



Meeting held at Rogate Village Hall starting at 5.00pm.

Parish Councillors in attendance: Chairman Max Harwood (MH), Adrian Collins (AC), Laura Craven (LC), Octavia Pollock (OP) and Angie Simonds (AS).

There were no members of the public (MOP) in attendance.

District Councillor: Tim O'Kelly (TOK)

Clerk: Debbie Harknett

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- 1) **It was noted the meeting would not be recorded.**
- 2) **Apologies for absence** were received and accepted from Mike Galley (MG) and Zoe Macle hose (ZM) and noted from County Councillor Kate O'Kelly (KOK).
- 3) **There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.**
- 4) **The minutes of the last meeting** held on 12th February 2024 were approved by the Council as a true record and signed by Chairman.
- 5) **Representations from the Public:** none

Reports from representatives of outside bodies:

- 6) **West Sussex County Councillor – KOK's report** had been circulated prior to the meeting:
 - a) Budget – the leadership changed the wording in the Council Plan to protecting the environment rather than addressing the climate crisis. She proposed their amendment to include the climate change crisis which included priority topics- more support for young people's mental health; more funds for highway & PROW maintenance; more Officer time for flood prevention; bus planning and active travel. They pushed for more capital spend on flood prevention - in spite of recent floods they have underspent Operation Watershed funds (lack of Officer time) and had cut next year's budget for this.
 - b) Heath and Adult Social Care Committee (HASC) – March meeting scrutinised St Richard downgrade by CQC from outstanding to 'requires improvement' - health leaders are working to decrease backlog of planned surgery waiting times and ambulance services presented their improvement plans. They have made significant progress related to category 2 (heart attack and stroke) emergency response times. The cancer referral to diagnosis times have improved but the time to treatment in many cases is taking longer than their target.
 - c) Recycling changes – as all districts and boroughs in West Sussex collect metal, glass, plastic, paper and card for recycling no change is expected to kerbside collections. They will be required to introduce separate collections of food waste from March 2026 and plastic film from March 2027.
- 7) **Chichester District Councillor – TOK's report** had been circulated prior to the meeting:
 - a) Budget has been signed off with amount of District council tax increasing for typical band D property by £5.41 to £186.48 per year. Despite tight funding this has enabled them to continue to fund the 'Supporting you' team and social prescribers. Concern continues to be Homelessness and in particular rough sleepers. One initiative is a joint scheme with Everyone Active (who run the district sports centres) to use physical exercise to boost wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem.
 - b) Council is working to ensure everyone has a roof over their head and working with voluntary groups the rough sleeper team goes out daily. CDC are committed to increasing their temporary accommodation.
 - c) Wellbeing team are offering support for smokers trying to quit and arranging Heartsmart walks.TOK raised some matters on behalf of a MOP from the parish:
 - d) Garbett's Wood maintenance – MH explained our voluntary tree warden has visited the site which appears to be under active management by the Woodland Trust with paths and steps that are clear and accessible. Bramble thickets line some of the paths but do not impinge on them and create a dense low-level habitat providing an area free from disturbance for the benefit of wildlife and woodland regeneration.
 - e) The Woodland Trust provided a 5-year management plan which was commended by our tree warden as a favorable action plan to restore the wood after the recent impact of Ash die-back in a sensible and sympathetic way to restore the wood to a thriving multi-species habitat in keeping with the natural context of our area.
 - f) The PC provided a grant last summer to help with the repair of the steps on the school side.

- g) Flooding on A272 at junction of Slade Lane. The council discussed this and agreed the recent prolonged wet weather has caused temporary flooding on many roads in this area and was not any worse than other locations in and out of the village.
- h) Fyning unofficial 20mph signs – at Highways request signs had been removed from their land but those on private land (not just Councillor owned) could remain.

TOK left with thanks.

8) Chairman's report – MH's report had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- a) We invited the PCSO to our annual parish meeting but unfortunately, he is unable to attend though has offered an earlier meeting if we would like one.
- b) Terwick post box – we have been approached by a resident on behalf of the Fyning, Terwick & Borden Wood Residents Association asking about retaining the defunct box as an historic monument but we are concerned the old box could fall into disrepair with nobody responsible for it. We have suggested they contact Royal Mail to see if they can take over the responsibility.
- c) Smugglers Wood – an area of trees has been felled and our tree warden attended a site meeting with Forestry England. The site has a valid felling licence and they plan to remove an area of chestnut for woodland diversity.
- d) Oliver's Piece – we have received a report of some summer antisocial behaviour; AC is investigating.
- e) Pumpkin patch – we appreciate there has been a lot of interest in this site. Following investigation SDNP planners have decided there is no justification to remove the permitted development rights of the site but will monitor to ensure the event stays within the confines of permitted development.
- f) Bus stop signs in the village – we received some complaints about the height of the new poles but since then flags have been fitted to the tops which show the wait time for the next bus. While this might not be attractive it is very useful.

Matters for discussion:

- 9) Playground inspections** – MH reported that after several years of carrying out weekly inspections of both village playgrounds and the outdoor gym equipment our volunteer is no longer able to continue. Many thanks to the MOP for her valuable help.
 - LC volunteered to carry out monthly inspections at the village hall playground and outdoor gym while OP volunteered to look at Hugo Platt. The clerk will share the checklists.
- 10) CDC All Parishes Meeting** – MH noted we had asked for social housing to be on the agenda because we wanted to know if parishes outside of our locality were being affected by the sell-off. This agenda request was not met though Hyde attended the meeting with a presentation mostly the same as our meeting a few weeks ago.
- 11) Social housing discussion meeting** - MH and AC attended this meeting with SDNP, planning, Hyde and other local Parish Councillors to discuss the provision of social housing in the small villages across the Downs. Whilst it was recognised current provisions are inadequate the builders and planners face difficulties with the provision of new sites and the cost of land. Hyde had identified a limited number of sites within their current estates; in Rogate this would be on the Parsonage.
- 12) SDNP Parish Workshop** – 13th March 2024 at 6.30pm (online) – noted that nobody was able to attend.
- 13) Traffic matters:**
 - a) **Hillbrow 30mph TRO application** – AC had no update but noted he had received an email from Rogate Road residents concerned about the amount of litter; unfortunately, this is a countrywide problem and probably not all as a result of the B1KE.
 - b) **Rogate Village 20mph zone Community Highways Scheme (CHS)** – AC reported that he, James Stock and the Clerk met with two representatives from Highways (Senior Engineer and Project Manager) to walk around the village and discuss the scheme and problems (including vehicles damaging the church wall). They will now provide a design for comment and consultation but the changes are likely to be as a result of signage changes rather than physical changes.
 - c) AS raised concern about the danger when exiting from Fyning Lane onto the A272. AC explained that a couple of years ago he submitted an enquiry to WSCC Highways about why 40mph stretch from the garage to Fyning Lane wasn't considered as part of the previous Rogate Traffic calming project. The response stated that a number of factors are taken into consideration including accident statistics for this area, highway regulation and the prevailing policy on speed limits. The last reported accident on the highways database occurred in 2018. The CHS scheme for Rogate was in its design phase and at the site meeting (referred to above) highways confirmed that they will

be considering any need for change to speed limits on roads approaching the 20mph limit in the village.

14) Finance matters

- a) Monthly finance report to the Council – AC noted it is the last month of the financial year and we are in a good state of affairs with a surplus anticipated to help carry us into next year with improved reserves.
- b) Non-cheque signatory to check reconciliation – OP.
- c) Bank payments authorisation – MH and AC.

Payments approved:		
Clerk/RFO	Salary/PAYE/Pension	Undisclosed
Debbie Harknett	Zoom video conferencing monthly cost	£15.59
Rogate Village Hall	Hall hire	£23.00
Debbie Harknett	Clerk's expenses – 3 months	£86.10
Parish Online	Mapping subscription	£108.00
Mick Butcher	Rogate & Fyning bus shelter cleaning - 6 months	£200.00
Sean Farren	Hugo Platt playground grounds maintenance - 6 months	£100.00
Fred Fosberry	Bin emptying/cleaning – 6 months	£100.00
Geoff Cornwell	Rake Recreation ground maintenance – 6 months	£100.00
Agreed for payment if invoices received before year end:		
Rogate Village Hall	Playground lease	£25.00
Rogate Village Hall	Outdoor gym lease	£25.00
Rogate Village Hall	Playground grass cutting	£150.00 max
Mark Schupp	Playground fence repair	£180.00

Committee/Working group reports:

15) Finance Committee

The Finance Committee meeting on Monday 25th March 2024 was noted.

16) Planning

- a) The comments from the Planning Working Group discussions of 16th January and 2nd February 2024 were received.
- b) The Planning Working Group discussion being held via zoom as necessary was noted.

17) Open Spaces Committee

- a) The Open Spaces Committee meeting on 25th March 2024 was noted.
Update from Open Spaces Committee:
- b) LC reported she has made the arrangements with CDC for the equipment loan and rubbish collection for the annual litter pick on Saturday 16th March. She offered to ask if they can help with a bin emptying service for the playground; Clerk will share previous correspondence explaining they were no longer taking on any new bin contracts.
- c) AS reported the old van in the asparagus field (private land) appears to have been vandalised and is possibly being used for anti-social behaviour; Clerk to contact owner.
- d) Everybody commented favourably on the daffodils around the village which were purchased with the CDC Coronation grant and are now flowering. AC noted the commentative plaques have been installed.

18) Policy reviews

- a) Data protection – AS reviewed this and following discussion her proposal of **resolution ‘to accept revised Data protection policy’** was seconded by AC and unanimously approved.
- b) Risk Register – AC has been working on this aiming to meet the new style suggested by the internal auditor but it has taken longer than expected. He showed a draft copy and it was agreed that the Finance Committee would consider at their meeting at the end of the month.
- c) Transparency code – Clerk had updated this to include grant/contract information for the current year. LC's proposal of **resolution ‘to accept the updated Transparency code’** was seconded by OC and unanimously approved.
- d) Retention of documents – Clerk had reviewed this in consideration of documents that are archived. LC's proposal of **resolution ‘to accept the updated Retention of Documents policy’** was seconded by AS and unanimously approved.
- e) Freedom of Information – AC's proposal of **resolution ‘to add a sentence from ICO guidance - Under the Freedom of Information Act there is an upper limit of £450 above which we do not**

have to provide information. The general guideline for working out whether or not a request may exceed this total is whether the amount of work involved in retrieving the information is likely to exceed 18 hours (2.5 working days)' was seconded by LC and unanimously approved.

- f) Vexatious complaints/communication – after discussion LC's proposal of **resolution 'to change the title to vexatious correspondence/complaints'** was seconded by OP and unanimously approved. Clerk to share existing complaints, vexatious and CDC unreasonable complaints policies for further review next month.

19) Projects and grants – SDNP CIL application – Clerk noted the closing date is 12th April 2024.

20) Drainage issues/operation watershed – Fyning Lane discussion is ongoing and St Peter's Road is waiting for it to dry out before it can be inspected – an almost impossible task.

Village organisation reports:

21) Rogate and Rake Schools – MH noted that Compton School (part of the Downland School Federation with Rogate and Rake) has received an improved 'good' Ofsted rating.

22) Rogate and Rake Village Halls – it is hoped to combine their AGM with our APM.

23) Correspondence -

- a) Bank statements received – filed in finance file.
- b) Other information/emails – circulated as received.
- c) Freedom of Information request – MH reported a request had been received from a MOP in the parish. Information requested has been provided and included copies of our accounts since 2020 and detail of council expenditure on the Terwick Wood village green application – the Parish Council did not make the application and therefore incurred no costs in doing so.
- d) Excessive and vexatious communication - MH reported we have been receiving a high volume of emails from a MOP that are creating a significant burden on the Parish Council. The MOP has copied them to a raft of people including other councillors, district & county councillors, MOPs, highways, planning and SDNP. The emails contain a mix of comment, opinion, assumptions and questions covering a range of topics in the same email.
- e) **Japanese knotweed** – MH noted he received a report of the possibility of some growing on private land north of Rogate village. Although it is considered an invasive plant it is not reportable but an owner should not allow it to spread to other properties. After discussion, it was agreed we are not qualified to determine whether or not the plant is Japanese knotweed. Agreed to monitor in the spring and consider writing to the owner if appropriate in due course.

24) Information for the Council (for noting or inclusion on a future Agenda) – none

25) Date of next meeting – the Full Parish Council Meeting will be on Monday 8th April 2024 at 5.00pm at Rake Village Hall.

Clerk reminded members the **Annual Parish meeting is on Thursday 18th April at 7.00pm** – further discussion next month.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.10pm.

Chairman:

Date: