

Minutes of the Meeting of Rushock Parish Council

Held on Thursday, 21st November, 2019 at Rushock Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present:

Cllr. T. Green (TG) (Chairman)
Cllr. D Cutler (DC) (Vice Chairman)
Cllr. S Davies (SD)
Cllr. R. Hampshire (RH)
Cllr. T. Jennings (TJ)
Cllr. J. Nicholls (JN)

Also Present were:

The clerk Mrs B J Drew (BD) County/District Councillor Mr. Marcus Hart (MH) District Cllr Mrs Lisa Jones (LJ) the Lengthsman, Mr. Bill Waldron (BW) and West Mercia Police.

1. Apologies for Absence:

District Councillor Ian Hardiman (IH).

2. Public Question Time:

None

3. Minutes:

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 12th September, 2019 were duly approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

4. Progress Reports:

TG, SD and BD had recently attended a training session on IDOX, the new planning software which is due to be launched in January 2020. The Clerk will attend a further training session in December. This was followed by a Planning Training session from Paul Round which was extremely informative. Superfast Broadband – this is progressing, it is likely that a traffic management system will have to be put in place shortly to close Clattercut Lane for ducting to be installed. Once all satisfactorily tested it will go “live”.

5. County Councillor’s Report:

Councillor Marcus Hart reported;

Rushock Issues

Since my September report it has been pretty quiet. I have been out and about in the Parish and report potholes and minor highway issues as I see them.

Wyre Forest Issues

The public realm work for Kidderminster Town Centre is progressing very well now and should be completed by the autumn. The bottom of end of Worcester Street has had new pavement and the road installation is certainly taking shape. This scheme is going to link into WFDC’s ambition to regenerate this area and the Bromsgrove Street – Lion Fields area of the town.

Work on Kidderminster Train Station continues, with changes to the forecourt taking place. The station has recently been demolished.

The Ludlow Road children's respite facility has now been agreed for closure. Children who use this facility will now use a facility at Bromsgrove or Malvern. The facility is outdated and not up to Ofsted and CQC standards as it has twin rooms which are no longer permissible. This decision was taken after full consultation and due regard for all service users' needs. This facility is owned by the Worcestershire Health and Care Trust.

The former Grange rehabilitation unit has been sold for a residential development. Service users who need rehabilitation after hospital but before they can go home are now placed in the independent sector within the Wyre Forest area.

Consideration is currently being given as to what type of congestion reduction scheme will be implemented on the A449 Hoobrook island. This should benefit Rushock residents wanting to come in and out of Kidderminster onto the A449 before going onto the A442, especially at peak times.

Strategic Issues County Wide

Worcestershire Children's First has now been launched and began on 1st October 2019 and includes Children's Social Care, Education and Special Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The company's budget is circa £100 million and circa 800 WCC staff have TUPE'd into the company which is based at County Hall. I am delighted to report that our Children's Services has recently been inspected by Ofsted and we are now no longer inadequate and are required to improve. We are the only local authority in England to do this prior to going into a company.

The County Council's 12 week public consultation on its County wide transport strategy, including home to school transport and bus services has ended and a cabinet report in respect of this is due out later in the year.

The County Council's consultation on its waste and minerals plan has now concluded and a further report to cabinet will come in due course.

The Parish Council Conference is at County Hall on 17th October.

The Cabinet have approved a County wide Education Strategy from 2019-2024. This sets out its vision and ambition for Education over the next 5 years.

There have been some welcome Government announcements on SEND funding recently with WCC expected to receive approximately an additional £7 million in 2020-2021 to cope with the rapidly growing pressures. We are also promised additional money for adult social care. The Government has announced that Councils will be able to levy an adult social care precept in 2020-2021 of a maximum of 2% and general council tax will be capped at 2%, which is 1% lower than previously allowed.

MH advised that the request for "Unsuitable for HGVs" sign by resident in Elmbridge Lane has been actioned. Planting of wildflower seeds in the Parish, MH will request Paul Green, Highways Liaison Engineer make contact with the Chairman to discuss.

6. District Councillor's Report:

Councillor Mrs Lisa Jones reported;

Local Issues

Prevalent fly tipping areas in the parish can now be targeted by a hidden camera which can be installed to prosecute offenders. If you know of an area in the parish that has a problem, please let us know and we can forward this onto the enforcement officer.

Marcus and Ian were very pleased to be able to help with the refurbishment of the kitchen in the village hall, Ian has contributed £200 from his leadership fund and Marcus has contributed £500 from his divisional funding, they are looking forward to seeing the finished project.

Mark Garnier will be holding a questions and village visit for residents on Saturday 7 December from 10.30-12 Noon to be held in the village hall.

Lisa has forwarded information regarding the monthly village coffee morning to the Adult Social Care Department in Social Services and Age UK to enable elderly residents to access our wonderful facility.

Lisa has brought along winter leaflets for the residents of the village which includes a thermometer and information to keep safe and warm over the winter months.

Wyre Forest Issues

The local plan consultations have now closed and we are awaiting details and findings to come to the Full Council. We will inform the parish council of any amendments in due course.

We welcome a new planning enforcement officer to the planning team, we now have two officers who can deal with enforcement issues within our parish.

The Progressive Alliance are compiling a car parking charges review for the whole of the district including consideration of charging blue badge holders, charges in the evening and overnight and removing free car parking locations, together with a 5% increase. We will report with further information once the matter has gone through Scrutiny and the Cabinet have made their final decision. A large part of the Progressive Alliance's savings plans are predicated on localism with the Town and Parish Councils expected to take on more services.

Shoppers can take advantage of free parking at all Wyre Forest District Council car parks after 3pm during the festive period. The offer is running from Friday 22 November when the first of the district's Christmas light switch-ons is taking place in Stourport. Kidderminster's lights switch-on will follow on Saturday 23 November and Bewdley's on Saturday 30 November. The offer finishes on Sunday 5 January 2020.

LJ had obtained some free wildflower seeds from the CALC AGM and has given these to BW.

LJ has sent the Clerk details of an "Orchards Workshop" free event run by Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Clerk will forward details to all.

7. Police Report:

Police reported one dwelling burglary in Rushock and reports of a suspicious Black Hyundai Vehicle looking at properties.

TG reported an abandoned car on the new West Mercia website which was answered by the Droitwich team and has now been removed.

Residents are to be encouraged to report any suspicious activity either on the website or call 101 or in the event of an emergency dial 999.

TG queried whether it is likely that written crime reports will be re-introduced. It was confirmed not as they are time consuming to produce and details are available online.

DC queried whether we still need a Parish Council Police Liaison Officer? The police said it is up to each individual Parish Council.

8. Rushock Village Hall:

TG reported that the final signature was obtained on 1st November and the village hall committee are registering the deed with the charity commission.

Sincere thanks were expressed to MH for all the time and effort put in dealing with this matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. TG advised that Laurence McCurrich has a box of documents relating to the village hall which he will obtain and review.

At the Village Hall AGM last week there were a few changes to the committee.

It was reported that the underfloor heating is costing a lot more than originally thought, the committee are working on a new kitchen and agreed they need to plan and advertise events more in advance. JN advised the committee are currently looking at different insurers with the hope of being able to get cover to use the open fire in the hall for village events, if desired, but not for when the hall is hired out.

9. Consultations:

- a) Budget Consultation Questionnaire – Feedback received and circulated to all.
- b) PCCs Rural Crime Strategy Consultation – TG completed response on behalf of Parish Council.

10. Planning:

TG reported on planning since the last meeting;

WF/19/0416/Certp: Demolition of rear bay window, proposed single storey rear extension at Upper Hyde, Rushock – Refusal of Certificate of Lawful use or development. The Parish Council did not comment on this application.

WF/19/0525/Full; Agricultural Storage Building at The Old Oak Barn, Rushock – Application Withdrawn.

WF/19/0637/Full; Two storey front, side and rear extensions including installation of 4 dormer windows to front at Iris Cottage, Elmbridge Lane, Rushock – Recommend Approval.

TG advised of a new Planning Application just received;

WF/19/0670/Full; Demolition of existing dwelling house for new replacement dwelling and associated external works and driveway, Clattercut House, Rushock. Due to the nature of this application TG circulated plans to all Councillors and asked for comment.

DC expressed concern at the inconsistency from the Planning Department who have previously approved applications for this house but now appear to be supporting that it is demolished, and a replacement dwelling built but feels that there are no planning grounds to refuse it.

RH supports the application. MH queried the materials to be used and TG advised they will be less intrusive. After discussion it was unanimously agreed to recommend approval but request conditions;

1. Removal of any permitted development rights for the new building,
2. Compulsory inclusion of the eco-measures referred to in the design statement.

11. Highways:

JN reported all was good until the severe weather recently which has caused various flooding.

Clerk is awaiting written confirmation from Paul Green that drain jetting can be undertaken in the New Year and payment made from Rushock Parish Council's Lengthsman allocation.

TG reported dangerous verges in Park Lane, MH will address.

DC reported serious flooding recently in Clattercut Lane and advised that she has taken photos of this. After much discussion MH suggested a site meeting with Paul Green, Highways, TG, DC and BW to try and find a way to resolve this. BD to forward photograph to MH.

12. Footpaths:

TG informed the work on the Parish Paths has been completed. Clerk to ensure invoices are submitted before 1st December 2019.

TG advised of a few stiles that need attention.

13. Management of Verges:

The matter of planting wildflower seeds in the Parish was discussed again and TG advised that the location needs to be set back and not be affected by verge cutting. MH suggested that this be looked at with Paul Green at the same time as the site meeting on flooding issues.

14. Finance:

TG advised that the Parish Council need to agree a suitable grant for the Church. DC asked if consideration could be given to helping with the Crib Service which is very popular and very well attended by families in the Parish. DC/JN will ensure request is sent from PCC to the Clerk.

The financial spreadsheet was duly circulated, and it was in accordance with the bank statements. The current bank balance was £5590.61

The following were approved for payment:-

Already Paid;	
Mr Waldron (Lengthsman Work)	£68.75
For Approval;	
Mrs B J Drew	£1196.24
(Clerks Salary 01/04/19 – 31/03/20)	
HMRC (Tax)	£299.00
Mrs B J Drew	£19.25
(Expenses incurred)	
Mr W Waldron	£72.00
(Parish Paths)	
Chemquad Weed Control &	£108.00
Landscaping	
(Parish Paths)	

BD advised VAT reclaim for 18/19 not yet received.

15. To discuss Divisional Funding Application:

BD to complete application form and forward to MH for approval.

16. CALC and Other Meetings:

TG/BD attended meeting on 16th September where topics discussed included Adult Social Care, Parish Council increase of Precepts to take on additional services under Localism and CCTV/Fly tipping in the District.

LJ went to the Worcestershire CALC AGM on 20th November which was very poorly attended. They appointed new representatives, discussed subscriptions and the possibility of making training compulsory.

17. Minutes from Neighboring Parish Councils:

Elmbridge agenda 21st November and Elmley Lovett minutes June 2019 have been received.

18. Correspondence:

The clerk circulated the schedule of correspondence and presented the correspondence to the meeting. Several items had already been discussed and the schedule was duly noted.

19. Agenda items for future meetings:

Budget and Precept
Maintenance of Verges
Emergency Planning – Clerk to contact Rebecca Pritchett.

20: To note the dates of the next meetings:

All at 7:30pm at Rushock Village Hall.

2020:

Thursday, 23rd January, 2020

Thursday, 21st May, 2020

Thursday, 10th September, 2020

Thursday, 26th November, 2020

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed..... (Chairman)

Dated.....