

RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 19th November 2024, 7.01 pm in Rodmell Village Hall.

Members in Attendance: Cllr Dishington (Chair), Cllr Wetttern, Cllr Hickey (arrived 19.15), Cllr Smart, Cllr Bentley.

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

Members of the Public in Attendance: 1 Questions RECEIVED from the Public: No questions received but an update on Egrets Way was provided by N.Harrison: The bridleway near the river (Rodmell) has been resurfaced and the section from the river to Ham Lane in Lewes is now complete; the bridleway to the village has been improved; there has many set-backs, particularly with the weather; the path is regularly used for cycling into Lewes; it is now possible to cycle from the Riverside Park, Newhaven (by the Jolly Boatman) to Piddinghoe Village; a more complex section is at the northern entrance to the C7 from Piddinghoe to Dean's Farm - the path has to run alongside the road; work is being undertaken with support from property owners, Sustrans, the SDNP and East Sussex Highways; the aim is to also deliver traffic speed restrictions; the Egrets Way project started in 2011, which is less than half a km of path a year; it is nearly at completion and will provide 5km of safe cycling from Newhaven to Lewes.

The Council asked several question: i) the gap at Piddinghoe?– the path will run alongside the road which may need some re-alignment requiring consultations with property owners; ii) long term maintenance?– hopefully this will be taken on by SDNP; iii) the surface of The Street was raised as it is no longer used by heavy vehicles - no further work is planned that impacts on the road surface; iv) will there be an official opening? – when complete there will be a grand opening.

N. Harrison was thanked for this work and for his update.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllrs Rathbone and Toye.
2. **NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST WERE MADE OR REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION RECEIVED.**
3. **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING** held on 17th September 2024 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were signed by the Chair.
4. **COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES:** The amendment by Cllr Toye was RECEIVED and ACCEPTED.
5. **FINANCE/ADMIN:**
 - 5.1 Details of the compensation payment made by NatWest Bank was RECEIVED.
 - 5.2 October payments were RATIFIED, November payments APPROVED, and the bank reconciliation RECEIVED and SIGNED; a payment of £48.52 to Business Stream for wastewater was approved.
 - 5.3 The NALC Pay Award March 2024- April 2025 was RECEIVED and AGREED – to be back dated to the start of the Clerk's permanent employment.
 - 5.4 The Council RESOLVED to make salary and pension payments by Standing Order.
 - 5.5 Confirmation of Ms S Webb undertaking the internal audit 2024-2025 on a voluntary basis was RECEIVED.
6. **2025-2026 BUDGET AND PRECEPT**
 - 6.1 The Council DISCUSSED the required expenditure for 2025-2026; amends were agreed to the budget for grass cutting services and fingerpost renovation; the Council reviewed the precept levels and budgets since financial year 2021-2022 and discussed the reasons for expenditure exceeding income in 2022-23 and 2023-24; the Council also reviewed precept levels for nearby parishes and the impact of precept increases on households; the Council noted that a precept of £19,500 p.a. will increase the weekly band D charge by approx. £0.26p per week (2025 tax base from LDC still pending to provide the exact increase).
 - 6.2 Council Members RESOLVED to set a precept of £19,500 for financial year 2025-2026.
7. **REPORT(S):** Written reports taken as read.
 - 7.1 The report RECEIVED from Cllr Spiteri to be circulated to councillors due to late receipt; no other reports.
 - 7.2 The following short, verbal or written reports were RECEIVED and NOTED:
 - 7.2.1 LDALC Meeting.
 - 7.2.2 POLO Meeting Report and Minutes.
 - 7.2.3 SDNPA Parish Meeting.
 - 7.2.4 Planning Training.
 - 7.2.5 New Cllr Training – Cllrs Hickey and Bentley: Cllr Hickey was unable to attend due to email issues; the Clerk will ask ESALC for the charge to be carried forward.
 - 7.2.6 Response to NPPF Consultation on behalf of Rodmell Parish Council: COMPLETED.
8. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:** RECEIVED and actions AGREED:
 - 8.1 Action in Rural Sussex- via ESALC: NOTED.

- 8.2 Village Field – M Tudge: The Council has received an enquiry for a charity car show (Save Maderia Drive Arches) to be held on 6th July 2025; there will be up to 100 cars, light vans and motor bikes and about 400 people including any pedestrians; the Council AGREED that the hirer would need to provide Public Liability insurance and parking stewards and that the cricket pitch could not be used; the Council AGREED the fee of £400 plus a £250 refundable deposit (subject to meeting booking conditions); the Clerk was asked to check the Council insurance policy, review the current booking form and to contact S. Prosser and R.Selleck advising of the potential booking; the Charity would need to confirm the booking asap.
- 8.3 Strengthening Local Relationship (SLR) Meetings – ESH: The Council AGREED it does not require a meeting.
- 8.4 Making a Complaint – The Process – ESH: NOTED.
- 8.5 Rodmell.net website – T Wheeler: NOTED.
- 8.6 Urban Mowing 2025 – Countrymans: NOTED.
- 8.7 Urban Grass Cutting 2025 – ESCC: RESOLVED to request Option 2 – 2 standard and four extra cuts over the course of the year; the Clerk was asked to liaise with Cllr Wettern regarding the schedule.
- 8.8 Loss of Lewes Bus Station and impact on your Parishioners – Cllr West: The Council AGREED that it would not comment as a Council but that individuals could respond should they wish to.
- 8.9 ESCC Street Lights – via ESALC. NOTED.
- 8.10 ESCC Highways/Balfour Beatty – via ESALC: NOTED.
- 8.11 Sussex Resilience Forum Survey – via ESALC: Cllrs to complete individually; the Clerk to put on the website.
- 8.12 Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at Council Meetings: Cllrs to complete individually.
- 8.13 ESALC Conference 2024 – ESALC: NOTED.
- 8.14 Speed Limit letter to MP – Westmeston Parish Council: The Council RESOLVED to support Westmeston Parish Council's letter to James MacCleary MP, requesting a reduction in the speed limit for rural roads.

9. MATTERS ARISING:

- 9.1 The decision to purchase a replacement battery and pads for the defibrillator was RATIFIED.
- 9.2 The Council RESOLVED to request Barcombe Landscapes to cut the hedges by the Recreation Ground in January at a cost of £150+VAT.
- 9.3 The proposal for first aid training by Cllr Toye was RECEIVED and AGREED: the training will be held on Thurs 9th Jan 7pm – 9pm; Cllrs to attend are Cllrs Wettern, Hickey and Toye; Cllr Rathbone to confirm; a fee of £10 per delegate (non council member) to be charged.
- 9.4 Quotes on the restoration of the Fingerpost were RECEIVED: The Council RESOLVED to apply for match funding and subsequently to appoint JAKK Country Furniture Designs to restore.
- 9.5 The Council NOTED that D H Property services were not able to do anything further on the noticeboard lettering; the Council AGREED to accept Cllr Smart's offer to undertake this work.

10. HIGHWAYS:

- 10.1 No update on the drainage investigation works, Newhaven Road, Rodmell 7th - 29th Oct 2024 was received.
- 10.2 The update on the Vehicle Activated Speed Signs was RECEIVED: The Traffic Signals Manager has been contacted by ESH and provided the following information; one sign is in the system to be repaired but no time frame has been given; the remaining sign requires a replacement due to a control board fault which is a longer process due to lead time of ordering the sign; this is unlikely to be replaced until next year.

11. PLANNING APPLICATIONS: NONE received.

12. PROJECTS:

12.1 Village Map (Parish Map):

- 12.1.1 The DINPP response from LDC was RECEIVED advising that planning permission is required to site the map on the wall of the Abergavenny Arms; the Council RESOLVED to proceed with this location and Cllrs Rathbone and Dishington will apply for planning permission.
- 12.1.2 The latest map design was RECEIVED; Cllr Rathbone has submitted amendments to the designer; the council RESOLVED to put the honorarium for the designer on the next payment schedule.
- 12.1.3 Next steps with regards to the production of the map were deferred until planning permission has been granted; the Council NOTED that the quote that the Clerk had previously circulated was from the company that produced the map at Southease.

12.2 Pavilion and Playing Fields:

- 12.2.1 The correspondence from the Site Manager of Monks House regarding the parking of Rodmell Football Club during their recent fixtures was RECEIVED; the Council NOTED the Clerk's response

and discussed their disappointment that the football club had not sought permission from Monk's House despite it being requested of them and being a condition of the booking form.

- 12.2.2 An update on the use of the Pavilion and Playing Fields by Rodmell Football Club was RECEIVED: the football club have been using the facility but have not supplied their insurance certificate, paid the fixtures fee or signed the booking form; the water hasn't been turned off after use or the system drained down; grass has been left inside the pavilion and rubbish left in the bins after matches; all these conditions were advised to the football club and included in the booking form; the Council RESOLVED that the football club could no longer use the pavilion or playing fields until they supply their insurance certificate, sign and return the booking form (and adhere to its conditions), pay the fee of £100 per fixture (including the outstanding fee for four fixtures); the Council asked the Clerk to email the football club and AGREED to change the lock code at the pavilion.
- 12.2.3 The following reports were RECEIVED and actions AGREED:
- 12.2.3.1 Repairs proposed and tender documents for the Pavilion from P Toye: The Council AGREED to send out the electrical tender documents to AJ Walton and the Clerk was asked to seek plumber recommendations from other parish councils; the Council AGREED to purchase a test kit for Legionnaires (4 samples, £43.75+ vat) and the Clerk to ask P.Toye if he would undertake the testing.
- 12.2.3.2 An update from the Pavilion Working Group meeting held on 12th November was circulated to the Council prior to the meeting; no further actions arising.

12.3 Play Equipment:

- 12.3.1 The play equipment item classified as 'High Risk' play in the LDC RoSPA Play Safety inspection report has notices in place advising children not to use the equipment; quotes have been requested by Cllr Dishington for the repair of the equipment which Cllr Dishington will circulate on receipt.
- 12.3.2 The playground equipment safety inspection report was RECEIVED; the Clerk was asked to compile a list of proposed works and seek quotes.
- 12.3.3 Previous quotes requested by Cllr Dishington for the minor works to repair the playground equipment were not yet received.

12.4 Playground Refurbishment:

- 12.4.1 An update on discussions regarding the playground refurbishment was RECEIVED: Cllr Hickey has spoken to Beth Rogers, who has previously designed play spaces; Cllr Hickey has designed a questionnaire to circulate to the local community; the Council AGREED to distribute it via the village whatsapp and facebook groups and to put it on the playground gate; Cllr Dishington AGREED to put a board up at the Village Hall Christmas event.

12.5 Benches:

- 12.5.1 Written permission from 2 landowners is still outstanding and Cllr Dishington will action and send to the Clerk.
- 12.5.2 The price from the Monday Group for benches 1.2m long, set in concrete was RESOLVED as £153 per bench.

12.6 Website/Social Media:

- 12.6.1 Council Members AGREED to send portrait photos to the Clerk to put on the RPC website.
- 12.6.2 All changes have been made to Rodmell.net regarding Parish Council information.
- 12.6.3 The changes to the hosting of Rodmell.net and the requirement for mailbox migration was DISCUSSED: Cascade Digital are no longer hosting domains and a new host will need to be appointed; Cascade Digital have not charged for hosting or emails during 2024 as they were no longer offering hosting; the Clerk was asked to seek quotes for domain hosting; Council Members will move to .gov email addresses and .net addresses will no longer be required.
- 12.6.4 The Council RESOLVED to move RodmellParishCouncil.org to a .gov domain with .gov emails via Hugo Fox.
- 12.6.5 The Rodmell Parish Council Facebook page is not yet complete due to technical issues.

13. **AGENDA ITEMS PROPOSED FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL:** To RESOLVE to install a bus shelter at the Northease bus stop – Cllr Hickey.

14. **THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL:** Tuesday 21st January 2025, 7pm,
Rodmell Village Hall.
15. **THE MEETING closed:** At 21.20.