



## **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 WEDNESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024 AT 19:30 IN THE PARISH COUNCIL ROOM AT ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL**

#### **PRESENT**

Cllr R Harris (Chair)  
Cllr B Johnstone (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr J Richardson

Cllr D Hiles  
Cllr J Gosney  
Cllr J Fryatt

Cllr P Kember  
Cllr L Buck

#### **COUNCILLORS ABSENT**

#### **ALSO PRESENT**

Cllr Bob Standley (East Sussex County Council) and Adam Hardy (Parish Clerk & RFO)

#### **1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -**

##### **a) Public forum.**

None

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

Apologies for absence were received from: Cllr A Martin, Cllr P Turner & Cllr P Snelling.

It was **RESOLVED** that their reasons be accepted.

Apologies had also been received from Cllr Jessika Hulbert (Wealden District Council). Cllr Michael Lunn (Wealden District Council) submitted apologies retrospectively.

##### **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 Bob Standley (East Sussex County Council)

*A report had been circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting.*

- Cllr Standley added that SEN Pressures had been recognised and some extra capital has been provided for this.
- Cllr Standley attended the meeting for Councillors held at Bewl Water regarding the new pipeline from Bewl to Cottage Hill. Rotherfield should face minimal disruption during the work.
- Cllr Fryatt asked if the B2100/A267 Junction project had now been completely dropped due to lack of funding or if it stands a chance of coming back in another budget year.

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The impression from the recent SLR meeting was that it was not proceeding but the Council would appreciate an answer either way. Cllr Standley agreed to find out more and report back to the Council. **Cllr Standley** to make further enquiries.

- Cllr Fryatt asked about the damaged road surface on the B2100 as you approach the junction with the A267 at Mark Cross. It was originally suggested that this was due to poor workmanship and that further repairs would be made. **Cllr Standley** to make further enquiries on behalf of the Parish Council.

**e) Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 for approval as a true record.**

It was **RESOLVED** that these were a true record of the meeting and they were signed by the Chair.

**f) Clerk's update on action items from previous meetings.**

- Clerk reported that he had made a further appeal to East Sussex Highways to ask for the lines at the Station Road junction to be repainted.
- Clerk reported that the new television had been installed in the Parish Council Room at Rotherfield Village Hall.
- Clerk confirmed that the Community Match Funding application for the revised A26 Speed Reduction project had been submitted.
- Clerk confirmed that he had notified undertakers of the new burial fees effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.
- Clerk has arranged for the War Memorial to be cleaned ahead of 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary D-Day events.
- Clerk reported the light on the Bicycle Arms junction to East Sussex Highways.
- Clerk confirmed that he has written a letter to send to the Diocese in relation to the Church Clock faculty application.

**2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT THE END OF FEBRUARY 2024, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND NOTE OR AUTHORISE PAYMENTS.**

**I Budget, other financial reports, and actions arising.**

The bank reconciliation up until the 29<sup>th</sup> of February 2024 was presented for all of the Council's bank accounts.

The Clerk, in his role as Responsible Finance Officer, proposed the following movements from General Reserves:

	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
£2,000.00	EM Reserves (320)	Office Costs (4110)
£2,000.00	EM CIL Receipts (329)	Footpaths (4250)
£2,000.00	EM Reserves (320)	Civic Celebrations (4159)
£20,000.00	EM Precept Contingency	Employment Costs (4100)

Cllr Hiles supported the Clerk's proposals. It was **RESOLVED** to move the funds from EM Reserves as outlined. **Clerk** to make necessary relocations.

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It was **RESOLVED** that the budget was correct and accepted by the Council as the correct position of the Council's accounts.

## ii Approval of payments.

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

Regular Payments			
Invoice/payer details	Ledger code	Cost centre code	Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters
Rotherfield Sports Club	4340	302	Grounds Maintenance
BT Business Broadband	4409	302	CCTV Broadband
Cloudy Group Ltd	4110	101	Rialtas Hosting
Veolia	4391	303	Village Hall Bin
Phil Ireland	4252	203	Street Sweeping
Tollwood Garden Services	4252	203	Street Sweeping
Phil Ireland	4364	302	Litter Picking
Rotherfield Memorial Institute	4125	101	Hall Bookings
Rotherfield Village Hall	4125	101	Hall Bookings
Tollwood Garden Services	4381	303	Hornshurst Burial Ground (1)
Tollwood Garden Services	4258	203	Eridge Station Planters (1)
Tollwood Garden Services	4258	203	Eridge Station Planters (2)
Tollwood Garden Services	4393	303	Ashes Interment - Plot 128 OBG
Tollwood Garden Services	4361	302	Village Hall Car Park Hedge
Tollwood Garden Services	4381	303	Hornshurst Burial Ground (2)
Tollwood Garden Services	4380	303	St Denys' Burial Ground (1)
Tollwood Garden Services	4393	303	Ashes Interment - Plot 790 OBG
Tollwood Garden Services	4393	303	Ashes Interment - Plot D15
Tollwood Garden Services	4380	303	St Denys' Burial Ground (2)
			<b>Total</b>
			<b>£2,467.02</b>
Other Payments			
Beverley Johnstone	4105	101	South East Water Event
Action in Rural Sussex	4120	101	Village Hall Services
ESALC Limited	4105	101	Training Planning (Clerk)
TN6 Electrical	4388	302	Repositioning of CCTV camera at rear of hall
William J Clark	4247	203	Hedge Cutting
Wealden District Council	4256	203	Dog Bin Emptying Jan - Mar 2024
Wealden District Council	4363	302	Dog Bin Emptying Jan - Mar 2024
Rotherfield St Martin	4110	101	Franking Machine Share
Paul Turner	4368	302	Key Cutting Container
ESALC Limited	4105	101	Future Shape of the Planning System Training
Rose Gas	4368	302	REACT Gas
PAUL OWEN ASSOCIATES	4410	302	Raise the Roof Scheme
Wealden District Council	4380	303	Non-Domestic Rates
TN6 Electrical	4110	101	TV and Installation in Village Hall PC Room
TN6 Electrical	4368	302	New CCTV Camera - Scout Hut
Moody Sewage Ltd	4341	302	Pre-School Cesspit Service
Hugh Page (Sussex) Ltd	4368	302	Generator
Wealden District Council	4105	101	WDC Parish Conference
			<b>Total</b>
			<b>£5,938.14</b>
Surgery payments	Ledger code	Cost centre code	Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters
			Amount

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Sussex Primary Care	4399	305	Surgery Costs	£629.08
Phil Ireland	4405	305	Surgery Window Cleaning	£14.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4405	305	Surgery Gutters	£250.00
				<b>£893.08</b>
Staff Costs - includes Tax, NI, pension and expenses			Total figure reported separately	<b>£4,015.18</b>

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

None

**3. RECEIVE REPORTS, UPDATES & RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PERSONNEL**

Cllr Richardson was pleased to say that Council staffing was now settled and the routine work of the Council was proceeding. She wished to thank Councillors for their support over the last few months whilst staffing has been finalised.

***The Chair Suspended Standing Orders to make a statement:***

*The Chair stated that following recent conduct at meetings, it was necessary to remind ourselves that Councillors and Officers need to act with civility and respect at all times. When disrespectful conduct is witnessed it should be called out. Any members of the public attending our meetings of late, with an interest in filling the Casual Vacancy, would most likely have been put off from making an application. This Council has signed the Civility and Respect pledge, and we must act accordingly. Furthermore, Councillors must adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life as laid out in the Council's Code of Conduct. If necessary, the Clerk can provide copies of the necessary documents to each Councillor. If such behaviour continues, then the Council Chair or the Committee Chair will suspend the meeting and if necessary bring the meeting to a conclusion with the business unresolved.*

***Standing Orders were reinstated and the meeting continued.***

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

**a) Discuss and review the Parish Speedwatch scheme.**

*Documents relating to this item had been circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting.*

The Council acknowledged receipt of the letter from the two parishioners connected with the SpeedWatch scheme and thanked them for their service as part of the team. The Council continues to lobby for speed awareness measures across the parish and has explored several options over the last ten years. However, its powers are limited.

The Council would be open to hearing from any parishioner with new ideas in this area and would like to extend an invitation to the two residents concerned to attend a meeting and address the Council. **Clerk and Chair** to write to the parishioners concerned inviting them to a Council meeting.

It is unfortunate that the SpeedWatch team cannot continue in Rotherfield at present but this situation is not unique to Rotherfield. Communities across Sussex are in the same position.

Councillors expressed a desire to get a SID device up and running again in the parish. Due to the software difficulties and older Bluetooth receivers, it was **RESOLVED** to purchase a new SID device with a budget of £4,000.00 (ex VAT). This machine will be accessible by Bluetooth connection to an application on tablet, phone and laptop. It was also felt that the device should do more than just flash speed and a preference for one with a smiling or sad face was expressed. **Clerk** to explore different options from surrounding Council's and get quotes for consideration. It was **RESOLVED** that funding for this would come from CIL Monies.

**b) Receive and consider options for memorial repairs in the parish cemeteries.**

*Documents relating to this item had been circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting.*

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from SEH Landscapes for the memorial repairs. **Clerk** to make arrangements for the works to be undertaken. It was noted that set dates would need to be identified so that interments could be scheduled around these dates.

**c) To discuss and resolve Rotherfield Parish Council holding a community event to mark the Great Big Green Week on 8-16 June 2024.**

*Documents relating to this item had been circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting.*

Cllr Johnstone addressed the Council and explained that Town and Parish Councils were involved but the timing was unfortunate as it came on the back of the events arranged to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day. As the Council was already committed to D-Day events it was **RESOLVED** not to participate this year.

**d) Discuss and consider the reintroduction of weed spraying for pavements across the Parish.**

*Documents relating to this item had been circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting.*

After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to reintroduce weed spraying for pavements across the parish with one application in early spring. **Clerk** to find a suitable contractor to undertake the work.

**e) Resolve and adopt new lease for Rotherfield Village Hall.**

Clerk reported that the DRAFT documents had not been received in time for consideration at this meeting. **Clerk** to add an item to the 25<sup>th</sup> April Parish Council Meeting agenda.

**f) Receive report from Clerk to remind Councillors of their responsibilities when using Social Media.**

*Documents relating to this item had been circulated ahead of the meeting.*

Clerk reminded Councillors of their responsibilities when engaging on social media and messaging platforms. It is not possible to separate the individual from the elected or co-opted Councillor and therefore you are always speaking as a Councillor even if you do not intend to.

Clerk asked Councillors to take particular care to ensure only accurate and up-to-date information is placed in the public domain. If Councillors are unsure about the validity of a document or statement they should consult the Clerk.

**g) Receive correspondence from Rotherfield St Martin and agree on associated actions.**

*Documents relating to this item had been circulated to Councillors ahead of this meeting.*

Cllr Buck asked how this letter had come about and was concerned that it would set a precedent for all village organisations & societies to have the need for official recognition by the Parish Council. Cllr Buck declared an interest as the founder of Good Company People who are an organisation who combat isolation and loneliness in older people. She confirmed she would abstain from voting on this item.

Cllr Richardson felt that the wording of the letter, "recognised as a leading charity in the community," meant that the Council could recognise RSM in the way that the letter requests and not set a precedent.

Cllr Hiles stated that the comparison relationship between Mayfield & Five Ashes Parish Council and MAYFACS was not appropriate to our situation because Mayfield Parish Council were part of the team that set that charity up.

Cllr Johnstone stated that there was difference between recognition and endorsement.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council believe they already recognise the work of Rotherfield St Martin. This is confirmed by its annual grants, support for Rotherfield Memorial Institute and work on joint projects. **Clerk** to write a reply to Chair of the Board of Rotherfield St Martin.

- h) **Discuss and resolve a request from Rotherfield Memorial Institute to make a planning application for Rotherfield Memorial Institute in the Rotherfield Parish Council's name.**

Cllr Kember briefed Councillors on the plans for the refurbishment that had been agreed by the Rotherfield Memorial Institute Management Committee.

Clerk reminded Councillors that although the Council is the Sole Custodian Trustee, it cannot unilaterally speak or act as the Rotherfield Memorial Institute Charity which is run by the Management Committee.

Cllr Richardson reminded Councillors that the building refurbishment would need to appeal to the whole parish if it is to be funded via the Public Works Loan Board.

It was **RESOLVED** that the planning application be made in the name of the Parish Council. **Clerk** to arrange for the application to be drawn up.

## **5. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE ROTHERFIELD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE.**

It was **AGREED** that no further update was required as the Institute had been heavily discussed under earlier items in this meeting.

## **6. TO NOTE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES PUBLISHED SINCE THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
20 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	Planning & Building Committee Meeting
12 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Planning & Building Committee Meeting

## **7. TO RECEIVE OTHER REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ARISING FROM THEM.**

### **a) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**

- Clerk attended the South East Water presentation for the new pipeline from Bewl Water to Cottage Hill Storage Tank.
- Clerk attended the Village Hall Committee meeting.
- Clerk attended a meeting with Cllrs Turner & Harris and Peter Ford on behalf of the Sports Club. Items from this meeting will be appearing on the agenda of the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 Recreation & Burial Committee meeting.
- Cllr Fryatt attended a recovery strategy meeting and will report back on this at a later date.
- Cllr Fryatt had met with a resident of Catts Hill who has started a petition for East Sussex Highways to lower the speed limit.
- Cllr Kember & Cllr Richardson had attended the Wealden Parishes Conference where the key themes were Councillor conduct including adherence to the Nolan Principles and the new Wealden Local Plan.

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- Cllr Kember had attended the Crowborough Repair Café where he had helped residents as an Energy Champion.
- Cllr Richardson and Cllr Johnstone had done a talk to Year 5 at Rotherfield Primary School as part of their recent Community Week. They were impressed with how knowledgeable the pupils were on various issues. The pupils would like to be involved in a campaign for the Community.
- Cllr Richardson reported that she had attended the Twinning Association AGM. They will be continuing for a further year. The Chair wished the Council's thanks to the Twinning Association recorded in the minutes – this was agreed by all.

#### **b) Clerk's updates and issues.**

- Clerk informed Councillors of the resignation of Claire Southern as a Councillor. He has forwarded this to the elections department at Wealden District Council and awaits the notice for advertising.
- Clerk would like to request the permission of the Council to start exploring options for digital cemetery management systems.
- Clerk reported that he would be on leave on the following days

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April

*Although the Clerk will be on leave during the day he will attend the Council/Committee meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> April in the evening.*

- Clerk reported that he had received the necessary permissions for the Rotherfield & Mark Cross Bonfire Society Easter Egg Event to take place on the Recreation Ground.

#### **c) Items for the next Parish Magazine column.**

- Local Plan Consultation
- Co-Option
- Speed Indication Device
- Rotherfield Memorial Institute Update

### **8. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.**

- Clerk reported that he had received an email from Wealden Citizens Advice asking us to participate in the Digital Fairness survey.
- Local Council Update for March 2024.
- The Parish Warden had raised specific concerns about the brick paving in Rotherfield Village Square. **Clerk** to chase the contractor for an estimate for this work to be carried out.

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## 9. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

Date	Inspection Report
20 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Hornshurst Burial Ground Report
20 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Playground Inspection Report
20 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Recreation Ground Inspection Report
20 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Old Burial Ground Inspection Report

## 10. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

Date	Meeting	Venue
2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2024	Planning & Building Committee	<i>Rotherfield Memorial Institute</i>
9 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	<b>Extraordinary Public Meeting re Local Plan</b>	<i>Rotherfield Memorial Institute</i>
11 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Rotherfield Memorial Institute Management Committee	<i>Rotherfield Memorial Institute</i>
16 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Community Engagement Committee	<i>Rotherfield Memorial Institute</i>
18 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Finance & General Purposes Committee	<i>Rotherfield Village Hall</i>
23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2024	Planning & Building Committee	<i>Rotherfield Memorial Institute</i>
25 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Parish Council Meeting	<i>Mark Cross Community Centre</i>
21 <sup>st</sup> May 2024	Recreation & Burial Committee with Planning & Building Committee	<i>Rotherfield Village Hall</i>
23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2024	Rotherfield Memorial Institute Management Committee	<i>Rotherfield Memorial Institute.</i>
25 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Annual Parish Assembly ( <b>Saturday</b> )	<i>Rotherfield Village Hall</i>
30 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Parish Council Meeting including the Annual Meeting of the Council.	<i>Rotherfield Memorial Institute</i>

All meetings are at 7:30pm.

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

- Cllr Richardson asked that a social media post be made to clarify that the flags at High Cross relate to South East Water works and not planning or development. **Clerk** to make a social media post.
- Cllr Johnstone reminded Councillors of the Institute redecoration working party that will take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April.

Chair declared the meeting closed at: **21:27**

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

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