

## ICKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at 7.15pm at Rye Harbour Village Hall

*Present: Councillors Mrs F Bates, C Bronsdon (in the Chair), B Chishick, R Comotto, J Horsman, P Hurrell, Mrs S Lyward, Mrs C Merricks, T Moore, Mrs J Stanford, H Sutton, M Terry, B Thompson.*

*In attendance: Cllr. K Glazier (ESCC), D Rosewell (Clerk). Apologies had been received from Cllrs. N Ramus and P Osborne (RDC). Members of the public were also present.*

**08/030** The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting at 7.15pm.

**08/031** The Chairman invited questions from the public. Mr Michael Alford asked if the timetable in the bus shelter at Rye Harbour could be reinstated. He also made a comment about the Mary Stanford Life Boat House issue. Representatives from Icklesham raised concern about the hole in the hedge next to the hall at Icklesham Recreation Ground. There was a discussion about the possible remedies to this. **It was agreed** that a solution would be brought to the next agenda.

**08/032 To receive reports and to ask questions of Cllr. Glazier concerning East Sussex County Council matters.**

Cllr. Glazier referred to the issue of the verges at Winchelsea Beach. These were damaged as a result of work done on sea defences. He would report further on this at the next meeting. He informed the meeting that Council Tax had been set by County at a 3.9% increase, which was a reduction on last year and it was hoped this would continue as a trend next year. He observed that work on the cycle path at Rye Harbour continues. It is hoped to complete this by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.

The Chairman then read extracts from the PCSO report (previously circulated by email).

**08/033** The meeting now formally opened for council business at 7.30pm. The Chairman sought approval from Council to move item 13 to follow item 7 in order to accommodate those members of the public who had come to the meeting specifically for this item. **This was agreed.**

**08/034 To receive and record any apologies for absence.**

.There were none.

**08/035 Disclosure of Interests and Code of Conduct.**

Cllr. Comotto declared personal interests in agenda item 10d and item 23, and a prejudicial interest in item 17. Cllr. Sutton declared a personal interest in item 12(ii).

**08/036 To consider and approve the signing of the Minutes of the Council's meeting of the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2008 by the Chairman.**

The following amendments were put forward:

Cllr. Comotto asked that item 08/016 be amended to show that previous amendments were proposed by him. There was a typographical error under 08/020. These amendments were agreed and the minutes were approved following a proposal by Cllr. Thompson, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Stanford.

The meeting was now formally suspended to allow non-councillors to provide an update on the Icklesham Memorial Trust hall refurbishment project.

#### **08/037 Icklesham Memorial Hall Refurbishment Project.**

Mr Dominic Manning introduced himself as the architect involved in the project. He gave a short description of the history of the project, adding that some amendments to the plans were necessary following the appointment of a structural engineer. A building contractor had been appointed. Documents would be ready for re-submission next week with revised costs available early in April. It was hoped that overall costs would not increase significantly. He expressed the view that a quantity surveyor was not really necessary for this project as the work was within an architect's remit to deal with. A monthly update will be produced. Work is scheduled to start in May and expected to take about 6 months. After discussion, **it was agreed** that Cllr. Horsman would join the project management group as a local ward councillor.

#### **08/038 Financial Matters**

- a) **Receipts & Payments report for the year to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (circulated).**  
Proposed by Cllr. Thompson, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Lyward. **Approved.**
- b) **To approve items for payment for March 2008.** The Clerk tabled items of expenditure totalling £5,470.04 for March which concerned cheques numbered 1882 to 1894 sequentially, plus £730.00 Standing Orders. Proposed by Cllr. Comotto, seconded by Cllr. Thompson that these be approved. **Agreed.**
- c) **Mowing Tenders.** After discussion, the Clerk's recommendation to appoint Kent County Council's Landscape Services as the contractor for mowing services during 2008 was agreed. Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Lyward, seconded by Cllr. Thompson. **Approved.**

#### **08/039 Matters Arising.**

None.

#### **08/040 Cllr. Comotto proposes the following resolutions (deferred from previous meeting).**

- a) *"The Clerk will table for discussion the question of 'Encouraging and assessing consultation and communication with residents by the Council and by ward councillors.'"*  
Cllr. Comotto gave a brief overview of the need to put in place a better form of communication with residents. After discussion, **it was agreed** to withdraw the motion and re-submit it on the agenda for the next meeting.
- b) *"The Council will write to the holders of plots 29a, 32 and 39a at the Cricket Field allotment in Winchelsea and plot 1 at the Pear Tree Marsh allotment asking them if they intend to cultivate their plots next year and giving them fair warning that, in view of the current state of their plots, which do not appear to have been properly cultivated this year and, in some cases, for several years, their leases will be terminated in October next year if the plots remain wholly or largely uncultivated, and that they will be liable for the costs of renovation. The Council will also offer a small prize each year in each ward for the best kept allotment plot as judged by ward councillors."*  
Cllr. Comotto said there had been some improvement since he had originally drafted this resolution some months earlier, but it was necessary for the Council to ensure that the allotments were kept in good order and it was felt that the proposed action would be helpful. Proposed by Cllr. Comotto, seconded by Cllr. Chishick. **Approved.**
- c) *"The Council will write to all holders of plots in the Cricket Field allotment in Winchelsea reminding them that the dumping of rubbish in the pathways, in the uncultivated margins of the allotment and over the fence in Hogtrough Lane is prohibited and anyone who does so will be liable for the full costs of removing the rubbish and may lose his plot. Three notices will be placed along the fence in Hogtrough Lane stating that the dumping of the rubbish is prohibited and making clear the penalties. Furthermore, the Council will arrange for the uncultivated margins of this allotment, either side of the perimeter hedge of this allotment, the uncultivated land at Pear Tree Marsh allotment, and all empty plots in either allotment to be cut and, where appropriate, sprayed with weedkiller."*  
Proposed by Cllr. Comotto, seconded by Cllr. Chisick. **Approved.**
- d) *"The Council will apply to East Sussex County Council for a licence to cultivate the verge at Back Lane, Winchelsea."* **Withdrawn.**

**08/041 Cllr. Comotto proposes the following resolution:**

*"In order to help ensure that public funds are used effectively and to encourage better facilities for residents, village halls seeking grants from the Parish Council should apply for the AiRS Hallmark Scheme status".* **Withdrawn.**

**08/042 Grant Applications:**

- i) RH Village Hall
- ii) Winchelsea Beach Community Hall.

After considerable discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk will write to the respective applicants for grants suggesting that they re-submit their applications for half the original amounts and that Rother District Council should then be approached for match funding. This was following advice that RDC will consider match funding but, before doing so, do require prior agreement to fund by parish councils.

**08/043 PA system for Council Meetings.**

The Clerk had brought his own PA system along, following the previous meeting's recommendation that we explore the practicality of using such a system. He said he proposed to make the system available, as meetings rotate through the various wards, until the system has been tried in each hall used by the Council. By that time, Council can evaluate whether it feels the purchase of a permanent system would be the way forward.

**08/044 Correspondence.**

The Clerk made Council aware of various items of information that had been received plus a response from Rother District Council agreeing to remove the 1066 information panel to the exterior wall of the public conveniences, as we had requested.

**08/045 Quality Council status – update.**

The Clerk informed Council that he was working with RDC towards moving the Council's website facilities into the RDC environment which would have a number of advantages including a much more flexible managed service, at no cost to IPC. He also felt that the 'family' look of websites managed by RDC would have an advantage in terms of branding. He took the view that the upgrading of the website, and improving its facilities in communicating to residents, would be an important step forward in moving to Quality Council status.

**08/046 Winchelsea Speed Gun Insurance.**

The Council's insurers had informed the Clerk that it would not be possible to insure the speed gun directly under its policy as the Council had no insurable interest in the gun.

**08/047 Mary Stanford Life Boat House – parish survey.**

It was put to Council **and agreed** that, before any further action was taken with this, the draft of the proposed survey should be shown to families of those involved in the Mary Stanford Life Boat disaster.

**08/048 Reports from Council Representatives.**

There were none.

**08/049 Cllr. Terry submits the following for consideration by the council.**

- 1) The creation of a maintenance schedule which would provide a checklist to ensure that repairs are timetabled and not forgotten, even when they have to be delayed. This schedule needs to be driven by the risk assessments.
- 2) The reformatting of the budget. It should be divided into Revenue and Capital. Revenue should be divided into Administration and Maintenance. Capital should clearly distinguish the Council's own projects from donations and grants to others. There should be a 3-year projection, if only for Capital. In preparing the projection, account should be taken of depreciation (not in an accounting sense, but in a practical sense of when we will need to repair or replace the item), so that we can plan our future expenditures and, if necessary, build up funds ahead of expenditure.

- 3) Rather than responding reactively to property wearing out, the Council should try to plan its maintenance and re-equipment activities. This pro-active approach should start by ward councillors, in consultation with the Clerk, conducting a comprehensive assessment of the state of Council property in their ward and producing a projection of the future work needed to maintain and, where necessary, replace property. Any proposals for material expenditure on maintenance and replacement should be put to the community in each ward for consultation, and ward councillors should measure the need for the property concerned (e.g. proposals for playground equipment major maintenance or replacement should quantify the number of users and likely frequency of use, other similar facilities, alternative equipment) before reporting to the Council.  
**Deferred to next meeting.**

**08/050 Cllr. Comotto submits the following:**

I would like to schedule a discussion of the format of the next Annual Parish Meeting. This meeting has been treated as just another Council meeting and is a pale reflection of the community events that take place in other parishes. NALC has issued guidance which we need to follow.

Cllr. Comotto outlined the purpose of parish meetings and said he felt the IPC meeting needed to be restored to an event closer to the original purpose of these meetings. He said it should be advertised as soon as possible and that it had to be more of a parish community meeting rather than an "ersatz council meeting." A discussion followed. Cllr. Bronsdon said that he could arrange for a guest speaker but this needed to be done sooner rather than later. The outcome was that **it was agreed** that the Chairman would pursue the arrangement for a speaker but that residents should also be given every opportunity to raise issues that they were interested in as well.

**08/051 Winchelsea ward councillors have submitted requests for the Council to write to outside bodies in accordance with the attached letters.**  
Proposed by Cllr. Comotto, seconded by Cllr. Terry. **Approved.**

**08/052 Councillor Comotto proposes the following resolutions:**

- a) *"In order to comply with its statutory obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council will conduct an audit of the state of its knowledge of local crime and disorder problems and the extent of the action it has taken to reduce those problems. It will review its current plans, strategies and policies, to ensure that they comply with the Act, and review its decision-making procedures to ensure and demonstrate future compliance. This exercise will be completed before the start of the financial year 2009/10."* **Deferred due time restraints.**
- b) *"In addition, in response to the request in the Local Councils Support Policy of Sussex Police, the Council will nominate a lead councillor for community safety in each ward. This councillor will report to the Council each quarter on crime and disorder issues in their ward and propose appropriate action by the Council."* **Deferred due time restraints.**
- c) *"The Council will consider the establishment of Local Action Teams in wards."* **Deferred due time restraints.**

**08/053 Date and venue for the next meeting.**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday April 14th 2008 at The Community Hall, Winchelsea Beach, commencing at 7.15p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.29p.m.