

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF
RUSHWICK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2023 AT 7.30 PM
AT RUSHWICK VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Jenkins (Chair), Cllr Hemsworth (arrived 7.50 pm), Cllr Williams, Cllr Lowe and Cllr Haywood

In Attendance: Sharon Baxter (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer) plus 2 parishioners.

1. Apologies: To receive apologies and approve reason for absence
Cllr Bryan (Personal) and Cllr Wise (Personal) - Accepted
District Cllr Daniel Walton (Personal) - Received
2. Declarations of Interest
 1. Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
 2. To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature - None.
 3. To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature - None
3. To Consider written requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of The Localism Act 2011) written requests to be with the clerk prior to the meeting - None

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A parishioner had reference to be aware of Entry Level Exception Sites, being a new classification under planning applications, referring to affordable housing. This is seen as a loophole in the planning system.

County Councillor Report - Cllr Scott Richardson Brown – No report available

District Councillor Report - Cllr Daniel Walton

The report was circulated in advance of this meeting. Daniel was thanked for his help and support serving the Parish over the last four years.

4. Minutes: Having been previously circulated the minutes of The Parish Council meeting of 08.03.2023 were signed as a true and correct record.
5. Progress Reports: Matters arising from previous minutes – None
The Action Plan was reviewed. The Clerk confirmed that unfortunately, no representative from WWT is available to attend the Annual Parish meeting, as a guest speaker. A decision was made to proceed with the Annual Meeting without one.
Cllr Williams reported all three Parish noticeboards in the village are in a poor state of repair. Clerk to arrange these to be assessed to establish cost of repairs or replacement.
A price had been established for a new larger litter bin. Before an order is placed, Cllr Jenkins to liaise with the resident before progressing further.
Cllr Jenkins gave an update on the status of the Whitehall Inn.
Cllr Williams together with volunteers to arrange a clean-up of the stream by the footbridge, shortly. This is in addition to the spring clean-up, of the whole village which is also to be arranged.

6. Correspondence for Information/Action: Circulated by the Clerk
 - a. Email dated 10.04.2023 – Elections Hustings enquiry. The advice received from Worcestershire CALC was that the Parish Council should not be involved in hosting such an event due to purdah. However, there is nothing to stop the individual or another concerned group arranging it.
 - b. Coronation Event 8 May 2023 – The Village Hall Committee are finalising arrangements.

7. Parish Lengthsman Scheme: Update was presented as per worksheet.

This month work included cutting back the verge along the Bransford Road, cleaning and clearing rubbish from the underpass, cutting back the footpath at Crown East, Grange Lane and Claphill Lane. Charging and moving the VAS sign at various designated locations. As a good will gesture he had cleared and removed the ivy in Grange Lane.

A large overgrown hedge is impairing visibility along a section of the road located at the top of Claphill Lane, Cllr Williams to inspect which house this belongs to for the Clerk to write to the householder requesting if this can be cut back.

8. Highway Issues update following a meeting with representative – Cllr Jenkins

A number of concerns had been referred to WCC Highways including Claphill Lane and the A44 junction. Councillors expressed that they were not satisfied with the responses received as they appeared not to address the specific questions being asked or address the impact of the issues overall, but only in isolation. Cllr Jenkins to go back to WCC Highways to try and progress further.

A further concern was raised concerning parking along the Bransford Road, particularly outside the entrance to the Kier site. This is to be raised also with WCC Highways.

9. Finance
 1. Payment of accounts were authorised as per schedule
 2. Monthly Bank Reconciliation Statement – For Information Only

10. Reports from representatives: To receive an update.
 1. Report from Village Hall Committee: Cllr Bryan – No report available
Cllr Jenkins to liaise with Cllr Bryan for continuity of progress of the Village Hall.
RESOLVED: To donate £500 to the Village Hall Committee in support of the Kings Coronation Event being organized.

 2. Footpath Officers report: Cllr Williams
 - a. Progress update on replacing stiles and gates.
'A litter pick in Claphill Lane produced another full bag of rubbish, including a 30 cm cylinder of nitrous oxide, which I removed to Grange Lane, and was taken by the Council bin men. This is to be reported to the police.
I removed vegetation from the kerbs in Grange Lane in advance of the Highways footpath works which began on April 5th.
The long-awaited work on the stiles and bridge in the Upper Wick Lane orchard will now take place in the next 3 – 4 weeks or sooner, subject to the Contractor's existing schedule.'

 3. Report of Play Area: Cllr Hemsworth

The ROSPA inspection had taken place in March identifying some minor improvements required to the zip wire and timber tower. Grass cutting has commenced. Unfortunately, the lawnmower has knocked the storage container from its plinth and this needs repositioning. Cllr Lowe agreed to help as he knew someone with a small crane.

 4. Social Media Update: Cllr Hughes – No report available

 5. School Representative report: Cllr Hemsworth - Nothing to report
Cllr Hemsworth to speak to the Headmaster of Rushwick Primary School to enquire how they intend to celebrate the Kings Coronation. Subject to this, the Parish Council would like to offer its support.
RESOLVED: To support Rushwick Primary school by donating £500 to help towards commemorating the Kings Coronation.

- 6. Speeding Issues & Crime Prevention Update: Cllr Wise - No report available
 - a. To progress with Community Speed Watch.

- 11. Update on the Parish Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Lowe
Cllr Jenkins has handed it to Cllr Lowe to help progress.

- 12. Planning:
The following Planning Applications were considered: -
Application number M/23/00220/HP - No Objection
Application number M/23/00376/HP - No Objection

- 13. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas – None

- 14. **Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 10 May 2023 at 7.00 pm at Rushwick Village Hall
Followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 8.00 pm.**

Meeting closed at 8.50 PM.

Signed Chairman..... Date.....

Rushwick Parish Council Meeting – April 2023 – District Council Report

Firstly, a big thank you for our Clerk and all Parish Councillors. Being part of Rushwick Parish Council meetings for the last four years has been a pleasure and despite it being a particularly tough time for the village to this point we've done all we can.

The work of Parish Councillors isn't an easy one and there is scant thanks for the work you do, especially considering it's voluntary, but I've got to see first-hand the hard work and dedication that goes in. Thank you.

I am on holiday this week so my apologies I can't be with you.

This final year of this particular District Council Period has been the only year that's come close to feeling normal. For my first year it was a typical first year of learning the ropes and making the contacts and understanding the priorities of the village.

I was hit with the size of the of what was to come down the line in terms of the development between Lower Broadheath and Worcester and learnt about the proposals, that I've fought, at Rushwick.

Then came Covid and changed the normal way we did things for two years, so this year has been a – somewhat- return to normal. All official District Council meetings have been in person, although we still use Zoom and Teams to meet for some meetings. I've had the role of Portfolio Holder for Economic Development for the past 2 years and that's meant much more involvement for me within the Council.

Within the past year we've brought in millions in grants to support economic growth in the area and we've support local organisations hit by the effects of Covid, not least by moving the focus of the Council from being an organisation that did unto areas and now works with communities to understand what is needed. The administration of this last year, within the Council, and with a very effective team of Portfolio Holders have been able to deliver that.

It means a financially strong council delivering services very effectively and laying out more to support communities led by communities. There's always more to do but this last year has made a big difference.

Unfortunately, we did see the passing of the Boundary Commission review. This has pluses and minuses – One big minus is that Rushwick, despite our fighting, was coupled with wards it had little association with. I wanted to keep up the fight against the overdevelopment that Rushwick is facing but I can do that from a neighbouring ward and promise I will. One plus is that 38 councillors always seemed too many. We have some councillors who don't show – ever and who offer very little. It's amazing to see so many people trying so hard to be elected and then see them do absolutely nothing when they are.

It doesn't matter what colour they wear – it's just important they do something and with less Councillors there's more chance we'll get more doing things. This comes onto another bad point – There are still three member wards. In the centre of Malvern, we still have wards where three councillors will be elected – meaning someone get a four year holiday! It's also the point that there are too many two

member wards where with two Councillors representing large wards means less representation for voters.

The other big news in the last year was the voting through of the SWDPr which will see further house building across Wychavon, Worcester and Malvern Hills. It is an order from Central Government and it does stave off speculative development –but I don't believe in the process and I don't believe in the outcome which will give us 1,000 more homes on top of the many thousands that already surround us, such as at Grove Farm and Elgar Park.

This is potentially another 2,000 cars on our doorstep – alongside a train station with a 500 car carpark. I was one of only two Councillors who didn't vote for it – and I don't believe the battle is over yet.

Much of the last few months my inbox has been full of messages about road closures over at Lower Broadheath.

Apprentices have formed a big part of my last four years, starting with the Task and Finish Group I chaired and then the introduction of several grants as I was Portfolio Holder for Economic Development. A new Apprenticeship support system has now been announced.

The new Worcestershire Apprenticeships Account is an online system to make it quick and easy for prospective apprentices to connect with Apprenticeship providers.

Those considering apprenticeships will be able to submit an expression of interest to the local training organisations that offer apprenticeships in the sector they're interested in.

This should not only make it easier to connect with local training organisations, but also removes the problem that applicants often have when they're not quite sure what vacancy to search for.

Individuals who obtain an Apprenticeship from signing up to the WA Account, will be eligible for the £500 WA Bursary to help with those initial costs and give them the best start to their Apprenticeship journey.

Visit www.worcsapprenticeships.org.uk/apprentices/worcestershire-apprenticeships-account for more information.

We also, as we do, supported the Malvern Jobs fair at Malvern Library last Wednesday (22 March) which was a great success with lots of excellent jobs on offer as well as career advice and volunteering opportunities.

We saw a great turnout of people of all ages looking for apprenticeships, part time and full-time work, training opportunities and more.

Stallholders included Worcestershire Apprenticeships, Morgan Motor Company, The IASME Consortium, Ornu Foods UK, The Boynes Care Centre and others.

There was also a Careers Insight Hub where experts from different sectors were available to help with questions and advice.

There's always lots going on over Easter but people can head to Tenbury Wells from 3-10 April to take part in the Easter Bunny Trail which has been organised in partnership with Tenbury Tourist Information Centre.

The TIC volunteers invited Tesco in Tenbury Wells to provide the prizes free of charge. Find out more here www.visitthemaalverns.org/tenburyeastertrail.

Finally, thank you. I am sure that your new Councillors will do a sterling job but always happy if you need to contact me. Stay in touch.

Thank you,

Daniel.