



Meeting held at Rogate Village Hall starting at 5.00pm.

Parish Councillors in attendance: Chairman Max Harwood (MH), Adrian Collins (AC), Laura Craven (LC), Zoe Maclehose (ZM) and David Seddon (DS).

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Clerk: Debbie Harknett

District Councillor: Tim O'Kelly (TOK)

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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), Elena McCloskey (EM) and Angie Simonds (AS) and were noted from the County Councillor, Kate O'Kelly (KOK). It was noted that ZM would be late.
- 3) **There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda** though LC noted she was secretary of Rogate & Terwick PCC it was agreed she had no personal financial interest in any grants awarded.
- 4) **The minutes of the last meeting held on 9th October 2023** were approved by the Council as a true record and were signed by Chairman.
- 5) **Representations from the Public:** none.
- 6) **Report from County Councillor** – KOK's report had been circulated prior to the meeting:
 - a) Chief Executive decision to appoint full-time; current leader had shared the role with East Sussex.
 - b) Budget – Members are being consulted; in order to increase spend on children's & adults social care and highways maintenance the council will be looking to make savings elsewhere. They will scrutinise proposals carefully – it is a very challenging time.
 - c) Environment – WSCC pledges to tackle climate change and protect the environment with target to be carbon neutral and being a climate resilient organisation by 2030.
 - d) Transport – West Sussex '16 to 20 bus saver' launched on 22 October and will run until March 2025. It allows young people to continue to receive discounted bus fares until their 21st birthday.
- 7) **Report from District Councillor** – TOK's report had been circulated prior to the meeting:
 - a) Grants – CDC sets aside money to support environmental projects, community groups, sporting activities & businesses achieve their goals. So far this year they have awarded £79,380 across the district - www.chichester.gov.uk/grantprogramme.
 - b) CDC are accepting applications for UK Shared Prosperity Funding (projects to complete 1/04/24-31/3/25). www.chichester.gov.uk/sharedprosperityfund.
 - c) Insulation and energy efficient grants are available www.gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme and Warm Homes initiative www.chichester.gov.uk/applywarmhomesinitiative.
 - d) WS Citizens Advice Energy Team are available to help anybody struggling with energy bills on 0800 145 6879; CDC 'Supporting You' team on 01243 534860 www.chichester.gov.uk/supportingyouteam.
 - e) When questioned, TOK explained CDC had not invested largely in property so wasn't experiencing the budget problems some other districts were but are likely to have issues within a couple of years when it looks likely the government will stop supporting local councils.
- 8) **Chairman's report** – MH's report had been circulated prior to the meeting – items covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Matters for discussion:

- 9) **Hall generator** – MH was pleased to report the joint application with Rogate Village Hall for a SSE Resilient Communities grant of £5,127.96 has been successful. We understand the hall are complying with SSE requirements before the funds are released in approximately 6 weeks. The £500 grant we received from George Street Trust towards the project is not required so we will repay.

10) Meeting dates 2024 – as circulated, agreed to continue meeting on second Monday of every month at 5.00pm in Rogate Village Hall with the exception of the April meeting which will be held in Rake Village Hall. Annual Parish meeting to be held on Thursday 18th April 2024 with coffee n cake as last year was an improvement and to invite those organisations we award grants to. Agreed to discuss collaborating with the hall for their AGM.

ZM arrived.

11) Rogate Stores – MH noted the building (the shop and 3-bed flat above) is currently on the market for £500,000 and explained it had been left to over 30 charities who have appointed a lead charity to handle negotiations for the disposal of the asset. We understand the shop has a lower than market rent to ensure its viability for the community and there was discussion about anything we could do to protect it. Clerk noted we could possibly apply to register as an ‘asset of community value’. MH added that START are due to discuss at their meeting this week and it was agreed there was nothing appropriate for the PC to do at this time.

12) Social housing in the village - House sale on Parsonage – MH explained over the past month we have learnt more about the unfolding story of how Hyde are selling off local, affordable rented properties. These properties are apparently uneconomic to refurbish and bring up to EPC (Energy performance Certificate) standards or they are struggling to find tenants. We have learnt there have been similar sales in Stedham, Harting and Milland and while it's only one or two properties in each parish the knock-on effect to local affordable housing cumulates in numbers that are potentially significant. In addition, as many of the social housing properties in the area were built at the same time, this could indicate that as each property becomes vacant it will be sold – at a time that we do not have sufficient local housing and other organisations are seeking to increase the affordable housing stock. As this concern is shared by neighbouring parishes the Clerk has arranged a joint meeting with Hyde next week.

13) Finance matters

- a) Monthly finance report to the Council – AC noted we are well within budget and have benefitted by holding funds for the Operation Watershed project as they have earned almost £1,000 in interest. We are likely to have an underspend at year-end which will go into our reserves which were depleted through not increasing the precept for a number of years. He noted the finance committee had considered the burial grants and recommended awarding within the budgeted amount and not to use our reserves for additional grant funding.
- b) AC noted the interim audit raised three matters:
 - not all policies need to be reviewed annually and some can be done on a three-year rolling basis;
 - bank statements need to be signed as well as the bank reconciliation;
 - there is an irregularity with the Clerk's salary in that she isn't paid on an exact NALC scale point in accordance with NALC requirements. AC explained the Clerk had been appointed on two different NALC salary points - point 49 as RFO in 2014 and 32 as Clerk in 2016. When separating the two roles became too difficult in 2018 she was appointed on a mid-point of 37/38 for the combined role. However, her current salary is reflecting salary point 31/32 which means she is not only not on an exact point but has also been being underpaid as the scale point has dropped. AC proposal of **resolution ‘to put Clerk/RFO on NALC salary scale point 38, with effect from November pay, as recommended by the finance committee’** was seconded by LC and unanimously approved.
- c) AC noted the annual NALC salary increases are always in agreed in arrears and they have finally decided the award for 2023-24 financial year – £1,925 flat rate across the board (pro-rata increase of £1.00 per hour). AC explained this increase had been anticipated within our current budget before proposing **resolution ‘to increase Clerk's salary in accordance with NALC recommendations backdating to April 2023’** which was seconded by MH and unanimously approved.
- d) Non-cheque signatory to check reconciliation – ZM.
- e) Budget 2024/25 – AC explained it can either be set by a top-down approach of deciding individual line items or bottom-up by agreeing the base line and setting line items to meet the total. He added the majority of our expenditure is fixed and, as recommended by the finance committee, AC's proposal of **resolution ‘to approve a budget figure of £41,843 which represents a 5% increase of £1,992.50 on last year's £39,850 precept’** was seconded by LC and unanimously approved.

f) Bank payments authorisation – MH and AS.

Payments approved:		
Clerk/RFO	Salary/PAYE/Pension	Undisclosed
Debbie Harknett	Zoom video conferencing monthly cost	£15.59
Rogate Village Hall	Hall hire	£46.00
Mulberry & Co	Interim internal audit	£210.06
Southern Water	Fyning water supply	£21.59
Adrian Collins	Materials for Hugo Platt playground repairs	£172.48
Information Commissioners Office	Annual registration fee	£40.00
Rogate PCC	Churchyard grant	£2,200.00
Terwick PCC	Churchyard grant	£800.00
4Sight	Grant	£100.00
George Street Trust	Repayment of unused generator grant	£500.00
Henry Warren Hall	Hall hire	£15.00
Chichester District Council	Election costs	£314.50

Committee/Working group reports:

14) Finance Committee

- a) The minutes from the Finance Committee meeting of 3rd April 2023 were received.
- b) The Finance Committee meeting on Monday 27th November 2023 was noted.
- c) Update from Finance Committee meeting on 30th October 2023 - AC noted as it was the first official meeting this year he had been appointed as Chairman and DS had agreed to stand as vice-chair.

15) Planning

- a) The comments from the Planning Working Group discussion of 2nd October 2023 were received.
- b) The Planning Working Group discussion being held via zoom on 20th November 2023 was noted.

16) Open Spaces Committee

- a) The Open Spaces Committee meeting on 27th November 2023 was noted.
Update from Open Spaces Committee meeting of 30th October 2023:
- b) AC noted preservation work has started on the Rogate Village Hall playground equipment and hopes it will be completed within a couple of weeks though it is weather dependent.
- c) The notice board in the village bus shelter has been repaired.
- d) Hugo Platt playground – a gate was damaged some years ago and we replaced with fencing. However, this new section of fencing has been forced opened to provide a short cut to the adjacent dell. It was agreed to reinstate the second gate to avoid further damage and costs. The buffalo board at the top of the slide has become delaminated. AC has kindly offered to carry out these repairs (material re-imburement costs agreed within payments). LC thanked AC on behalf of the council.

17) Policy reviews

- a) Finance Committee Terms of Reference
 - b) Financial regulations
 - c) Internet banking policy and procedure
 - d) Banking arrangements
 - e) Members allowance policy
 - f) Expenses policy
- AC explained the finance committee had reviewed these policies with no suggested changes so his proposal of **resolution ‘to accept policies a-f) above as reviewed by the Finance Committee’** was seconded by LC and unanimously approved. Others, g-k) below to be reviewed at the next meeting
- g) Standing orders - EM
 - h) Code of conduct - LC
 - i) Data protection - AS
 - j) Recording of public meetings - MH
 - k) Press and media – ZM

18) Projects and grants – there was nothing to report.

19) Drainage issues/operation watershed – MH reported the work in North Street is now complete. We have been completely bowled over by the support from residents to the work and contractors and have emailed Landbuild to say how pleased we all are. We are hoping to arrange a meeting with Landbuild about possible solutions to the spring in the middle part of Fyning Lane.

Village organisation reports:

20) Rogate and Rake Schools – there was nothing to update.

21) Rogate and Rake Village Halls – there was nothing to update.

22) Correspondence -

- a) Bank statements received – filed in finance file.
- b) Other information/emails – circulated as received.
- c) Grit bin – MH noted the bin at the corner of Fyning Lane had been destroyed by WSCC grass cutters. They will remove the damaged bin and will provide a replacement but as we do not want to re-site in the same position AC has kindly offered to store until needed.
- d) MH reported that we have been copied in on two complaints about Pumpkin Patch with concerns raised about flooding, rubbish, road issues and exceeding the 28-day planning rule (which includes set-up and removal of all equipment). The issues have been raised directly with the appropriate authorities (planning, WSCC Highways, Environmental Agency, CDC Safety Advisory Group). After discussion, it was agreed our role is to sign-post to authorities with power to action concerns, as this has already been done it was agreed there was nothing further for us to do at this point other than asking to be kept informed.
- e) MH added we have also received unconfirmed rumours about field run-off causing flooding in various parts of the A272 and urged councillors to find out more if possible so we could ask Highways to investigate.
- f) AC reported he was hugely disappointed that the Rogate Road, Hillbrow 30mph TRO application has not been supported by Sussex Police and that after a subsequent ‘re-moderation’ exercise, WSCC have decided not to progress it any further. The Police cited the 2013 DfT guidance document on speed limits specifically, the lack of accidents as a criteria for not supporting the change. AC pointed out that police appear not have considered other objectives in the DfT guidance such as ‘benefit to the community/environment’. WSCC also appeared to look at the road in isolation and the length of the proposed 30mph was below the WSCC speed limit policy of a 600m threshold and not within the ‘descriptors’ in the policy for a 30mph area. AC commented that Rogate Road should be looked at as road crossing the London Road and continuing over the county border, down into Liss which already has a 30mph restriction. KOK has communicated that she is challenging the decision.

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

24) Date of next meeting – the next **Full Parish Council Meeting** will be on **Monday 11th December 2023 at 5.00pm at Rogate Village Hall.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.37pm.

Chairman:

Date: