised access gate and extension of the property on to Parish land.

b) **Receive an update regarding red cedar tree and proposals for reducing or removing.**

As residents were present with regard to this issue it was dealt with at the start of the meeting under "Public Forum". Key points of the discussion were as follows: -

- The site meeting held on July 14th had passed on the issues identified to the 28th of July Parish Council meeting. This meeting resolved that the tree could be felled, subject to approval from the Conservation Officer, if the residents of Moons Yard would meet the full cost of the works. A requirement would also be put in place to ensure a replacement tree is planted within the Old Burial Ground. The residents had been made aware of this decision.
- It was considered that the tree was not unsafe.
- Removal could cause damage to the retaining wall as the remaining root ball of the tree would shrink over time; There was no evidence that the tree was currently damaging the wall.
- Shadows created by the Yew Trees in the closed churchyard caused loss of light to the residents of Moons Yard. This was disputed by some Councillors.
- The residents still wish for the tree to be removed and replaced with one of more modest scale.
- Cllr. Wickenden, the Parish Council's tree warden, was concerned that the cost of removal, if agreed, should not fall upon the Council.
- The matter should be reconsidered next summer.
- Councillors were concerned that funding tree removal could set a precedent and that other trees could be put forward by residents as candidates for the Council to remove.
- It was **RESOLVED** that CLERK will add an item to the October Parish Council Meeting to discuss and agree the future of the tree, and to consult with the Conservation Officer regarding removal should this be agreed.

c) **Consider commissioning a survey of all trees in the Old Burial Ground.**

DEPUTY CLERK to seek quotes for this from the contractors identified in item 3a) above.

6. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

b) **Receive an update regarding Christmas Light permissions including switch on date and event arrangements.**

This is a matter to be considered on behalf of the Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee. The contractor dealing with this has been asked to complete the H & S and licencing formalities with ESCC.

DEPUTY CLERK to liaise with the Bonfire Society regarding "lighting up" date, time, and other arrangements. Clerk and deputy clerk are liaising with the suppliers regarding tree supply and delivery, also arrangements for tree and decorations at Mark Cross.

DEPUTY CLERK to review and contact property owners to confirm that they are willing for lights to be attached to their premises.

7. RECEIVE DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE

Provisionally 14th February 2023, 19:30, in Rotherfield Village Hall. Deputy Clerk advised that the 2023 schedule of meetings has been drafted and awaits checking/fine tuning before enquiring as to availability of venues and publication.

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

- Cllr. Martin has received a quote for the repair work required to the floor of the Surgery.

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- Work to install the match funded speed awareness measures agreed with ESCC has commenced. Red road surfacing and speed roundels have already been installed on the B2100 Rotherfield Hill approach.
- **CLERK** to draft letter for sending to the Trustees of the Institute thanking them for their work in managing the building for many years; 13th October is the “handover” date for the transfer of responsibility for the Institute from the Trustees to the Parish Council
- **DEPUTY CLERK** to liaise with Cllr. Wickenden and arrange site visit regarding trees identified as being potentially hazardous in the Town Row area; Land Registry enquiries will be submitted to establish ownership, and issues reported to the appropriate bodies/owners. **CLERK** to add item to the October Council meeting agenda to consider actions required.
- Cllr Buck advised that a maintenance volunteer for the Old Burial Ground had reported that some grave/hole infilling was required, also that volunteers were required to help removal of grass cuttings.
- Councillors are reminded that updated photos will be taken at the October Council Meeting.

9. The Committee Chair declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:22.

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