

ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Working for the Community

in Rotherfield, Town Row, Mark Cross, Eridge Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD AT 19:30 PM ON TUESDAY 10TH JANUARY 2012 AT ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. L. Pike (Chair)

Cllr. Miss N. Bolton (Vice Chair)

Cllr. Mrs P. Halse Adamson

Cllr. C. Clibbens

Cllr. C. Prince

Cllr. N. Wickenden

ALSO PRESENT.

The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe and Cllrs. Hall and Thomas who are not members of this Committee and attended as members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s 85).

An apology was tendered and accepted on behalf of Cllr. J. Padfield.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None.

3. RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF 12TH APRIL 2011 & MATTERS ARISING.

It was proposed and agreed that the Minutes of the meeting be adopted, there were no matters arising and the Chairman signed them.

4. CONSIDER BUDGET FOR GRANTS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS.

a) Approval of Budget for grants and subscriptions.

Grants

i. Rotherfield St. Martin.

£1750 was granted under s137 in 2011/12. RESOLVED to budget for a grant of £1500 to the organisation for 2012/13.

ii. Rotherfield preschool.

The July 2009 Council Meeting agreed to grant £500 p.a. (paid in half yearly £250 instalments) under S137 powers, reviewed after 3 years, this to part offset the £750 p.a. rent charged by the Council to ESCC for the land. Rental payments of £375 half yearly are now being received from County.

iii. Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau.

Grants to this organisation may be made under powers granted by S142 (2a) of the 1972 LGA and a £250 grant was made to them in February 2011.

RESOLVED to budget for a grant of £250 to the organisation for 2012/13.

iv. Anchor Staying Put.

£250 has been paid as a s137 Grant in previous years, the last payment was made to them in October 2009 and no approach has been made subsequently.

RESOLVED to remove this organisation from the budget, as they are no longer approaching us for grants.

v. Rotherfield Bowls Club.

Planning permission was renewed in March 2010 for rebuilding of the clubhouse. Club have already approached for assistance with rebuild. They have advised that estimated cost is £86K of which club have £15K currently. Clerk has passed on

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information to them of possible sources of external funding. An indicative support figure of £5k was mentioned at the December Recreation and Burial meeting.

RESOLVED to include £5000 in the 2012/13 Budget for support to this project.

- vi. **Village Hall Requests.**
£1500 was paid last year to Eridge Hall. It was considered that as Eridge Hall had received financial support in the last two Financial Years perhaps Mark Cross Hall may benefit from support. Cllr. Halse Adamson declared an interest at this point as she is Chair of the Mark Cross Village Hall Trustee's. Future plans for the Hall are to be discussed at their forthcoming AGM.
RESOLVED not to budget for a grant to Eridge Hall in 2012/13.
- vii. **Samaritans.**
£100 granted under s137 in February 2011.
RESOLVED to include £100 in the 2012/13 Budget for support to this organisation.
- viii. **Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee.**
Payment allowed under s143 LGA 1972 as the Committee is an association of local authorities formed to consult upon matters of common interest. Requests are made on an "ad hoc" basis by them for modest sums to assist with administrative costs. £25 was paid to them in September 2011.
RESOLVED to contribute in support of this group, in view of modest sums involved no specific allowance was needed in the budget for 2012/13.

With the exception of iii), iv) and viii) above, these payments may be made using powers granted by sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972 as it is considered that they are in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure. Details are awaited of the s137 multiplier figure for 2012/13.

Subscriptions

- a) **Wealden District Association of Local Councils (WDALC).** £30 contribution made for 2011 when Council rejoined the Group.
RESOLVED to continue membership.
- b) **Sussex Association of Local Councils/National Association of Local Councils (SALC & NALC).** £847 subscription paid for 2011, Sub for 2012/13 estimated at £852.
RESOLVED to continue membership.
- c) **Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).** £29 subscription paid in 2011.
RESOLVED to continue membership.
- d) **Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).** £140 subscription recently paid for 2011. Clerk confirms that valuable support and advice is provided by both this organisation and SALC, RESOLVED to continue membership.

It was agreed to increase the contingency provision to £3000.

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b) Approval of The Council's total expenditure and income budget for 2012/2013.

After discussion, it was RESOLVED to present the following 2012/13 Budget to Full Council for consideration at the January Council meeting

PARISH COUNCIL BUDGETED EXPENDITURE AND INCOME FOR 2012/13

RECREATION GROUND

	£
Grounds Maintenance Contract for playing surfaces - Sports Club	2400
General Repairs & Maintenance	3000
Grounds Maintenance Contract - Recreation Ground	2250
Grounds Maintenance Contract – Amenity Land Court Meadow	850
Allotments rental	1000
Car Park Repairs	500
Play Area	500
Dog Bins - Millennium Green	500
TOTAL	11000
<i>Less</i> School Contribution for Recreation Ground	500
<i>Less</i> Allotment Rent Income	1000
<i>Less</i> Other credits (Millennium Green dog bin contribution)	120
NET EXPENDITURE	9380

BURIAL GROUNDS

General Maintenance	1000
Grounds Maintenance Contract	4200
Repairs & Renewals	500
Tree and Hedge Work	1000
Water Supply	50
Rates	125
Other improvement works	250
TOTAL	7125
<i>Less</i> Burial Fee Income	2500
NET EXPENDITURE	4625
RECREATION AND BURIAL GRAND TOTAL	14005

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LIGHTING

Energy & Maintenance contract	5000
Repairs	2000
Capital Works: New Installations	1500
TOTAL	8500

HIGHWAYS

Footpaths	1000
Seat repairs	500
Street sweeping	1600
Fingerposts & signs	1500
Bus shelter refurbishment	500
Traffic control	2250
Other maintenance	500
Mark Cross & School dog bin	500
Ground maintenance contract	500
TOTAL	8850

HIGHWAYS AND LIGHTING GRAND TOTAL **17350**

CAPITAL WORKS

Pre School driveway improvements	3100
Bowls Club Building/Land	5000
Mark Cross parking area extension	5000
Extension of Recreation Ground footpath as a Jubilee project	5000
Additional bus shelter in Parish	1500
Support for formation of Tennis Club	5000
TOTAL	24600

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Employment Costs and Training	17000
Office Costs (Tel, Home Office, Stamps, Stationery)	1500
Office Equipment	100
Provision for possible allotment legal fees	1000
Establishment Costs, Subs & Insurance	4000
Meeting Costs including hire of Village Hall	500
Noticeboards	200

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Election Costs	1500
Chairman's Allowance	250
Newsletter & other community engagement costs	1000
TOTAL	27050
<i>Less</i> Interest Income	750
NET EXPENDITURE	26300

GRANTS - GENERAL

General	250
Citizens Advice Bureau LGA 1972 s142(2a)	250
TOTAL	500
<i>Less</i> Grants Obtained	0
NET EXPENDITURE	500

GRANTS UNDER SECTION 137

St Martin's Project	1500
General	1000
Pre School annual grant	500
TOTAL	3000
Contingency	3000
CONTINGENCY & GRANTS GRAND TOTAL	6500

TOTAL EXPENDITURE SUMMARY 2012/13

Recreation Ground	9380
Burial Ground	4625
Lighting	8500
Highways	8850
Capital works	24600
General Administration	26300
Grants	6500
BUDGETED TOTAL EXPENDITURE	88755

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- c) **Approval of the Committee's Precept figure recommendation for 2012/2013, to be considered for final approval by the Full Council at the January Council meeting.** With reference to the 2012/13 Budget above the following adjustments were made to establish the proposed precept request figure.

Budgeted total expenditure 2012/13	88755
<i>Less</i> transfer from reserves	14000
<i>Less</i> 2011/12 underspends identified	20000
PROPOSED PRECEPT REQUEST FROM WDC FOR 2012/13	54755

It was RESOLVED to recommend to the January Council meeting that a precept request of £54755 be made to Wealden District Council representing an increase of 4.3% on the previous year's request of £52500. Based on the factors provided by Wealden District Council the recommended precept will cost a Band "D" property in the Parish £34.96 p.a. in Council Tax, an increase of £1.32 p.a. (approximately 2.5p p.w.) over the 2011/12 figure of £33.64.

CLERK to add to the Agenda of the January Parish Council for consideration by the Full Council.

d) **Review of existing banking arrangements.**

- Clerk has been in contact with NatWest local business manager who offered 1.15% on deposits over £25K (current bank 1%) although wished to charge 84p per cheque written which would possibly be offset somewhat by the higher interest rate. Have also looked at Co-op and Unity Trust Bank (both active in the public sector) but their interest rates are not competitive.
- Currently seeking clarification from internal auditors and other local Parish Council's as their interpretation of the position regarding use of "on line" banking for payments – there is much conflicting information regarding this.
- At year-end will investigate options for fixed short-term lump sum deposits to earn higher interest on unutilised funds.

CLERK will report progress at February Council meeting and will add to Agenda

5. **URGENT ISSUES FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA.**

- WDC Planning Officer advised that the application for social housing development at Town Row is to be resubmitted with some amendments.
- Draft article regarding landowner responsibilities for hedges and trees has been prepared for Magazine.
- Seeking source of replacement bin lids, as some in the Rec. are damaged/missing.
- Highways have been in touch re: Sherriff's Lane gullies – they hope to revisit with jetter.
- Cllr. Jaques is unwell; CLERK to send card to him.
- Cllr. R. Tidy (ESCC) has been awarded an M.B.E. in the New Year Honours list.
- Clerk has written to new Landlords of the allotments to seek a convenient time for a 3-way meeting with the Council and RHAA.

6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.**

- 8th May 2012 19:30 Rotherfield Memorial Institute to received end of year accounts.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 22:00.

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7. PUBLIC FORUM.

- Cllr. Hall expressed the view that Rotherfield St Martin was an important asset to the community particularly as he could foresee more services for the elderly being devolved from central control. The Project could fill an important role within the community in providing these services to the Parish and wider community.

.....Chairman's Signature.....Date

DRAFT MINUTES SUBJECT TO ADOPTION