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 TUESDAY 13TH OCTOBER 2026 @ 7:30PM
IN THE UPPER HALL AT ROTHERFIELD COMMUNITY HUB (MEMORIAL INSTITUTE)

PRESENT

Cllr Robert Harris (Chair)
Cllr Beverley Johnstone (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Lucy Buck
Cllr David Hiles
Cllr Janice Ricahrdson
Cllr Paul Beach
Cllr Paul Snelling
Cllr Georgina Frowde
Cllr Douglas Johnstone
Cllr Peter Kember

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT

Adam J Hardy	*Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer*
Fiona Wilson	*Council Administrator*
Cllr Michael Lunn	*Wealden District Council & East Sussex County Council*
Members of the Public	**14**

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 Cllrs Paul Turner, Benji Cheeseman, and Christian Mills.

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

Apologies were also received from Cllr Jessika Hulbert (Wealden District Council) and Cllr Georgia Taylor (East Sussex County Council).

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

Cllr Paul Beach and Cllr Peter Kember declared a personal interest in item 2a as they own neighbouring property to the application site.

Clerk: Adam J Hardy, 3 Trinity Mews, Mill Crescent, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2QU
Tel: 01892 358240. Email: Clerk@rotherfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk
Parish Council Website: www.rotherfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk **and on Facebook**

e) Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday, 17th September 2026, for approval as a true record.

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

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

- The Clerk confirmed that he has updated the Use of Recreation Ground Conditions.
- The Clerk confirmed that the Service Level Agreement with Rotherfield St Martin had been accepted by their Board of Trustees and a signing event is being organised.
- The Clerk notified the Rotherfield Sports Club that the Council would make a contribution of £1,000 towards the cost of reseeding.
- The Clerk notified Rotherfield School that their grant application for support with the Year Six Residential Trip had been successful.
- The Clerk confirmed that he had arranged a meeting with Tangent Space to look at options for redesigning the Rotherfield Surgery Waiting Room.
- The Clerk reported that all works required at the surgery building, including plumbing, vegetation, and vermin, had been completed.
- The Clerk confirmed that he had ordered the wreaths for Remembrance events and arranged for Councillors to lay wreaths.

2. TO CONSIDER AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS AND OTHER PLANNING MATTERS.

Cllr Harris asked Cllr David Hiles, in his capacity as Chair of Planning & Environment, to Chair this part of the meeting.

a) WD/2025/2722/F - Highfields Farm, New Road, Rotherfield, TN6 3JS
Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and residential dwelling and erection of 8 no. New dwellings with associated landscaping, amenity, parking and biodiversity enhancements.

Six members of the public addressed the Council speaking against the planning application.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Wealden District Council that this application be **REFUSED.** The Parish Council maintains that its original reasons for refusal are still valid to the proposed application. Reasons are as follows:

- The development site is located in a prominent position within the High Weald National Landscape and would not conserve or enhance it.
- The proposed development is outside of the local housing plan for the village of Rotherfield.
- The proposed development would dominate the landscape, overbearing and overlooking neighbouring properties and amenities.
- The proposed visibility splay for entrance and access to the site fails to account for the hedgerow being owned by the adjacent properties, and therefore, the proposed site access cannot be considered a valid representation.
- The Council believes there is a lack of supporting information in the application on how surface water would be managed. New Road already suffers from flooding, and believes the proposed development would exacerbate the problem.
- The Council believes there is a lack of supporting information on how the increase of sewage is to be managed to prevent further pressure on the already overtaxed Victorian sewage system. Properties are already affected by sewage washing into

gardens further down New Road and the combined sewer overflow near the Station Road end of New Road frequently overflows.

- The application site lies within 7km of the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and is likely to have a significant impact upon the SPA as a result of recreational impact caused by intensified residential occupation within the zone of influence of the SPA.
- The Council believe that this development is not in the public interest for the residents of the Parish as it is the wrong type and size of development for this site.
- The increase in the volume of traffic up and down New Road and entering and exiting the site. This is considered unreasonable as per Wealden Policy EC4. This objection is in addition to the objection already submitted by the Council.

A **COMMENT** that the Parish Council supports residents' concerns with regard to traffic use and parking on the junction of New Road and Mayfield Road and how the development may exacerbate this.

Should the planning application be approved, the Parish Council **would recommend the following conditions:**

- A S106 or appropriate Legal Agreement for the formation of an Estate Management Committee to manage and maintain in perpetuity the proposed estate road and its highway visibility splay, the surface water drainage system including the on site water storage tanks, and communal landscaped areas.
- A Grampian condition that would prevent occupation of the housing units until Southern Water has carried out essential capacity upgrades to the local drainage system.
- A condition in the Construction Plan that all site traffic and deliveries must enter and exit New Road using the adopted highways with the junction to Mayfield Road and not the unadopted section with Station Road.
- A condition in the Construction Plan that no deliveries, construction or site workings will take place outside of the hours of 10:00am – 3:00pm Monday to Friday.

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

The Chair asked Cllr Paul Beach, in his capacity as Co-Chief of Highways, Recreation & Cemeteries, to Chair this part of the meeting.

i. Discuss and consider further actions in relation to traffic and parking on Church Road, Rotherfield.

The Clerk shared the correspondence from residents regarding the traffic and parking situation in Church Road, Rotherfield. The Clerk confirmed that multiple representations and lobbying of East Sussex County Council had taken place with regard to parking in Rotherfield village.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council would write to Wealden District Council to emphasise that the non-acceptance of the decriminalisation of parking by the District Council has such an adverse effect on parking in the Parish of Rotherfield. **Clerk** to draft a letter for the Chief Executive and Leader of Wealden District Council.

It was **AGREED** that considerate parking would be regularly promoted in all the Parish Council media outlets. **Clerk** to arrange media releases.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would lobby East Sussex Highways to repaint the double yellow lines on Church Road and ask if there is the possibility of any signage. **Clerk** to write to East Sussex Highways.

ii. Discuss and consider further actions in relation to parking around Eridge Station.

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

The Council **RESOLVED** to take the following actions:

- Request that the disabled spaces outside of the station be repainted. **Clerk** to raise request with East Sussex Highways.
- Request regular monitoring of the area by Sussex Police, PCSOs and East Sussex Highways to ensure access for Emergency vehicles is maintained. **Clerk** to write to each public body.

iii. Discuss and review recent Speedwatch and SID statistics.

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

A presentation regarding SpeedWatch was received from Richard Baldwin the SpeedWatch District Administrator for East Sussex. He thanked the Parish Council for their continued support and requested assistance in recruiting more volunteers to the Rotherfield Parish group.

Questions were asked about any suitable sites in Eridge and Mark Cross. Richard agreed to investigate and liaise with the Parish Clerk.

The Chair thanked Richard for attending tonight's meeting.

iv. Discuss and consider the installation of a grit bin at the Forstal.

It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a 125l grit bin for location on the junction of the Forstal with Groombridge Lane. **Clerk** to arrange purchase of Grit Bin and filling of salt.

v. Discuss and consider further actions in relation to the footpath on the A26 from the Forstal to the Nevil Crest & Gun Public House.

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

It was **RESOLVED** that the footpath should be shovelled clean on this section of the A26. **Clerk** to notify contractor with the following conditions to be agreed to:

- Contractors must wear appropriate PPE for working on the highway.
- Contractors must erect signage to indicate their working area.
- Contractors must carry out work during non-peak hours.

Cllr Georgina Frowde wished it noted that it was felt that part of this work should have been lobbied for or undertaken by Frant Parish Council.

vi. Discuss and resolve the budget and precept request for this committee for 2027/2028.

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

It was **AGREED** that a line-by-line discussion on this Committee's budget would be undertaken by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Clerk asked Councillors to consider the requested increase in pitch contribution for the 2027/2028 Financial Year.

It was **RESOLVED** to increase the monthly contribution for pitch maintenance to £420pcm with the condition that this may be reviewed if the cost of diesel reduces.

It was **RESOLVED** that the end-of-season Pitch Contribution remain at £2,000 and that the Council would be happy to consider additional applications for support during the financial year as required. **Clerk** to notify Rotherfield Sports Club.

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

1)	Rotherfield Parish Council is increasingly concerned with anti-social parking across the Parish particularly on double yellow lines. The Council will continue to do all it can to encourage considerate and legal parking.
2)	The Parish Council welcomed correspondence from a Church Road resident regarding traffic and parking. The Parish Council will request the double yellow lines are repainted but ask that everyone parks responsibly.
3)	The Parish Council reaffirmed its objection to Highfields Farm Planning application but also repeated its request for conditions should the planning application be approved by Wealden District Council.
4)	The Parish Council were pleased to receive a presentation on SpeedWatch from Richard Baldwin the SpeedWatch District Administrator for East Sussex.
5)	The Parish Council were pleased to support Eridge Residents with the installation of a new grit bin on the Forstal and clearance of a footpath alongside the A26.

5. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

Date	Meeting	*Venue*
27th October 2026	Planning & Environment Committee	*Rotherfield Village Hall*
29th October 2026	Parish Council Meeting	*Eridge Village Hall*
17th November 2026	Planning & Environment Committee	*Rotherfield Village Hall*
26th November 2026	Parish Council Meeting	*Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute)*
1st December 2026	Planning & Environment Committee	*Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute)*
	Community & Events Committee	
3rd December 2026	Finance & General Purposes Committee	*Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute)*
10th December 2026	Parish Council Meeting	*Rotherfield Community Hub (Memorial Institute)*

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

6. 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 reported on correspondence from Wadhurst Parish Council requesting support for engaging an independent planning advisor to review the Regulation 19 Documentation for the New Wealden Local Plan. It was **AGREED** that the Council would not support Wadhurst Parish Council in this approach. **Clerk** to notify Wadhurst Parish Council.
- The Clerk asked permission to charge an admin fee for a recent request for an Exclusive Right of Burial that was subsequently withdrawn due to an error by the Funeral Directors. It was **AGREED** that a £50.00 admin fee would be charged. **Clerk** to notify Funeral Directors.
- The Clerk reported that the bollards for installation on the South Street/New Road Junction were due to be delivered this week. Warren Drives will then arrange the installation, and we will notify residents before work commences.
- Cllr Paul Beach reported that he had just completed his tree inspection course. It was suggested that a tree register be established for trees under the responsibility of the Parish Council. It was **AGREED** to start a register; Councillors to send tree details to the Clerk, who will maintain it.
- Cllr Beverley Johnstone reported that two agricultural vehicles had reappeared on Town Row Green. The Council will monitor the situation and send a reminder to surrounding properties if required.
- Cllr Beverly Johnstone reported that she had attended the recent Wealden District Association of Local Councils meeting.
- Cllr Lucy Buck reported that she had received complaints from residents regarding parking in North Street, Rotherfield, particularly at the junction with the square. This area will also be covered in our communications on parking across the Parish.

Chair declared the meeting closed at: **9:30pm.**

…… Chair…… Date

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