



**Working for the Community in Rotherfield, Mark Cross,
Eridge Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL, INCORPORATING
THE MAY MONTHLY MEETING, HELD ON THURSDAY 25TH MAY 2017 AT 19:30 IN THE
PARISH COUNCIL ROOM, ROTHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr. D. Thomas (Chair)
Cllr. R. Harris (Vice Chair)
Cllr. J. Cahan
Cllr. T. Gilbert

Cllr. A. Hardy
Cllr. D. Hiles
Cllr. L. Henrick
Cllr. J. Kitchenham

Cllr. A. Martin
Cllr. J. Richardson
Cllr. G. Watson-Smith
Cllr. N. Wickenden

COUNCILLORS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

The Parish Clerk, Trevor Thorpe, Cllr. P. Dixon (WDC) and Cllr. F. Whetstone (ESCC).

1. TO ELECT A CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR, AND SIGNING OF THEIR DECLARATIONS OF OFFICE.

Cllrs. Thomas and Harris were proposed as candidates for the Council Chair. A vote was taken resulting in a tie with each candidate receiving 6 votes. Cllr. Thomas exercised the Chair's casting vote in his favour and was duly elected as Chair.

Cllr. Harris was proposed as Vice Chair and unanimously elected unopposed to the post. Cllrs. Thomas and Harris signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

2. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING: -

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

Cllr. Standley (ESCC) submitted an apology after the meeting as he had attended the Annual Parish Meetings of both Frant and Wadhurst Parishes on the same evening. It was noted that Cllr. Whetstone had submitted an apology for absence for the April Council meeting but that this had not be noted in those minutes.

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

None

c) District and County Councillor reports.

Cllr. Whetstone was congratulated on being re-elected as our ESCC representative for Forest Row and Groombridge Division. His report contained the following key points: -

- Cllr. Bob Standley is now the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability.
- Cllr. Whetstone is a member of the Children's Scrutiny and Corporate Parenting Panel. He advised that many "In Care" children in East Sussex are in Foster Homes, some are in residential units and others are awaiting adoption. These services have been considered "Good" by Ofsted.
- The next four years will present challenges in funding of social care.

Cllr. Dixon's report contained the following key points: -

- Next planning Committee meeting has been deferred to the end of June due to the Election.
- Wealden are organising "Safety in Action" sessions for Primary School Children at the end of June. The Parish Primary Schools will be attending sessions at Hurstmonceux.

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- Wealden are not holding a “Festival of Walking” this year but instead are holding a “Year of Walking”. A new website “Wealden Do Sussex Walks” has been set up together with a phone app to encourage younger walkers.
- Many will be aware of the recent high profile case of a Wealden Councillor breaching planning rules and the Councillor in question has been disqualified. If in any doubt regarding listed building matters please do not hesitate to seek advice from the Planning Team.

d) Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held 27th April 2017 for approval and adoption as a true record.

Draft minutes had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. Concerns were raised that these were not a true record as, although the Chair’s statement to the meeting had been published, there was no record of the responses to this. **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes not be signed at this meeting and that the **CLERK** should seek advice from the Wealden Monitoring Officer with the intention that these minutes and a summary of responses be brought before the June Council meeting to be considered for approval.

e) Update regarding matters arising & action items from previous meetings.

i. Consider candidates for co-option to fill the Councillor vacancy in Mark Cross Ward.

Clerk reported that one application has been received and another Parishioner has been sent a form and information. Further posters will be displayed inviting applications for co-option and this will feature on the agenda of the June 29th Council meeting.

ii. Review further the Scripts for Planning and Building Committee meetings and agree policy on site visits and pre-application meetings.

Clerk erroneously omitted consideration of the Scripts from this agenda and will feature on the June agenda, **CLERK** to note. The matters relating to site visits and pre-application meetings have been dealt with.

iii. Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. Consider cost, workload impact and potential benefits.

Tom Warder from Action in Rural Sussex has agreed, subject to confirmation, that he or a colleague will attend the June meeting to make a presentation regarding this subject. **RESOLVED** that as the June meeting will feature selection of co-option candidates that this presentation be deferred to the July Council meeting. **CLERK** to note and liaise with AiRS regarding this.

iv. Policy for paying expenses to Councillors who require to employ a carer to allow them to attend Council meeting.

Cllr. Cahan declared an interest in this item as she could be affected by this Clerk has sought advice from SLCC and their view is that the General Power of Competence could be used to pay expenses. The spending should be discussed and resolved at a Council meeting without any Councillors affected being involved in the discussions. SLCC recommend that the Council devise and adopt a clear policy for expenses paid in respect of carer costs and that this policy states clearly in what way the spending will benefit the community by encouraging Councillors to come forward who could more widely represent the members of the Community.

RESOLVED that a policy be drawn up for adoption and that Cllr. Cahan’s offer to draft this be accepted; a notional upper limit of £300 per Councillor per financial year is to be set in the policy.

Internal auditors are of the view that the figures provided by WDC for Chairman/Councillor expenses are advisory only and that Councils could adopt a higher figure. Clerk will investigate.

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3. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT END OF MARCH, REVIEW EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET TO DATE AND APPROVE PAYMENTS.

i. Clerks budget report and actions arising.

Report circulated prior to meeting. No items of concern thereon.

ii. Approval of payments.

List circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and it was RESOLVED that cheques for the following items be signed and issued: -

PAYMENTS				
Date Paid	Payee Name	Chq. No.	Payment Description	Amount
10/05/2017	<i>Friends of Mark Cross School</i>	802382	<i>Mark Cross fair stall</i>	£30.00
16/05/2017	Rotherfield and Mark Cross Bonfire Society	802105	Stall at Easter egg hunt 2016, cheque cancelled	-£10.00
25/05/2017	Trevor Thorpe	802383	May salary	£1,556.94
25/05/2017	H M R C	802384	May tax and NI	£497.11
25/05/2017	Trevor Thorpe	802385	Expenses & reimbursements	£191.21
25/05/2017	<i>A. Martin</i>	802386	<i>Minor works</i>	£190.80
25/05/2017	Signs of Style	802387	3 x Signs for APM	£171.00
25/05/2017	Norman Wildblood & Co. Ltd.	802388	Replace light - Village Hall as authorised at March 21st HLT 7a)	£1,717.66
25/05/2017	RBS Software Solutions	802389	Annual licence fee	£139.20
25/05/2017	e-mango	802390	Website annual fee	£345.60
25/05/2017	AON UK Ltd	802291	Insurance annual renewal	£1,421.11
25/05/2017	<i>Dale Smith</i>	802292	<i>Wall repair Old Burial Ground</i>	£330.00
25/05/2017	Teambase	802293	Stationery	£11.64
25/05/2017	Rotherfield Village Hall	802294	Hall hire - April	£50.00
25/05/2017	Rialtas Business Solutions	802295	Year-end Closedown	£639.90
25/05/2017	Phil Ireland	802296	Litter picking/street sweeping	£321.30
25/05/2017	Tollwood Garden Service	802297	May grass cutting	£1,683.00
Total Payments				£9,286.47

Italicised items have been authorised by delegated authority contained in the Council's Financial Regulations section 4.1

RECEIPTS			
Date	Received from	Receipt Description	Amount
01/05/2017	Santander Bank	April interest earned	£4.67
01/05/2017	Santander Bank	April Interest - correction	-£4.67
10/05/2017	C. Waterhouse and Sons	EROB fees P26 & P27	£550.00
22/05/2017	Burslem Memorials Ltd	Memorial fee P27 & P 28	£170.00
22/05/2017	P. A. Jones	Memorial plaque fee P18	£60.00
22/05/2017	Rotherfield Millennium Green	Jan-Mar dog bin fees	£30.00
Total Receipts			£810.00

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4. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

- i. **To elect Chair & Vice Chairs of Committees, appoint Committee members, and arrange review of the terms of reference of the following Committees and working groups.**

The elections and appointments were undertaken. The Council Chair and Vice Chair are ex-officio members of all the Committees, details of Committees membership and other Council posts are as follows: -

- **Planning and Building Committee**
Chair – Cllr. Hiles
Vice Chair – Cllr. Wickenden
Committee members: - Cllrs. Watson Smith, Gilbert, Henrick, Richardson, Kitchenham, Martin and Hardy.
- **Recreation and Burial Committee**
Chair – Cllr. Gilbert.
Vice Chair – Cllr. Watson - Smith
Committee members: - Cllrs. Wickenden, Henrick, Richardson, Cahan, Martin and Hardy.
- **Highways Lighting and Transport Committee**
Chair – Cllr. Martin.
Vice Chair – Cllr. Kitchenham.
Committee members: - Cllrs. Watson, Smith, Gilbert, Wickenden and Henrick.
- **Finance and General Purposes Committee**
Chair – Cllr. Henrick.
Vice Chair – Cllr. Harris.
Committee members: - Chairs of each of the Committees.
- **Land Acquisition Advisory Group**
It was RESOLVED that if it were felt necessary to continue this Committee's work that it should be undertaken by the Planning and Building Committee.
- **Communications and Social Media Committee**
Chair – Cllr. Hardy.
Vice Chair – Cllr. Cahan.
Committee members: - Cllrs. Hiles, Henrick, Richardson, Martin and Harris

- **To Appoint Council Representatives to the following organisations.**

- **Rotherfield Village Hall**
Cllrs. Gilbert and Watson Smith.
- **Rotherfield Allotment Association**
Cllr. Watson Smith.
- **Rotherfield Millennium Green.**
Cllr. Henrick.
- **Mark Cross Village Hall**
To be renamed as Mark Cross Community Centre.
Cllr Kitchenham is to be the representative to this organisation.
- **Rotherfield Twinning Association.**
Cllr. Richardson.
- **Rotherfield Scout Group**
Cllr. Hiles.
- **Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils**
Cllrs. Thomas and Henrick.
- **Rotherfield Memorial Institute**
Cllr. Martin.
- **Rotherfield Sports Club**
Cllrs. Gilbert and Watson Smith.
- **Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Group**
Cllr. Cahan.
- **Wealden District Association of Local Councils**
Cllr. Harris.
- **Parish Schools and Pre-Schools**
 - Rotherfield School. Cllrs. Thomas, Richardson and Hardy.
 - Mark Cross School. Cllr. Cahan.
 - Rotherfield Pre-School. Cllrs. Henrick and Harris.

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- **Rotherfield Bowls Club**
Cllr. Gilbert, also Sports Club

- **Rotherfield St Martin**
Cllr. Richardson

- **St Denys' Church**
Cllr. Hardy.

ii. **To make appointments to the following posts, review or create new responsibilities and posts**

- **Emergency Co-ordinators: - Infrastructure/Utilities, Snow Clearance and Vulnerable residents.**

Cllr. Wickenden (Co-ordinator), Cllr. Harris, Cllr. Martin and Cllr. Richardson (Liaison with Rotherfield St Martin).

- **Pond Warden**
Cllr. Wickenden.

- **Press Liaison and Newsletter**
Now dealt with by the Communications and Social Media Committee.

- **Footpath Wardens**
Cllrs. Wickenden and Watson-Smith.

- **Rotherfield Village Conservation**
Cllr. Henrick.

- **Smith and Fermor Charity**
Clerk.

- **Business Enterprise and Tourism**
Cllr. Hardy.

- **Public Transport**
Cllr. Watson-Smith.

- **Sussex Police - Liaison**
Cllr. Harris and Henrick.

- **Gatwick Airport and aircraft issues**
Cllr. Henrick.

- **Tree Wardens**
Cllrs. Wickenden and Martin.

- **Safety inspections and public liability insurance**
Recreation Ground, Court Meadow Green and Cemetery – Cllr. Gilbert.
Old Burial Ground – Cllr. Richardson.
Public Liability Insurance – Cllrs. Harris and Thomas.

- **Telecoms. Broadband and Mobile Phone.**
Cllr. Harris.

- **Raising the Roof project**
Cllr. Thomas.

- **War Memorial Working Group**
Cllr Thomas stood down as Chair of this Group and Cllr. Hardy has been appointed in his place.

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

- i. **Resolution granting all Councillors serving on Rotherfield Parish Council dispensation to speak and vote on the Council's budget and setting of the precept for the remaining term of this Council.**

This is not required as Section 10 (2) (vi) of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct provides dispensation for this.

- ii. **Resolution to adopt the General Power of Competence as contained in the Localism Act 2011.**

RESOLVED that this power be adopted.

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iii. **Annual Return for year ended 31st March 2017. Sign off document prior to submission to external auditors.**

Clerk summarised the contents of the return. **RESOLVED** that it be approved and signed by the Chair and Clerk.

ACTION for CLERK. Dispatch to external auditor, PKF Littlejohn for scrutiny and publish statutory public notices within timescales required.

iv. **Receive information regarding costs involved with installation of Broadband in the Scout and Community Youth Hall.**

Clerk reported that it had been difficult to prise information from BT regarding this and for them to understand that the Parish Council was a not for profit body. As far as could be understood the estimated costs are as follows (VAT to be added):

- As there is no existing phone line to the building engineer visit will be required to survey site - £250.
- Installation - £125.
- Monthly Line rental - £16.90.
- Monthly Broadband - £22.90 (Subject to discount of £28.90).

RESOLVED to that Cllr. Harris is to liaise with the Pre-School to establish if it is feasible to boost their Wi-Fi signal to cover the Scout and Youth Community Hall as well, thus avoiding cost of a new installation, Cllr. Hardy to assist by providing technical information regarding this.

v. **War Memorial Project.**

Planning application for this is being processed by Wealden under reference WD/0941/2017/F and will feature on the agenda of the 6th June Planning and Building Committee to note. One response received on the WDC website, this from Historic England, who did not wish to comment.

RESOLVED the following: -

- **CLERK** to monitor responses and comments from Parishioners regarding this project and report to Communications Committee to process.
- **Cllrs. THOMAS and HARDY** to draw up specification with basic requirements and assumptions so that we may go out to tender for the work, details for inclusion are number and style of inscriptions and stone quality/dimensions. This will enable establishment of likely cost prior to seeking external funding for the project.

vi. **Decision regarding action to prevent damage to wall of the Scout and Youth Community Hall.**

Preventative measures have been discussed with the Scouts who do not wish a protection strip attached to the building but suggest reconfiguration of the barrier and provision of a bollard as a solution.

RESOLVED CLLR. HARRIS to investigate options and report at the 20th June Recreation and Burial Committee meeting so that a decision may be made, **CLERK** to note.

vii. **Arrangements during Clerk's absence 29th May – 2nd June.**

Agenda for 6th June Planning and Building will require sending to Councillors and posting in noticeboards no later than Thursday 1st June.

ACTIONS for CLERK

- Provide Cllr. Hiles with details of the agenda for this meeting and requirements/timescale for its publication and sending to Councillors.
- Confirm email login details for Cllr. Harris so that any urgent items may be dealt with.
- Set up "out of office" messages for email and phone.

6. TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING.

- 28th March Communications and Social Media Committee

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- 25th April 2017 Planning and Building Committee
- 16th May 2017 Planning and Building Committee

Draft minutes of these meetings have been circulated in to the Councillors and it was **RESOLVED** to note and approve the acts and proceedings of them, confirm recommendations contained therein and, as far as requisite, the action taken by them. Clerk reported that he had not yet had the time to produce the minutes for the 23rd Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee meeting or examine the Recreation and Burial Committee meeting minutes from the 11th April meeting but will endeavour to do so before his holiday.

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

- **Other committees and sub-committees.**

None.

- **Meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council.**

- Sports Club meeting – Cllr. Gilbert. Club reported instances of drone flying, golf practice and dog fouling.
- Village Hall AGM – Cllr. Gilbert. Hall are pleased with hiring and income levels; new broadband is to be installed in the Autumn.
- Mark Cross Fair – Cllrs. Cahan and Henrick. This had been successful.
- Cllrs. Harris and Henrick. Had a recent meeting at Hailsham with Inspector Wakefield of Sussex Police regarding local issues. Notes of the discussion will be circulated in due course.

- **Clerk's updates and issues.**

Clerk thanked Cllrs. for their efforts and practical support given by Councillors but appreciates that due to their own work pressures it is not always possible to rely on this. Is currently trying to find a timesheet format that allows easier allocation of workloads, will welcome a response to the earlier manuscript timesheets sent to Chair and Vice Chair at the beginning of March. Will resend in case they have been mislaid.

- **Items for next Parish Magazine column.**

War Memorial project and information regarding the East Sussex Highways roads programme for 2016/17.

8. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE.

- Clerk Magazine May 2017.
- War Memorials Trust Bulletin May 2017.
- Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee – minutes of 8th March meeting.
- Clerks and Councils Direct – May 2017.
- Rotherfield Village Hall – revised fees from 1st May.
- St Chéron en Bref – mai/juin 2017.
- Letters of thanks for grant support from the Council have been received from Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance, Tunbridge Wells and District Samaritans, Rotherfield St Martin and Rotherfield Friendship Club.

9. TO RECEIVE INSPECTION BOOK & REPORTS

No issues of concern had been noted nor had any issues been raised by Parishioners regarding Council owned land.

10. TO RECEIVE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

- 30th May – Communication and Social Media committee.
- 6th June – Planning and Building committee.
- 20th June – Recreation and Burial Committee.
- 27th June – Planning and Building committee.
- 29th June – Monthly Council meeting.

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All meetings are to be held in the Parish Council Room, Rotherfield Village Hall, starting at 19:30.

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

- Item regarding the Jarvis Brook – Rotherfield footpath to be added to the agenda of the forthcoming SLR meeting with East Sussex Highways at the request of Cllr. Wickenden.
- Bollard by Highgate Florist reported as dislodged.
- Clerk requested to investigate relocating two meetings during the Autumn months to the Mark Cross Community Centre.

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

12. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

Confirmed as a true record and signed at the 27th July 2017 Council Meeting.

..... ChairmanDate: