



## 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 THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2025 AT 19:30 IN THE UPPER HALL AT ROTHERFIELD COMMUNITY HUB (MEMORIAL INSTITUTE)

#### PRESENT

Cllr R Harris (Chair)  
Cllr B Johnstone (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr D Hiles

Cllr D Johnstone  
Cllr J Fryatt  
Cllr L Buck

Cllr P Kember  
Cllr J Gosney  
Cllr E Holmes-Cutting

#### COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

#### ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Bob Standley (East Sussex County Council), Cllr Michael Lunn (Wealden District Council),  
Cllr Jessika Hulbert (Wealden District Council) and Adam J 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 J Richardson, Cllr P Turner, Cllr P Beach and Cllr P Snelling.

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

*Apologies have also been received from Cllr G Taylor (East Sussex County Council)*

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

- Cllrs B & D Johnstone declared an interest as they were on the payment run to be reimbursed for items relating to windows replacement at Rotherfield Memorial Institute.

##### d) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr Bob Standley (East Sussex County Council)

- Cllr Standley reported that he was working with stakeholders regarding the rural crime wave that has recently grown in Rotherfield and neighbouring parishes. There will be a meeting at Withyham with representatives of the police on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> February, and the County and District Councillors will feed back to the Council. The Clerk reported that he had written to Katy Bourne, the Sussex Police & Crime Commission, but had received no response to the Council's letter. Cllr Standley agreed to follow this up. The Council strongly felt there was a greater need for visible policing in the area. There was a clear need for better communication between the Police and Parish Councils.

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Cllr Michael Lunn (Wealden District Council):

- Cllr Lunn reported that the New Local Plan Consultation Summary and Development document - *Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation; Summary of Responses includes a new timetable for the Local Plan (Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS)* – would now go to a meeting of Wealden District Council Local Plan Sub-Committee on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025. It is unsure what progress will be made now that devolution to a Mayoral Combined County Authority has been approved. The timetable for the development of the plan is longer than the devolution process. District Councillors will provide an update at the March Parish Council Meeting. Cllr Gosney asked if all the work the Parish Council had done on the original consultation would be lost when the Local Plan changes to reflect current legislation and another Regulation 18 Consultation is undertaken. Councillors confirmed that, sadly, this would be the case.

Cllr Jessika Hulbert (Wealden District Council):

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

- Cllr Hulbert reported that she, too, was engaging with all concerned parties regarding the rural crime wave. Many of the victims were in her Ward. She will be attending the meeting at Withyham.

**e) Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025, 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.**

- The Clerk confirmed that the successful grant recipients from the January 2025 Parish Council meeting had been notified and are on the payment run for approval at this meeting.
- The Clerk confirmed that an additional quote for clearing the surgery roof of moss had been accepted. The work will be carried out in March.
- The Clerk reported that he had confirmed the fencing specifications for the gift of land adjoining Rotherfield Bowls Club. However, no work can proceed until the transfer of land is complete.
- The Clerk reported that a meeting of the new Mark Cross Community Centre Management Committee had been set for Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025
- The Clerk reported that the East Sussex Rights of Way Access Plan Consultation had received an extension to the deadline. This would now be considered at the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025 Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee.

**2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT THE END OF JANUARY 2025, 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 **30<sup>th</sup> January 2025** was presented for all of the Council's bank accounts.

The Clerk reported that, unfortunately, due to volume of Council Work the budget and bank reconciliation were not yet available for this meeting. They will be presented to the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025 Parish Council Meeting.

## ii Approval of payments.

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

<b>Regular Payments</b>				
<b>Invoice/payer details</b>	<b>Ledger code</b>	<b>Cost centre code</b>	<b>Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters</b>	<b>Amount - VAT included where applicable</b>
Rotherfield Sports Club	4340	302	Grounds Maintenance	£368.75
BT Business Broadband	4409	302	CCTV Broadband	£47.94
Cloudy Group Ltd	4110	101	Rialtas Hosting	£76.56
Veolia	4391	303	Village Hall Bins	£175.30
Tollwood Garden Services	4252	203	Street Sweeping	£110.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4364	302	Litter Picking	£440.00
Rotherfield Village Hall	4125	101	RVH Hall Hire	£53.40
Rotherfield Memorial Institute	4125	101	RMI Hall Hire	£20.00
Rotherfield Memorial Institute	4125	101	RMI Hall Hire (2)	£32.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4259	203	SID Deployment	£40.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4408	303	War Memorial Cleaning	£20.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4250	203	Station Road Path	£110.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4393	303	Ashes Interment	£103.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4381	303	Flytipping Removal	£215.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>£1,811.95</b>
<b>Other Payments</b>				
Action in Rural Sussex	4120	101	Village Hall Advisory Service	£10.44
Robert Shreeve Associates Limited	4113	101	RMI Professional Fees	£1,112.40
The Powdermill Trust	4150	101	Grant for Fencing & Gate	£400.00
Friends of Mark Cross Primary School	4156	102	Grant for Maths Resources	£500.00
SEH LANDSCAPES LIMITED	4255	203	Footpath in Rotherfield 50%	£1,416.00
KPS Contractors Ltd	4393	303	Gravedigging	£694.50
Bev & Douglas Johnstone	4110	101	Card Reader Batteries	£8.50
Doug Johnstone	4113	101	RMI Windows Materials	£101.41
MW Turfcare Partnership	4343	302	Agricultural Gypsum - Sports Pitch	£362.04
<b>Total</b>				<b>£4,605.29</b>
<b>Surgery payments</b>	<b>Ledger code</b>	<b>Cost centre code</b>	<b>Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Sussex Primary Care	4399	305	Surgery Costs	£629.08
				<b>£629.08</b>
Staff Costs - includes Tax, NI, pension and expenses			Total figure reported separately	<b>£4,902.77</b>

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

- The Clerk reported that spending had been authorised for the glass for the windows at Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute) as per the resolution made at the 30<sup>th</sup> January Parish Council meeting. This was authorised by Cllr Harris and Cllr B Johnstone.

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

The Clerk reported that there were no updates for the Council.

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

**a) Receive and resolve quotation for the relining of Rotherfield Village Hall Car Park.**

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

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the quote from Ace Road Markings. **Clerk** to contact Ace Road Markings and arrange a date for the works to be undertaken. The Council would prefer the Easter Holidays as it would make closing the car park for the work easier.

**b) Receive update on the Parish VE Day 80th Anniversary events.**

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

Day & Date	Time	Event	Action Notes	Responsible Organisation/S
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> May	12:00noon	Luncheon Club Fish & Chips Celebration. War pony in car park Village Hall – <i>Open to all – booking through RSM.</i>	Pic ups agreed £7 per portion – no max. Call by 30/4 to confirm nos. RSM Lunch Club Leader – Stuart (Methodists/CofE) pudding to be decided. PC agreed to pony – VH aware – cost £150 - RSM?	Rotherfield St Martin
	9:30pm	Beacon Lighting & Fireworks Display on Rotherfield Recreation Ground	Fireworks have been confirmed. AH/RH to arrange Recreation Ground Access.	Rotherfield Parish Council (with R&MC Bonfire Society).
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> May – Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> May	Thu-Fri 9am -5pm  Sat 10am – 3pm	Rotherfield Hall of Memories at Rotherfield Community Hub.	Call out for memorabilia Feb onwards Thursday/Friday - VC & IB Sat - TBC	Rotherfield St Martin and Rotherfield Community Hub
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> May	11:00am	Thanksgiving & Celebration Parade Service at St Denys' Church with wartime pony & artillery carriage	Cost £150 - RPC	St Denys' Church.
	12:00noon	Parish Picnic on Court Meadow Green & St Denys' Churchyard – <i>Open to all</i> <i>Invitation to the Martlets to perform at Picnic.</i> <i>To include Dressing Up, Cake Competition and Toast</i>	AH has written to the Martlets in response to an email received from VC.  AH to arrange Fizz.  Church will provide Tea & Coffee.	Rotherfield Parish Council with St Denys' Church.

The Clerk reported that the 'Save the Date' posters had already gone out.

## 5. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

- a) **WD/2025/0130/F** - Hamilton House, Forge Road, Eridge, TN3 9LG  
Replacement residential storage outbuilding.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Wealden District Council that this application be **APPROVED**. The Council had no further comments on the application.

- b) **WD/2025/0007/F** - Cherry Orchards, Gillridge Lane, Crowborough TN6 1UR  
Proposed riding arena (manege) with fence.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Wealden District Council that this application be **APPROVED SUBJECT TO A CONDITION** that the arena is only for private use.

- c) **WD/2024/2788/FA** - 24 Court Meadow Close, Rotherfield TN6 3LW  
Variation of conditions 8 & 10 of WD/2023/2388/F (construction of two new dwellings) to enable raising of building by 400mm, addition of single-storey front porch extension to both plots, internal alterations and alterations to fenestration.

Cllr Harris declared an interest in this application as he is a close neighbour.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Wealden District Council that this application be **REFUSED**. The Council feel that the planning application as approved is correct for the site. The variations would not be in keeping with the surrounding properties.

## 6. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE ROTHERFIELD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE.

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

Councillors recognised that progress had been made towards agreeing detailed plans and cost estimates (RIBA Stage 4) necessary for a Building Regulations application. The next stage of professional fees for this work, to be funded by the Rotherfield Trust grant, will be discussed and signed off at the Management Committee meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March. This would allow funding applications to be made to various grant and loan providers.

Cllr Harris asked if the Rotherfield Trust were aware of the risks associated with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) application process, particularly if the public referendum was not successful. Cllr B Johnstone confirmed the Trust were aware.

A number of Councillors raised concerns about the scale of the project and the need to be prudent about financial commitments in the present economic climate. Councillors discussed ways in which the project's overall cost might be reduced and whether undertaking the work in phases might have advantages. Cllr B Johnstone reported that the Management Committee was actively looking at ways to reduce costs and suggested that the initial cost estimates, which were based on generalised assumptions at this stage, should come down once the Committee completed further discussions about the final design and level of services.

It was **AGREED** that the Management Committee should explore various sources of grant funding before the Council made any decision about a Public Works Loan Board application. **Clerk** to advise the Management Committee. Cllr Harris reminded Councillors that the maximum amount available via PWLB was £500,000, which would be funded by a precept increase.

Cllr Hulbert suggested that there may be some support available from Wealden District Council, and they could be approached. **Clerk** to contact Wealden District Council

## 7. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE MARK CROSS COMMUNITY CENTRE.

The Clerk reported that the Community Centre was running smoothly and no issues had been raised. The first Committee meeting has been set as referred to earlier in the meeting.

## 8. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE ROTHERFIELD SURGERY BUILDING.

The Clerk reported that he and Louise Henrick, Chair of the Surgery Working Group, met with a representative of Sussex Primary Care regarding our rent review offer. Sussex Primary Care asked if there was any wriggle room in the percentage of rent increase. The Working Group met and communicated via email to make a further offer to Sussex Primary Care with two options. A reply has been received with their preferred option, and we now await confirmation from NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board and the District Valuer Office.

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

Date	Meeting
28 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Planning & Environment Committee

The Clerk reported that the 18<sup>th</sup> February Planning & Environment Committee was cancelled due to lack of business.

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

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

- The Clerk reported he had attended the Village Hall Committee meeting.
- The Clerk met with parents of the school and preschool regarding the speed of vehicles passing the school. Cllr Standley raised this in his report to the Council.
- Cllr Fryatt met with residents of Medway Farm to discuss Highways and drainage matters; he will be liaising with Cllr Standley.
- Cllrs Kember, B Johnstone and Fryatt met to formalise the Council's response to the Wealden Green Paper on Climate Change. The Clerk confirmed that this had been submitted to Wealden District Council.
- Cllr Harris reported that he had met with a representative of High Weald and Natural England regarding possible funding for the land adjoining the Recreation Ground.

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

- The Clerk reported that he had been in contact with members of the Rotherfield Twinning Association who would shortly be meeting to consider the future of the association. He reminded Councillors that even if the association folds, the twinning responsibility would then fall back to the Parish Council.
- The Clerk reported that he had received notification that the planning application for the Highfields Farm site has now been verified and will shortly be coming before the 11<sup>th</sup> March Planning & Environment Committee Meeting. As a large public presence is expected this meeting will now take place in Rotherfield Scout Hut. After discussion, it was **AGREED** that the Council would comment on the application and that no conflict of interest existed because of a bequest from the sale of the land to the Rotherfield Memorial Institute charity of which the Council is Sole Custodian Trustee. The sale of land and the development of it are two separate matters.



- The Clerk reported that he had circulated a report that will go to Wealden District Council Local Plan Sub-Committee on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025. Titled: *Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation – Summary of Responses includes new timetable for the Local Plan (Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS).*

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

- Flytipping at the Parish Cemetery and across the Parish.
- VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Update
- Twinning between Rotherfield and St Cheron.

**11. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.**

- The Clerk reported that he had received a letter from Family Support Work once again thanking us for their grant this financial year and outlining how our grant has been used in the Parish.
- The Clerk reported that he had received a letter from East Sussex County Council under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 – Section 53 regarding a Claimed Public Right of Way of a Public Footpath from Town Row Green to Mark Cross. This is a complex issue involving multiple properties and landowners. The Council response will be determined by the Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee and an item has been placed on this Committee's 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025 agenda.
- The Clerk reported that he had received a request to hold a bootcamp on the Recreation Ground and Village Hall Carpark.
- The Clerk reported that he had received communications from Rotherfield Pre-School about potential expansion plans. A meeting has been arranged with the Pre-School to discuss this further.

**12. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.**

No inspections have occurred this month. Cllr Harris agreed to undertake these shortly.

**13. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.**

Date	Meeting	Venue
11 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Planning & Environment Committee	Rotherfield Scout Hut
25 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee	Rotherfield Memorial Institute
27 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Parish Council Meeting	Rotherfield Memorial Institute
1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	Planning & Environment Committee	Rotherfield Village Hall
8 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee	Rotherfield Memorial Institute
16 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	Finance & General Purposes Committee <b>NB: Wednesday</b>	Rotherfield Memorial Institute
22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2025	Planning & Environment Committee	Rotherfield Village Hall
24 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	Parish Council Meeting	Mark Cross Community Centre

*All meetings are at 7:30 pm unless otherwise stated.*

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

- Cllr Kember reported on conversations he had regarding the lack of signage on the approach to Cowfold Bridge. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would raise this with the Highways' Liaison and Safety Officers. **Clerk** to contact East Sussex Highways.

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- Cllr Gosney reported that recent buses had been improved. The Council were disappointed that the service had recently not run through Rotherfield at all for four days with little or no communication or advertising for parishioners. The Clerk reported that Cllr Beach is still working on getting a meeting with Stagecoach.
- Cllr Harris reported that the no dogs signpost in the Recreation Ground had fallen over and asked that the Council contractor be asked to restore it. **Clerk** to make necessary arrangements.

Chair declared the meeting closed at: **[9:15pm]**

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