



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 24th APRIL 2025 AT 19:30 IN MARK CROSS COMMUNITY CENTRE

PRESENT

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

Cllr P Turner
Cllr J Fryatt
Cllr D Johnstone

Cllr P Kember
Cllr J Gosney
Cllr P Beach

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Georgia Taylor (East Sussex County Council),
Cllr Jessika Hulbert (Wealden District Council), Cllr Michael Lunn (Wealden District Council) and
Adam J Hardy (Parish Clerk & RFO)

1. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

a) Introduction of Councillors & Officers.

The Councillors and Officers introduced themselves.

b) Public forum.

None.

c) Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s 85).

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr E Holmes-Cutting, Cllr L Buck and Cllr P Snelling.

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

Apologies had also been received from Cllr Bob Standley (East Sussex County Council).

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

Cllr P Turner declared an interest in item 2ii as he is on the payment run for reimbursement.

e) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr Bob Standley (East Sussex County Council) had submitted a report to Councillors in his absence.

Cllr Georgia Taylor (East Sussex County Council)

- Cllr Taylor apologises for not sending a report in advance of the meeting.
- Cllr Taylor reported that the devolution discussions were ongoing and that a full plan would be worked up that, hopefully, would take account of Parish/Town Council views. The election for Mayor will take place in May 2026. There will be a crossover where the County Council and the new Unitary Authority both exist at the same time. It is hoped that the County Council will provide briefings for Parish Councils.

Cllr Jessika Hulbert (Wealden District Council):

- Cllr Hulbert apologised for not sending a report before the meeting and had nothing to add to Cllr Taylor or Cllr Lunn's reports.

Cllr Michael Lunn (Wealden District Council)

- Cllr Lunn reported that he understood Wealden would shortly be commissioning a new Regulation 18 Consultation on the New Local Plan following revisions due to the change of government housing policy.
- Cllr Lunn informed the Council that the Alliance at Wealden District Council were refreshing the Wealden Constitution and encouraged Councillors to watch the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 14th May 2025. Cllr B Johnstone asked if we had any details on the changes. Cllr Lunn replied that there were plans to change the planning committees, licensing committee, overview and scrutiny.
- Cllr P Beach asked if the planning policy and decisions reflected the number of already approved planning applications. Cllr P Turner asked if the housing targets set nationally also consider the number of existing approved planning permissions. Cllr Lunn replied that the local ones had been taken into account. Cllr Hulbert said that there is an unacceptable delay between permission and construction. Cllr Taylor said that across the Country there are a large number of empty homes that need utilising. There is a need for a change in National Planning Policy.

f) Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 22nd April 2025, for approval as a true record.

The Clerk reported that he had not yet produced the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday.
Clerk to hold over until the May Parish Council Meeting.

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

27th March 2025 Parish Council Meeting

- The Clerk confirmed that he had written to the owner of the unsightly vehicle in Rotherfield Square.
- The Clerk confirmed that the revised Burial Charges had been published.
- The Clerk reported that the website had been updated with the newly adopted Financial Regulations.
- The Clerk confirmed that the new protocol for hearing planning applications had been published on the Council website.
- The Clerk reported he had written to Sussex Primary Care to chase the rent review. Sussex Primary Care replied, informing us that there is a long wait for the District Valuer to sign off.
- The Clerk reported he had contacted the contractor working on the Rotherfield Surgery Roof to confirm the Council wished to proceed with treating the roof following the moss removal.

22nd April Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting:

- The Clerk reported that some actions remain outstanding as the meeting was only held two days ago. These will be completed by the end of the week.

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

2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT THE END OF MARCH 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 31st **March 2025** was presented for all of the Council's bank accounts.

The Clerk reported that he had submitted the VAT reclaim for the period of 1st October 2024 – 31st March 2025. The amount for reclaim is £ 11,026.51

The Council **NOTED** the budget and other financial reports.

ii Approval of payments.

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

| Regular Payments | | | | Amount - |
|--------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Invoice/payer details | Ledger code | Cost centre code | Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters | VAT included where applicable |
| Rotherfield Sports Club | 4340 | 302 | Grounds Maintenance | £368.75 |
| BT Business Broadband | 4409 | 302 | CCTV Broadband | £52.16 |
| Cloudy Group Ltd | 4110 | 101 | Rialtas Hosting | £76.59 |
| Veolia | 4391 | 303 | Village Hall Bins | £175.30 |
| Phil Ireland | 4252 | 203 | Street Sweeping | £178.93 |
| Phil Ireland | 4364 | 302 | Litter Picking | £357.87 |
| Rotherfield Village Hall | 4125 | 101 | RVH Hall Hire | £17.80 |
| Rotherfield Memorial Institute | 4125 | 101 | RMI Hall Hire | £35.00 |
| F Wilson | 4100 | 101 | Clerk's Admin Assistant | £362.22 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4381 | 303 | Hornshurst Burial Ground (1) | £80.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4255 | 203 | Village Plants (1) | £40.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4259 | 203 | SID (1) | £10.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4341 | 302 | Village Hall & Recreation Ground (1) | £331.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4257 | 203 | Highways (1) | £288.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4257 | 203 | Highways (2) | £49.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4389 | 302 | Court Meadow Green (1) | £37.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4390 | 303 | Old Burial Ground (1) | £466.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4381 | 303 | Hornshurst Burial Ground (2) | £70.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4250 | 203 | St Chéron Twitten (1) | £200.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4389 | 302 | Court Meadow Green (2) | £37.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4341 | 302 | Village Hall & Recreation Ground (2) | £49.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4259 | 203 | SID (2) | £10.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4393 | 303 | Ashes Interment HBG | £103.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4381 | 303 | Hornshurst Burial Ground (3) | £5.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4255 | 203 | Village Plants (2) | £15.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4389 | 303 | Court Meadow Green (3) | £37.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4389 | 303 | Court Meadow Green (4) | £10.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4341 | 302 | Village Hall & Recreation Ground (3) | £208.50 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4381 | 303 | Hornshurst Burial Ground (4) | £70.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4341 | 302 | Village Hall & Recreation Ground (4) | £49.00 |
| Tollwood Garden Services | 4389 | 303 | Court Meadow Green (5) | £37.00 |

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

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------|---|----------------------------------|------------------|
| | | | | Total | £3,826.12 |
| Other Payments | | | | | |
| MPH Metcalfe Plumbing and Heating Limited | 4381 | 303 | New Cemetery Tap | | £69.14 |
| ESALC Limited | 4120 | 101 | ESALC & NALC Renewal | | £1,016.88 |
| Rialtas Business Solutions | 4120 | 101 | Annual Support & Maintenance | | £352.80 |
| Ace Road Markings | 4361 | 302 | Car Park Relining | | £1,560.00 |
| Newman Business Solutions Ltd | 4110 | 101 | Jan- April Printing | | £1,154.82 |
| MW Turfcare Partnership | 4340 | 302 | End of Season Fertiliser | | £110.00 |
| Paul Turner | 4368 | 302 | Container Padlock Keys | | £22.50 |
| Peter Mannington | 4340 | 302 | Deep Spike Draining Lower Pitch | | £672.00 |
| Action in Rural Sussex | 4120 | 101 | Village Hall Advisory Service Renewal | | £150.00 |
| Direct 365 | 4391 | 303 | Excess Waste Charge | | £6.67 |
| | | | | Total | £5,114.81 |
| Surgery payments | Ledger code | Cost centre code | Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters | Amount | |
| Sussex Primary Care | 4399 | 305 | Surgery Costs | £629.08 | |
| Phil Ireland | 4405 | 305 | Surgery Windows | £15.00 | |
| L J Ashwell | 4405 | 305 | Surgery Roof Moss Clearance | £1,551.00 | |
| | | | | £2,195.08 | |
| Staff Costs - includes Tax, NI, pension and expenses | | | | Total figure reported separately | £4,672.83 |

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

None.

3. RECEIVE REPORTS, UPDATES & RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PERSONNEL

None.

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

a) Approval of the Council's DRAFT accounts for the 2024/2025 financial year.

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

The Clerk presented the DRAFT Income & Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st March 2025.

The Council **NOTED** the DRAFT accounts for 2024/2025.

b) **Approval of Grant applications recommended for payment at the 16th April 2025 Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting.**

The Following grants were recommended to Full Council:

| Organisation | Amount Requested | Comments |
|--|------------------|--|
| Rotherfield & Mark Cross Bonfire society | £600.00 | |
| Rotherfield & Mark Cross Bonfire Society | £550.00 | To be coded as a Community Initiative. |
| Rotherfield St Martin | £1,500.00 | |
| Wealden Citizens Advice | £700.00 | |
| Family Support Work | £800.00 | |
| Total: | £4,150.00 | |

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the payment of the grants listed above. **Clerk** to notify applicants.

c) **Receive an update on the Parish Assembly 2025**

The Clerk reported that invitations had been sent out. The event would run pretty much as last time. We have invited our grant recipients from 2024 but none were keen to speak. Cllr Harris as Chair will open the event at 10:00am. Please could all Councillors arrive at 9:00am to set up. Councillors who are unable to attend please notify the Clerk.

d) **Receive an update on the Parish VE Day 80th Anniversary Events**

The Clerk gave the following update on VE Events:

Thursday 8th May 2025

- 9:00am Flag raising ceremony with bagpipes and proclamation reading. Awaiting confirmation of Rotherfield School attendance.
- 12:00pm Fish and Chip lunch at the Village Hall open to all. Numbers are currently at 60. Cllr Standley & Cllr Hulbert are attending.
- 6:30pm The Church will be ringing the bells in line with the rest of the Nation.
- 9:30pm Beacon Lighting and Fireworks. The Fireworks organisers are working with the Bonfire Society on set up. I have approved the risk assessments and method statement for the fireworks. I have completed a Method Statement and Risk Assessment for the Beacon Lighting. Fireworks warning notifications have been drafted and will be sent to property owners in the vicinity of the Recreation Ground and placed on social media.

Thursday 8th May – Saturday 10th May

- Hall of Memories

Sunday 11th May 2025:

- Thanksgiving & Celebration Service – all organised with the Church, Scouts, Legion and Bonfire Society. The Chair will do a reading as part of the service.
- Parish Picnic drink refreshments are in hand with the church. Clerk and his Admin Assistant will arrange purchase of prosecco. The Clerk suggested a need to advertise the cake competition and dressing up further.

Cllr Gosney asked for a running order to be circulated to Councillors.

e) Discuss and consider quotation TPB-0794 from East Sussex Highways to replace failed obsolete lantern Court Meadow Road - Rotherfield - Lc75 & 77

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

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from East Sussex Highways. **Clerk** to sign off on quotation and commission the work.

f) Discuss and resolve updated Rotherfield Parish Council Standing Orders.

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

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Standing Orders. **Clerk** to publish on website and circulate to Councillors.

5. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE ROTHERFIELD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE.

- Cllr B Johnstone gave a brief update, informing Councillors that a meeting had been set up with RSA (architects) to review the design. A further update will be presented to the Council in May 2025.

6. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE MARK CROSS COMMUNITY CENTRE.

- Cllr B Johnstone reported that identified works were being carried out by Ian Bassett.
- The Clerk reported that the internet was currently cut off from the Community Centre, but it should be fixed early next week. However, the Hive Heating System was not presently able to be programmed remotely.

7. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE ROTHERFIELD SURGERY BUILDING.

- The Clerk reported that, as mentioned earlier, the rent review process was still ongoing.
- The Clerk reported that the Surgery Entrance Carpet was in need of replacement and that he was obtaining quotes for this work.
- The Clerk reported that the roof had now been cleared of moss and treated.

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

| Date | Meeting |
|------------------------|--|
| 25 th March | Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee |
| 1 st April | Planning & Environment Committee. |
| 16 th April | Finance & General Purposes Committee |

9. TO RECEIVE OTHER REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ARISING FROM THEM.

a) Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

- The Clerk reported that he had attended the Village Hall Committee meeting.
- Cllrs R Harris, P Turner, Cllr B Johnstone and the Parish Clerk had a meeting to discuss and review Recreation & Burial Matters.
- Cllr J Richardson had met with the Crowborough and Rotherfield Art Group and invited them to the Parish Assembly.
- Councillors attended the retirement party for Dr Golton.
- Cllr J Gosney had met with Wealdlink representatives.
- Cllrs P Turner and R Harris met at the Parish Cemetery to discuss options for improving access and paths.

b) Clerk's updates and issues.

- The Clerk reminded Councillors that next month's Parish Council meeting would include the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council where Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Liaisons would be appointed.
- The Clerk reminded Councillors that he would be on leave from 27th April returning to work on the 6th May.
- The Clerk reported that he had attended the training course on Unitary Authority Reorganisation offered by SLCC.

c) Items for the next Parish Magazine column.

- VE Day 80th Anniversary – Special Edition.

10. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- Multiple communications in relation to the Highfield Farms planning application.
- The Clerk reported that he had received a communication regarding spaces for older children in the Parish. It was **AGREED** that the resident concerned would meet with one or two Councillors to discuss her ideas.
- Communications regarding the disbandment of the Rotherfield Twinning Association returning the responsibility of the Twinning to Rotherfield Parish Council.

11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS.

| Date | Inspection Report | Comments |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 21 st April 2025 | Hornshurst Burial Ground Report | Some recent mole activity. The grave diggers need to put the spoil in the bins not outside. The Clerk has asked the grave digger to return and move the soil. |
| 21 st April 2025 | Playground Inspection Report | One of the cross beams on the large climbing frame shows signs of rot. The Clerk has made arrangements for this to be replaced by the end of the week. |
| 21 st April 2025 | Recreation Ground Inspection Report | Nothing to report. |
| 21 st April 2025 | Old Burial Ground Inspection Report | The bin needs emptying. The Clerk has asked for the bin to be put out for collection. |
| 21 st April 2025 | Court Meadow Green Inspection Report | Nothing to report. |
| 21 st April 2025 | REACT Container Box Inspection Report | Recently inspected - all in good order. |
| 21 st April 2025 | Scout Hut and Pre-School Buildings Inspection Report | Nothing to Report |
| 21 st April 2025 | Village Hall and Car Park Inspection Report | Nothing to Report |

12. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

| Date | Meeting | Venue |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| 13 th May 2025 | Planning & Environment Committee | <i>Rotherfield Village Hall</i> |
| 13 th May 2025 | Communications & Events Committee 8:15pm | <i>Rotherfield Village Hall</i> |
| 29 th May 2025 | Parish Council Meeting including the Annual Meeting of the Council | <i>Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute)</i> |
| | | |
| 3 rd June 2025 | Planning & Environment Committee | <i>Rotherfield Village Hall</i> |
| 10 th June 2025 | Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee | <i>Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute)</i> |
| 24 th June 2025 | Planning & Environment Committee | <i>Rotherfield Village Hall</i> |
| 26 th June 2025 | Parish Council Meeting | <i>Mark Cross Community Centre</i> |

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

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

- Cllr P Turner asked if the Parish Council had ever considered fencing Town Row Green as it was a vulnerable area. The Chair replied that this had been raised before and will discuss the history of the Green with Cllr Turner.
- Cllr B Johnstone asked if the meeting to discuss RPC Resilience in relation to the REACT Policy could be rearranged. **Clerk** to set a date.

Chair declared the meeting closed at: **21:17**

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