



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 18TH SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 19:30 IN THE UPPER HALL AT ROTHERFIELD COMMUNITY HUB (MEMORIAL INSTITUTE)

PRESENT

Cllr R Harris (Chair)
Cllr B Cheeseman

Cllr L Buck
Cllr P Beach

Cllr P Kember
Cllr D Hiles

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Bob Standley (East Sussex County Council), and
Adam J Hardy (Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer).

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 J Gosney, Cllr J Richardson, Cllr P Turner, Cllr E Holmes-Cutting, Cllr B Johnstone and Cllr D Johnstone.

It was **RESOLVED** that the reasons for the apologies be accepted.

Apologies have also been received from Cllr J Hulbert (Wealden District Council) and Cllr G Taylor (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.

e) 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 explained that Local Government Reorganisation was proceeding by looking at different models. Brighton & Hove had submitted a model in which the area had been split into

Last Updated: Thursday, 30 October 2025 - 1:19 PM

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five Unitary Authorities. Wealden District Council had recently stepped back from supporting a one Sussex Model.

- Cllr Standley has made enquiries regarding white lines at the tactile crossing on Station Road and is awaiting a response from East Sussex Highways.

f) Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday, 28th August 2025, for approval as a true record.

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

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

- The Clerk reported that he had not yet made progress on arranging a joint District and Parish Council Surgery for residents.
- The Clerk reported that the Undercroft had been cleared, and the container at the rear of the car park is now being used as a temporary store.
- The Clerk confirmed that payment of a grant to the Bonfire Society to cover the cost of their insurance is on the payment list for this meeting.
- The Clerk confirmed that he had written to both schools to offer a local democracy meeting in the form of a mock Council meeting.

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

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

ii Approval of payments.

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

Invoice/payer details	Ledger code	Regular Payments		Amount - VAT included where applicable
		Cost centre code	Ledger entry description - Max 30 characters	
Rotherfield Sports Club	4340	302	Grounds Maintenance	£368.75
BT Business Broadband	4409	302	Broadband	£52.16
Cloudy Group Ltd	4110	101	Rialtas Hosting	£76.56
Veolia	4391	303	Village Hall Bins	£175.30
Direct 365	4391	303	Cemetery Bins	£522.11
Phil Ireland	4252	203	Street Sweeping	£220.00
Phil Ireland	4364	302	Litter Picking	£440.00
Rotherfield Memorial Institute	4125	101	RMI Hall Hire	£50.00
F Wilson	4117	101	Clerk's Admin Assistant	£277.28
Wealden District Council	4256	203	Dog Bin Emptying July - September 2025	£540.00
Wealden District Council	4363	302	Dog Bin Emptying July - September 2025	£180.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4381	303	Hornshurst Burial Ground (1)	£70.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4381	303	Hornshurst Burial Ground (2)	£70.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4381	303	Hornshurst Burial Ground (3)	£408.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4389	302	Court Meadow (1)	£37.00

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Tollwood Garden Services	4389	302	Court Meadow (2)	£178.50
Tollwood Garden Services	4341	302	Village Hall & Rec (1)	£505.50
Tollwood Garden Services	4341	302	Village Hall & Rec (2)	£30.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4257	203	Highways (1)	£40.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4407	302	Mark Cross Mill Green (1)	£85.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4341	302	Village Hall & Rec (3)	£30.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4341	302	Village Hall & Rec (4)	£173.50
Tollwood Garden Services	4389	302	Court Meadow (3)	£37.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4341	302	Children's Play Area (1)	£49.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4393	303	Ashes Interment (1)	£103.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4393	303	Ashes Interment (2)	£103.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4257	203	Highways (2)	£40.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4258	203	Eridge Station (1)	£100.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4381	303	Hornshurst Burial Ground (4)	£70.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4389	302	Court Meadow (4)	£37.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4341	302	Village Hall & Rec (5)	£331.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4257	203	Highways (3)	£288.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4255	203	Old Railway Bridge	£49.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4255	203	Station Road Grass	£5.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4380	303	Old Burial Ground (1)	£466.00
Tollwood Garden Services	4257	203	Highways (4)	£120.00
Total				£6,327.66

Other Payments

Crowborough Community First Responders	4150	101	Grant	£750.00
TN6 Electrical	4409	302	CCTV Camera Repair	£60.00
Rotherfield Village Hall	4125	101	Dr Davis Retirement Party	£71.75
Coppard Plant Hire	4120	101	Container Delivery and Hire	£169.20
Action in rural Sussex	4120	101	Housing Needs Survey (50%)	£3,654.48
Rotherfield & Mark Cross Bonfire Society	4150	101	Carnival Insurance Grant	£807.61
DCS Structural	4113	101	Structural Design - RMI	£1,800.00
D Johnstone	4254	203	Bus Shelter Window Repair	£13.22
Balfour Beatty Living Places	4221	202	TOWN/PARISH - COURT MEADOW - P5	£740.50
Total				£8,066.76

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
Tollwood Garden Services	4405	305	Doctors Surgery Work	£90.00
				£734.08
Staff Costs - includes Tax, NI, pension and expenses				
Total figure reported separately				£4,812.45

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

The Clerk reported that spending on additional resources for the deployment of the Speed Indication Device was authorised under delegated powers by Cllr R Harris, Cllr D Johnstone and agreed by the Clerk.

3. RECEIVE REPORTS, UPDATES & RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PERSONNEL

Nothing to report.

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

i. **Discuss and approve the process for drafting of a new licence with Rotherfield Sports Club for the use of Rotherfield Recreation Ground.**

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

The Clerk reported that the current licence agreement with Rotherfield Sports Club dates from 29th April 1995 and is no longer fit for purpose. The Clerk seeks the permission of the Council to engage our solicitors to prepare a new licence agreement between the Parish Council and Rotherfield Sports Club with regard to the use, rent, insurance and legal requirements for use of the Rotherfield Recreation Ground by Rotherfield Sports Club.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the drafting of a new Licence Agreement. **Clerk** to draft new licence.

ii. **Discuss and adopt a Rotherfield Parish Council Flag Policy.**

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

The Clerk recommends that this item is held over pending release of further guidance from the East Sussex Association of Local Councils. The Clerk has ordered a new Sussex County Flag to fly on our flag posts.

Cllr Buck asked that the Pride Flag be included in the policy. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would add the Pride Flag and the policy would return to Council for adoption on the 30th October 2025 meeting.

iii. **Receive update on Rotherfield Pre-School.**

The Clerk requested that the Chair bring a motion that the public is excluded under the authority of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The following update includes information that is commercially sensitive to the Parish Council.

*It was **RESOLVED** to pass the above motion.*

It was **RESOLVED** that preparations begin for a new lease for the Rotherfield Pre-School building with Rotherfield Primary School.

It was **RESOLVED** that an inspection be made of the Pre-School decking area and undercroft roof.

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5. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE ROTHERFIELD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE.

The Clerk updated the Council on the condition of the boundary between the Rotherfield Memorial Institute and neighbouring properties.

The Clerk updated the Council regarding correspondence received from three of the five charities that are residual estate beneficiaries, alongside the Memorial Institute from the will of a late resident.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Officer's recommendations.

The Press and Public were permitted to return to the meeting.

6. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE MARK CROSS COMMUNITY CENTRE.

The Clerk reported that the Community Centre was running well. A new Yoga Group had taken a regular booking on a Monday.

7. RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE ROTHERFIELD SURGERY BUILDING.

The Clerk reported that Sussex Primary Care had now sent dates for an update meeting on the Rotherfield Surgery building.

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

Date	Meeting
19 th August 2025	Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee
26 th August 2025	Planning & Environment Committee
16 th September 2025	Planning & Environment 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 a meeting of local groups and organisations, organised by the PTCA of Rotherfield School, regarding coordinating Fundraising events. He promoted the Community Diary and was asked if the Council would help promote events for other groups. Other matters were raised, including the cost of venues. Cllr Harris reported that he had been contacted by the Chair of the Bonfire Society regarding the cost of the Village Hall Hire and how they were unsure they could afford to put on the senior citizens' lunch this year. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would write a letter to the Village Hall Management Committee regarding hire rates of more than four hours for local charities. **Clerk** to draft letter.
- The Clerk reported that he had attended the Rotherfield Village Hall Committee meeting.
- Cllr B Cheeseman reported he had attended the Rotherfield Sports Club AGM.
- Councillors reported they had visited the Eridge & Tunbridge Wells model railway exhibit and had been thanked for their grant.

b) Clerk's updates and issues.

- The Clerk reported that he had attended the recent Clerk's Forum on the 4th September. The key points were as follows:

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- East Sussex Highways has issued a statement that all flags flying off street furniture or painted on roundabouts should be reported straight to the them where they will be removed on Health & Safety grounds.
- Parish & Town Councils are required to have a Flag Flying Policy for any flagpoles owned and managed by the Council.
- Parish & Town Council's emergency & resilience planning should now contain a section on protest and protection of communities.
- The Local Government White Paper on Local Government Reorganisation includes the following timetable for whichever Sussex model is adopted.
 - Election of Mayor – May 2026
 - Shadow Unitary Authority Election – May 2027
 - Vesting of power for the new Unitary Authority – April 2028
- Encouraged to put more faith in the official government information over other sources.
- Town & Parish Councils are being encouraged to hold public meetings in 2026 to inform their residents about Local Government Reorganisation.
- Relations between the Town and Parish Council and East Sussex Highways are very low. Clerks and Council report a complete lack of communication. ESALC is looking into this and trying to encourage more communication.
- Recent incidents have led the County Council to check whether volunteers or contractors working on the roadside have the correct training. The Clerk is investigating appropriate training and has sounded out our contractors on their willingness to undertake this.
- Assertion 10 – new AGAR requirement. The Council will need to revise it's IT and Social Media policy before March 2026.
- The Clerk reported that the letter to the Mayor of St Chéron had been sent.

10. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

None.

11. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION REPORTS AND RECREATION & BURIAL UPDATES.

Date	Inspection Report	Comments
15 th September 2025	Parish Cemetery	Some recent mole activity half way down on the right hand side. The East Sussex Highways drain on the opposite side of the road to the car park is blocked which will mean that water runs across into the cemetery.
15 th September 2025	Old Burial Ground	Nothing to report.
15 th September 2025	Court Meadow Green	Nothing to report.
15 th September 2025	Playground	The damaged cross beam on the large climbing frame has hazard tape on it pending a repair. The bolt attaching the rope to the base of the other climbing frame has detached again and the rope is no longer held at the base.

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15 th September 2025	Recreation Ground	Nothing to report.
15 th September 2025	REACT Container Box	Nothing to report.
15 th September 2025	Scout Hut and Pre-School Buildings	Nothing to report
15 th September 2025	Village Hall and Car Park	Pothole in need of repair previously reported and contractor contacted.
15 th September 2025	Norman's Field	The contractor who will install the stock fencing has advised that it will soon be too wet to take machinery into the field. The work will need to be done in the spring when the ground is dry enough. The contract will need to ensure that this is reflected.

- The Clerk confirmed that the drain opposite the Parish Cemetery had been reported to East Sussex Highways.
- The Clerk confirmed that the contractor had been contacted to fill the pothole in the Village Hall car park.
- The Clerk noted the comments regarding the fencing of Norman's Field; however, this was now superseded by information received earlier in the meeting.

12. TO AGREE ON FIVE POINTS FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY DOCUMENT.

1)	The Parish Council will continue to keep residents updated on the Local Government Reorganisation. Once a model is chosen by Government we will provide further updates.
2)	The Parish Council as Sole Custodian Trustee working with the Management Committee are continuing to explore grant funding for refurbishment of the Institute.
3)	The Parish Council has responsibility for some buildings and lands across the Parish. It is working on a long term plan of reviewing and updating the leases and licences relating to these sites.
4)	Did you know the Parish Council carries out a monthly inspection of the Parish Cemeteries, Recreation Ground and other areas.
5)	Cllr R Harris and Cllr D Johnstone recently installed a new post near Rotherfield Primary School to mount the Speed Indication device to. This will help us to get a better understanding of the speed of vehicles approaching the school from Eridge Road.

13. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

Date	Meeting	Venue
7 th October 2025	Planning & Environment Committee	Rotherfield Village Hall
14 th October 2025	Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee – including agreement of the 2026/2027 budget and precept request.	Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute)
28 th October 2025	Planning & Environment Committee	Rotherfield Village Hall
30 th October 2025	Parish Council Meeting	Eridge Village Hall
18 th November 2025	Planning & Environment Committee	Rotherfield Village Hall
27 th November 2025	Parish Council meeting	Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute)

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

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- Cllr P Beach gave apologies for the 7th October Planning & Environment Committee and 14th October Highways, Lighting & Transport Committee meetings.

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

- The Clerk asked if the Councillors would like him to arrange the Parish Council Christmas party. It was **AGREED** to proceed with this.

Chair declared the meeting closed at: **20:57**

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

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