

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 18TH JANUARY 2011 AT ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT	Cllr. L Pike (Chairman)	Cllr. J. Padfield
	Cllr. Mrs. P Halse-Adamson (Vice-Chair)	Cllr. C. Prince
	Cllr. C. Clibbens	Cllr. N Wickenden

No members of the public attended.

MINUTES

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972 s 85).** None.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** None.
- 3. RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF 20TH APRIL 2010 & 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.**

Grants

a) Rotherfield St. Martin.

It was AGREED to include £1750 in the budget for the forthcoming financial year on the basis that no further applications for funds would be submitted by them during the period. Their request for increasing funding is to be considered at the January Council meeting.

b) Rotherfield preschool.

The July 2009 Council Meeting agreed to grant £500 p.a. 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. Council's Solicitors are chasing ESCC for completion of the lease and the first rental cheque, grant payment is to be made to the Pre School once the rental payment received. CLERK to set up reminders for this for the following two years.

c) Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau. £250 is granted each year toward this and a request is on the agenda of the January Council meeting for consideration. AGREED to include £250 in next year's budget for this payment which is made under powers granted by S142 (2a) of the 1972 LGA.

d) Anchor Staying Put. £250 is usually granted each year toward this, AGREED to include this sum in next year's budget.

e) Rotherfield Bowls Club.

Planning permission was renewed in March 2010 for rebuilding of the clubhouse; it is not known what plans are with regard to progressing this.

f) Village Hall Requests.

Approach received for contribution to Eridge Hall in respect of refurbishment of the toilet area and provision of a disabled WC with the amount left to the Council's discretion; the matter is on the agenda for consideration at the January Council meeting. Accounts to be provided and the Hall has made an invitation to their AGM 19:00 Friday February 25th. AGREED to include £1500 in the budget for the forthcoming year, powers are given by S133 of the 1972 LGA for such payments.

Rotherfield Hall has suggested that the path alongside the Hall be properly surfaced, as it is a more appropriate route for pedestrians from the rear car park, particularly if flooding issues persist. This is also on the January Meeting agenda for consideration.

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- g) **Samaritans.** £50 granted to them in the past two years, request is on the Agenda of the January meeting for donation for this year. AGREED to include £250 allowance in the forthcoming year's budget for small requests of this nature.
- h) **Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee.** £20 donation made last year on approach by the Committee for assistance with their modest expenses. Payment allowed under s143 LGA 1972 as the Committee is an association of local authorities formed to consult upon matters of common interest. It is believed that requests are made on an "ad hoc" basis for support from this group which is covered by the budget for establishment costs and subscriptions.
- With the exception of c), f) and h) 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. Clerk advised that for 2011/12 financial year the Parish limit for payments under S137 would be £16944 derived from £6.44 x 2631 electors.
 - Wealden DC advice is that the "worst case" estimate for costs in respect of the May elections is £6K, based on all seats contested. It is believed that only one Ward was contested in 2007, this would account for the lower cost of £3K for that election. If the Electoral Reform referendum is held on the same day this will allow further cost sharing reduction in the bill.

Subscriptions

- i) **Wealden District Association of Local Councils (WDALC).** £30 contribution made for 2010. It is not apparent what benefit is derived from membership and it was AGREED to make no further payments to the association.
- j) **Sussex Association of Local Councils/National Association of Local Councils (SALC & NALC).** £841 subscription paid for 2010, AGREED to continue membership.
- k) **Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).** £29 subscription paid in 2010. AGREED to continue membership.
- l) **Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG).** £42 subscription paid in 2010. It is not apparent what benefit is derived from membership and it was AGREED to make no further payments to the Group.
- m) **Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).** £135 subscription recently paid for 2010. Clerk confirms that valuable support and advice is provided by this organisation and SALC, AGREED to continue membership.

5. CONSIDER EXPENDITURE BUDGET FOR 2011/2012.

After discussion, the following expenditure budget was AGREED.

RECREATION AND BURIAL

RECREATION GROUND

	£
Grounds Maintenance Sports Club	2400
General repairs and maintenance	1000
Ground maintenance - Contractors - Rec.	3700

Parish Council Website: www.rotherfieldparishcouncil.co.uk

Email: rotherfieldpc@yahoo.co.uk

Clerk: Trevor Thorpe 82 Fernor Way Crowborough East Sussex TN6 3BJ 01892 664245.

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Ground maintenance - Contractors - Amenity Land	800
Allotments Rent	500
Car Park Repairs	500
Play Area	1000
Dog Bin (Millennium Green)	360
TOTAL	10260
<i>LESS</i> Allotments rent income	500
<i>LESS</i> School contribution	500
RECREATION GROUND NET TOTAL	9260
BURIAL GROUNDS	
General maintenance	1500
Ground maintenance - Contractors	3800
Repairs and renewals	500
Tree and hedgework	1000
Water supply at Parish Cemetery	50
Rates	100
Car park at Parish Cemetery	0
Improvement works	1000
TOTAL	7950
<i>LESS</i> Burial fee income	2500
BURIAL GROUNDS NET TOTAL	5450
RECREATION AND BURIAL GRAND TOTAL	14710

HIGHWAYS LIGHTING AND TRANSPORT

LIGHTING

Energy costs & maintenance contract	6000
Repairs	2750
Capital Works: New Installations	3000
TOTAL	11750

HIGHWAYS

Footpaths	1250
Seat Repairs	300
Street Sweeping	1500
Fingerposts & Signs	1500
Bus Shelter Refurbishment	500
Traffic Control	2000
Other maintenance	500
Mark Cross dog bin	250

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Ground Maintenance - Contractors	1000
TOTAL	8800
HIGHWAYS AND LIGHTING TOTAL	20550

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND GRANTS

Employment Costs and Training	15000
Office Costs (Tel, Home Office, Stamps, Stationery)	1700
Office Equipment	100
Employment Costs and Training	16000
Office Costs (Tel, Home Office, Stamps, Stationery)	1700
Office Equipment	100
Establishment Costs and Subs	5000
Meeting Costs	400
Noticeboards	150
Election Costs	1000
Chairman's Allowance	250
Newsletter	1000
TOTAL	25600
<i>Less</i> Interest Income	100
GEN ADMINISTRATION NET EXPENDITURE	25500

GRANTS NON S137

General	250
Citizens Advice Bureau - LGA 1972 s.142(2a)	250
Eridge Village Hall - LGA 1972 s.145	1500
GRANTS TOTAL	2000
<i>Less</i> Grants Obtained	0
GRANTS NET EXPENDITURE	2000

SECTION 137 GRANTS

St Martin's Project	1750
Freedom Leisure - hall hire for Active Play project	200
Anchor Staying put	250
General	250
	2450

Contingency	1000
GENERAL CONTINGENCY	1000

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GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND GRANTS GRAND TOTAL 30950

TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE 2011/12 66210

It was AGREED to obtain two quotations for the Parish grass and hedge cutting to enable a cost comparison with the existing contractors.

6. CONSIDER PARISH PRECEPT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011/2012.

The total net expenditure figure in the budget for 2011/12 is £66210. After taking into account budgeted expenditure not made during 2010/11, it was AGREED to recommend to the January Council meeting that a precept request of £52500 be made to Wealden District Council. This represents an increase of 2.94% on the previous year's request of £51000. Based on the factors provided by Wealden District Council the recommended precept will cost a Band "D" property in the Parish £33.64 p.a. in Council Tax, an increase of 53p over the 2010/11 figure of £33.11. CLERK to add this to the Agenda of the January Parish Council.

7. CONSIDER LEVEL OF PUBLIC LIABILITY COVER REQUIRED BY CONTRACTORS TO THE COUNCIL.

This was discussed at the June 2010 Council meeting and it was requested that Clerk add it to this agenda after investigation. Agents for Council's insurers recommend £5m minimum cover for this although insurers themselves have no specific conditions. AGREED CLERK to write to our regular contractors and licensee's of the Recreation Ground to recommend that they adopt this figure.

8. URGENT ISSUES FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA.

- Contractors advise that they have cut inside and top of hedge by Rec. There is a problem with cutting the roadside of hedge due to parked cars and proximity of power cable, the latter issue has previously been raised with EDF on two occasions, they have again been chased.
- CLERK to investigate/report potholes by Orchard Cottages, Station Road.
- Drains on Rotherfield Hill have been cleared; unfortunately, debris from these has been left alongside to be washed back in again in due course. CLERK notes that ESCC Highways raised this as an issue at the June 2010 SLR with the request that such occurrences be reported to them; he will investigate.
- It is noted that "Uneven Surface" signs have appeared at foot of Rotherfield Hill, it is believed that this is the result of an inspection by Highways Officer resulting from this issue being raised at the recent SLR. CLERK to contact him and enquire as to when work will take place to improve the surface conditions here.

The Chairman declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 21:15.

9. PUBLIC FORUM. None.

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