

RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 20th May 2025, 7.00pm in Rodmell Village Hall.

Members in Attendance: Cllrs Dishington (Chair), Bentley (arrived 7.02), Smart, Toye, Wettern, and Hickey (arrived 7.06).

Members not in Attendance: Cllr Rathbone. **Others Present:** Clerk and RFO Lorna Thwaites, District Cllr S. Spiteri.

Members of the Public in Attendance: 3 **Questions RECEIVED from the Public:**

A question was raised regarding playground funding, donations and the next steps – a brief update was given as the item is being covered under agenda item 19.3. An application for CIL funding has been submitted; a donation has been agreed, and a working group has been set up.

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR:

1.1 Cllr Dishington was elected as the Chair for Rodmell Parish Council for the forthcoming year.

1.2 The Chair, Cllr Dishington SIGNED the Declaration of Office form.

2. ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIR. Cllr Smart was elected as the Vice-Chair.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: RECEIVED and accepted from Cllr Rathbone.

4. NO DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS were RECEIVED AND NO REQUESTS FOR A DISPENSATION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA, as required by the Members Code of Conduct.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes of the ordinary meeting of Rodmell Parish Council held on 19th March 2025 were RESOLVED as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

6. COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS:

6.1 The Council AGREED not to appoint any committees; to maintain the current working groups, and to reporting back at parish council meetings.

6.2 Individual areas of responsibility were AGREED with no changes to last year.

7. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES:

7.1 Councillor appointments to outside bodies were AGREED with no changes to last year.

8. THE COUNCIL CONFIRMED it is not eligible **FOR THE EXERCISE OF THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE** as it does not meet both criteria: The Clerk is CILCA qualified but only 2 of the 7 councillors were elected.

9. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF ORDERS, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES: Adopted.

9.1 Standing Orders

9.2 Financial Regulations

9.3 Members Code of Conduct

9.4 Social Media Policy

10. INSURANCE COVER:

10.1 The Council RESOLVED that it would seek a quote from Clear Councils and that it would delegate the decision as to which insurer to appoint to Cllr Dishington and the Clerk.

11. FINANCE:

11.1 The Council RESOLVED to pay the following subscriptions, regular payments, and direct debits to other bodies. Subscriptions – SLCC, LDALC, ESALC and NALC; Direct Debits - ICO data protection, EDF electricity for Pavilion, Hugo Fox website; Standing Orders - Team 4 Solutions – payroll, Clerk Salary; ESPF Pension.

11.2 The banking arrangements were AGREED for the year and the Council AGREED to add Cllr Smart to the nominated signatories.

11.3 April payments were RATIFIED, June payments AUTHORISED, and the bank reconciliation RECEIVED.

11.4 The Risk Assessment for 2025 – 2026 was AGREED.

11.5 All councillors have now changed to .gov email addresses and the hosting for Rodmell.net has been moved; the Clerk has a .gov email address and will start to migrate her emails to this account.

11.6 Allotment payments have been received by Cllr Smart and sent to Mr C Wettern; Cllr Smart will check allotment allocations against her map.

12. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR):

12.1 The Internal Audit is being undertaken by Ms S Webb.

12.2 The Certificate of Exemption was SIGNED.

13. REPORT(S): Any written reports were taken as read.

13.1 Written reports from Local and District Councillors were RECEIVED:

13.1.1 Wildflower planting – Cllr Smart: The planting is complete and the flowers are starting to come through; the Council thanked Cllr Smart for her work.

14. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

14.1 Annual Play Inspections 2025. Received from LDC. *The Council paused the meeting to enable the Clerk to pass documents to the internal auditor who had entered the meeting room.* The meeting restarted. The Council AGREED that no inspection was currently required.

14.2 Booking the Cricket Pavilion: The Council RESOLVED to allow the pavilion to be used for the Boot Fair in aid of St Peter's Church, free of charge; the clerk was asked to send a booking form and request insurance details.

14.3 James MacCleary Summer Visit: The Council AGREED that the session on 31st July should run as a Q&A.

15. MATTERS ARISING:

15.1 Details of any signs that could be used to prevent dog fouling in the parish were RECEIVED: The Council discussed the tactics that other parish councils have employed such as spray painting the dog mess as well as Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) with Lewes District Council; Rodmell is covered by the PSPOs and breaching a PSPO can be a criminal offence, offenders can be issued with a £75 fixed penalty notice or a fine of up to £1000; the Clerk was asked to contact LDC for warning signs; the Council also discussed the current number of dog bins and how some people don't have poo bags when challenged; full poo bags are also left around the village and the clerk was asked to get a cost for a poo bag dispenser.

15.2 Details of the process for the installation of a mirror and any associated costs were RECEIVED: The Clerk advised that ESCC do not permit them on or around public roads unless the site has a poor crash record. On private land – there are conditions listed and anyone who installs a mirror may be liable; the Council discussed the requested location and that current mirror that is on private land; the council also discussed the C7 project and their timeframes which would be unlikely to facilitate this; Cllr Dishington AGREED to speak to the land owner where the current mirror is sited.

15.3 The tidying of the overgrown tree by the bus shelter has been undertaken and the Council gave their thanks for this work being done,

15.4 Painting of the noticeboard lettering: Deferred.

15.5 An update on the request to the Rodmell Football Club to remove their goal posts was RECEIVED: The posts have been removed and stored so the cricket club could use the fields; the Council AGREED no further action to be taken regarding the posts; the Council NOTED that there are holes where the posts have been removed; Cllr Wettern AGREED to check and to discuss at the working party; any further action to be taken regarding the goal posts to also be discussed.

15.6 An update on the state of the Pavilion after the last use by the Rodmell Football Club was RECEIVED: Cllr Smart sent photos to the Council which showed the poor state the pavilion was in after use by the football club; the mess has now been cleaned by the cricket club and the Parish Council extended their thanks to the cricket club for doing this.

16. GRASS CUTTING:

16.1 The Council discussed cutting the grass from the bus shelter to the 50mph sign, at the end of the horsefield and the barley field; Cllr Smart AGREED to find out the path number and circulate and Cllr Toye AGREED to take a photo; Cllr Bentley offered to ask his groundsman to do that path and the Council AGREED they would like to go ahead with this and thanked Cllr Bentley.

17. HIGHWAYS:

17.1 An update on the repairs requested to the Vehicle Activated Speed Signs was RECEIVED: ESH have advised that both signs need replacing and this has been logged but no timescales are available; Cllr Spiteri offered to escalate the matter and the Clerk will forward the email chain.

18. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

18.1 **SDNP/25/01928/LIS Location:** Northease Lodge, Newhaven Road, Northease, East Sussex, BN7 3EY
Proposal: Internal alterations including relocation of doors and openings, relocation of ground floor WC and creation of new ensuite and dressing area to first floor. Complete rewiring of property and installation of fire alarms. Installation of over floor heating throughout ground floor. Replacement of gates to north and south sides of garden. (Deadline for comments 6th June 2025). **AGREED to SUPPORT.**

19. PROJECTS:**19.1 Village Map:**

19.1.1 An update on the application for Listed Building Consent for the map was RECEIVED: The application has not gone through on the portal and the Clerk has re-submitted.

19.2 Pavilion and Playing Fields:

- 19.2.1 The itemised estimate for the plumbing works was RECEIVED: The Council NOTED the expiration date, and the Clerk was asked to request a current estimate and to proceed.
- 19.2.2 The installation of the industrial grade socket on the side of the pavilion will be completed over the next two weeks.
- 19.2.3 The overgrown tree and hedge have been tidied, and the Council gave their thanks.

19.3 Playground:

- 19.3.1 An update on the public consultation regarding the playground restoration options was RECEIVED from Cllr Dishington: There was a good response to the survey (32) and good attendance at the consultation; Beth Rodgers lead a workshop with children designing playground ideas; information about the playground refurbishment has been put on the Parish Council and Rodmell Village Facebook pages; it has also been displayed on wall of village hall; Cllr Dishington has approached two people to join working group as volunteers; Cllr Dishington AGREED to call Beth Rodgers to discuss her proposal.
- 19.3.2 The application for CIL funding has been submitted and a response is due in August.
- 19.3.3 The Council did not resolve to apply for a VEOLIA grant award just yet as plans need to be finalised before this can be done.
- 19.3.4 The playground boundaries were DISCUSSED: The council consider the boundary marked by the picket fence to be the responsibility of Charleston House; the Council NOTED it has right of way over the strip; no actions were agreed regarding this boundary; the Council AGREED that Cllr Dishington will notify the fence owner that the current fence will be taken down and that they may wish to put their own fence up; the Council discussed the shelter which will be retained in the new playground scheme and will need some repairs; the Council RESOLVED to set up a savings account with the current provider for any fundraising monies; the Council also RESOLVED to set up a cashless fundraising payment system.
- 19.3.5 An update on the next steps of the playground working group was RECEIVED: The Parish Council working group will arrange a meeting with volunteers to agree how the project will be taken forward regarding any further quotes; funding applications; seeking approval by the parish council and the project implementation.
- 19.3.6 Further details on the removal of the 'high-risk' MPU by Cosmo Construction were RECEIVED: Cosmo Construction propose to cut down the item but the poles will not be removed below ground level; this will need to be done by the installation company when the new playground is installed; the Council AGREED to proceed with Cosmo Construction to remove the MPU and to cap any extra work to £200, should any repairs to the surface be required.

19.4 Benches:

- 19.4.1 An update on the location map and outstanding written permission was RECEIVED: Cllr Wettern will visit Mr Robinson to have the letter signed; Cllr Wettern also offered to meet the Monday group before they started work.

19.5 Website/Social Media:

- 19.5.1 The Council AGREED they would like to have photos of the Cllrs on the website, and they will send to the Clerk.

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

21. THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL was RECEIVED as 29th July 2025, 7pm in Rodmell Village Hall.

22. THE MEETING CLOSED at 20.31.