

RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 17th September 2024, 7.00pm in Rodmell Village Hall.

Members of the Public in Attendance: 2 (one joined at 19.24) **Questions RECEIVED from the Public:** None.

Members in Attendance: Cllr Dishington (Chair), Cllr Rathbone (Vice-Chair), Cllr Wetttern, Cllr Hickey, Cllr Smart, Cllr Bentley (after co-option 19.05).

Members not in Attendance: Cllr Toye. **Others Present:** Clerk and RFO Lorna Thwaites.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Toye.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS WERE MADE:** Agenda items 12.3 and 12.5 Cllr Wetttern is the landowner; **NO REQUESTS FOR A DISPENSATION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA** were made.
3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Rodmell Parish Council held on 10th April and the ordinary meeting of 16th July 2024 were RESOLVED as correct records and signed by the Chair.
4. **VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF COUNCILLOR FOR RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL:**
 - 4.1 The Council RESOLVED to co-opt Chris Bentley as a Councillor, filling the vacant seat; Cllr Bentley SIGNED the Declaration of Office and joined the meeting at 7.05pm.
5. **COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES:** Areas of responsibility and membership of working groups for recently appointed councillors were AGREED and RECORDED.
6. **FINANCE/ADMIN:**
 - 6.1 Banking Arrangements:
 - 6.1.1 The Clerk confirmed online access to the bank account; the Clerk advised that NatWest sent the bank card and pin to a previous Clerk's address; the Clerk has submitted a complaint to NatWest.
 - 6.2 Payments to be made in September were AUTHORISED, excluding the Fingerpost tidying – the Clerk is to request Aviemore to return to clear around the Fingerpost itself; the bank reconciliation was RECEIVED.
 - 6.3 The Council RESOLVED to pay invoices under financial regulation 4.1 on the months where no meeting is held – the Clerk will circulate the monthly finance report and will make payments once email confirmation from the Chair has been received.
 - 6.4 Rodmell Parish Council RESOLVED to join the East Sussex Pension Fund (ESPF) and RESOLVED that the role of Clerk and RFO for Rodmell Parish Council is eligible to join the Fund.
 - 6.5 The internal audit report for financial year 2023-2024 was RECEIVED and ACCEPTED: The auditor has been thanked with flowers for undertaking this work on a voluntary basis for the Council.
 - 6.6 Notification of exempt status from the external audit from PKF Littlejohn was RECEIVED.
 - 6.7 The Council RESOLVED to request Sandra Webb to perform the internal audit for financial year 2024-2025.
 - 6.8 The 2025/6 annual budget was DISCUSSED: The precept request will be sent to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) in Dec/Jan; the Council discussed their budget strategy and likely areas of spend; the Clerk will prepare a draft budget for the Council at the next meeting.
 - 6.9 It was RESOLVED that a header in the noticeboard will replace the header from the agenda and minutes.
7. **REPORT(S):**
 - 7.1 No reports were received from Local and District Councillors or the MP for Lewes: A report was RECEIVED and circulated from Cllr Toye; the Council NOTED that the hedge at The Dicklands has been cut and the Defibrillator battery level has been checked and updated on The Circuit; a member of the public made a representation about the poor performance of the LDC rubbish collections in the Parish; the Council asked that the parishioner send further details via the Clerk.
8. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**
 - 8.1 Town and Parish Council Info on Lewes District Council's website – Jennifer Norman, Democratic Services. All councillors AGREED to check their RoMI information.
 - 8.2 Wildlife/Meadow verge applications – Projects Officer, Highways, ESCC: The Council AGREED not to make a wildlife/meadow verge application.
 - 8.3 Urban Mowing 2025 – Countrymans: The Clerk will request a quote from Countrymans.
 - 8.4 ESALC Training Dates – Emily Simpson, ESALC: Cllrs Bentley and Hickey to attend the new cllr training on 26th September and Cllr Wetttern Planning Training on 25th September.
 - 8.5 Response to NPPF report – ESALC: The responsibility to complete this consultation on behalf of the Parish Council was delegated to Cllrs Wetttern and Rathbone.
 - 8.6 Further £1m on improving the roads in East Sussex – Cllr Claire Dowling: NOTED.

- 8.7 Sensitive Interests Letter to LA's – ESALC: NOTED.
- 8.8 Response to the Government consultation to the new NPPF – Sarah Lawrence: NOTED.
- 8.9 New Chief Executive for SDNP: NOTED.
- 8.10 Invitation to SDNPA Parish Meeting – 2nd October 2024: Cllr Rathbone AGREED to attend.
- 8.11 Village Field – M.Tudge: The Clerk was asked to request for further details about the car show.
- 8.12 Website – J.Gillies / A Wheeler: J. Gillies (in attendance) was invited to explain discussions to date; the Council AGREED in principle to share the design of the website with the Parish of Kingston for a fee of £750.

9. MATTERS ARISING:

- 9.1 An update on the work of D H Property Services to paint the lettering on the noticeboard white was RECEIVED: The Clerk was asked to contact D H Property Services to establish if they intend to paint the letters further.
- 9.2 An update on the work to cut back and tidy around the fingerpost by Aviemore Landscapes was RECEIVED: Aviemore have offered to return to complete the work.
- 9.3 A quote for the work to repair the back flint wall was not received: Homestead Flints viewed the wall but don't consider any repairs to the area in question to be necessary.
- 9.4 An update on the progress of the First Aid training for the Parish Council and other members of the local community was RECEIVED: In her absence, Cllr Toye's report advised that 12 people are interested and she will arrange a date with the supplier.
- 9.5 An update on the work to restore the Fingerpost was RECEIVED: Cllr Smart visited the fingerpost and considers significant work is needed; Cllr Smart offered to undertake the work but she has limited availability until next Easter; the Clerk was asked to seek quotes for the restoration; the Council also raised the broken dog bin at the top of Mill Lane during this item; the Clerk will report to East Sussex Highways.
- 9.6 An update on the work to re-varnish the signs The Paddocks, Badgers Dean and South Barn Close was RECEIVED via a report from Cllr Toye: Signs have been varnished & trimmed back where appropriate; the Council expressed their thanks to Cllr Toye.

10. HIGHWAYS:

- 10.1 An update on the East Sussex Highways (ESH) drainage investigation works for 3rd September 2024 was not available however drainage contractors have been observed on The Street.
- 10.2 Drainage investigation works, Newhaven Road, Rodmell 7th Oct to 29th Oct 2024: NOTED
- 10.3 An update on the drainage issues reported to ESH was RECEIVED by report from Cllr Toye: The drains were assessed by ESH and those needing clearing have been done.
- 10.4 An update on the repairs to the potholes on the Street and Mill Lane was RECEIVED by report from Cllr Toye: All potholes have been filled.

11. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

- 11.1 The process for approving planning applications in the absence of a meeting of the full council was RESOLVED: In the first instance the Clerk will apply for an extension to the deadline for comments to allow them to be agreed at the next parish council meeting; if this is not possible planning decisions will be delegated to cllrs with planning responsibility; for larger applications or those requiring the agreement of the full council, an extraordinary meeting will be called in accordance with Standing Orders.
- 11.2 SDNP/24/02806/HOUS Location: The Old Smithy , Mill Lane, Rodmell, East Sussex, BN7 3HS
Proposal: Retrospective Construct a low level retaining wall to the existing upper terrace, construct a retaining wall (height 1.6 metres) with tapering side walls (to 0.7 metres) to form a Sun Terrace and install a staircase & balustrade constructed of galvanised steel, to provide safe access/use of the area
Comments AGREED: RESOLVED to SUPPORT with no comments.
- 11.3 SDNP/24/03295/TCA Location: Monks House , The Street, Rodmell, East Sussex, BN7 3HF
Proposal: T1 - Sycamore - removal of tree but retain 4m trunk - to prevent injury to the public and reduce lean over track T2 - Elm - remove to ground level - dead and overcrowded site T3 - Black Mulberry - light crown thinning by no more than 10% - to reduce canopy spread and reduce risk of limb failures (deadline for comments 20th September 2024). Cllr Wettern declared a personal interest in girlfriend managing monks house. Comments AGREED: RESOLVED to SUPPORT with no comments.

12. PROJECTS:

12.1 Parish Council Key Priorities

- 12.1.1 The presentation prepared by the Clerk was RECEIVED: the Clerk will add it to the RPC website.

12.2 Village Map

- 12.2.1 An update on the DINPP enquiry made to LDC was RECEIVED: Cllr Rathbone has sent a map as requested to LDC and their response is currently pending; the map illustration is not yet complete.
- 12.2.2 A quote for the frame/production options for the map was RECEIVED from Fitzpatrick Woolmer: Cllr Rathbone will send the Clerk details of the supplier who produced the map on the Southeast Swing Bridge, for an alternative quote.

12.3 Pavilion

- 12.3.1 An update from the meeting of the Pavilion Working Group was RECEIVED: Cllr Smart advised the ESCC hire charges for a field and pavilion, was £120; the Council NOTED the pavilion is usually winterised and increased costs will be incurred with winter use (heating and water); current annual costs are @£3000 (excludes any winter usage); the Council NOTED works are currently needed to the pavilion (work to the roof, taps and lightbulbs); Mr P Toye and Mr S Baker (football club) will assess the work required and provide details to the Council; the Council received, via Cllr Dishington, Mr Baker's request to run regular football fixtures at the playing field and pavilion; Mr Baker has offered to cover their costs of using the facilities and to undertake any maintenance works he can – no agreement on this maintenance work offer was reached by the Council; the Council felt a commitment of 6 matches would be needed but no resolution was reached; the Council AGREED the following: if the football club use the pavilion they must drain down/winterise the system after each use; any car parking for fixtures will need to be requested from Monk's House as parking in the Croft is not feasible when the ground is wet; alcohol cannot be sold without a license; the Council RESOLVED to charge £100 pitch fee per match with the football club to arrange their own cleaning after each use; Cllr Dishington AGREED to advise Mr Baker of the fee; parking requirements and to request a copy of the football club's insurance; the Clerk was asked to review the current pavilion booking form so Cllr Dishington can send a form to Mr Baker; Cllrs Dishington and Smart AGREED to take water and electricity metre readings and photos of the current state of the building; the next meeting of the pavilion working group is on the 9th October.

12.4 Playground refurbishment:

- 12.4.1 To RECEIVE the quote for the minor works to repair the playground equipment and to RESOLVE to proceed – Cllr Dishington. DEFERRED.
- 12.4.2 To RECEIVE an update on discussions held regarding the refurbishment of the playground and to AGREE further actions - Cllrs Dishington and Hickey. DEFERRED.

12.5 Benches:

- 12.5.1 An update on the written permission from the landowners to site the village benches on their land was RECEIVED: Cllr Wettren SIGNED the letter giving permission to place a bench on his land; it was raised that Mrs Young may own the land where the Council would like to site a bench at the bottom of The Street and The Drove (opposite to the entrance to Monks House); Cllr Dishington AGREED to speak to Mrs Young and to ask for her to sign a letter giving permission; a letter requesting permission has been sent to Cllr Dishington to take to Mr Robinson for signing.
- 12.5.2 Information from the Monday Group was RECEIVED, and the Council RESOLVED the bench size required was 1.2m length which would be set in concrete but would have no concrete slabs underneath; the Council confirmed the sites were accessible by vehicle and trailer for installation.

12.6 Website/Social Media:

- 12.6.1 The decision to purchase the domain www.rodmepparishcouncil.org for a 1year period until July 2025 at a cost of £13.21 was RATIFIED.
- 12.6.2 Positive feedback on the trial parish council website hosted by Hugo Fox was RECEIVED.
- 12.6.3 The Council RESOLVED to proceed with the website www.rodmepparishcouncil.org and to pay the monthly fee for the bronze package of £9.99 per month plus VAT by direct debit.
- 12.6.4 The Council RESOLVED to retain the Rodmell.net website as a community website and to put a link to Rodmell.net on the new Parish Council website.
- 12.6.5 The Council RESOLVED to set up a Facebook page for Rodmell Parish Council as an online noticeboard.
- 12.6.6 The Council RESOLVED to adopt the Social Medial Policy.

13. NO AGENDA ITEMS WERE PROPOSED FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL.

14. THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL was RECEIVED as 19th November 2024, 7pm Rodmell Village Hall.

15. THE MEETING CLOSED at 21.15.