

Minutes of the “Virtual” Meeting of Rushock Parish Council

held on Monday 26th April 2021, 7.30pm via ZOOM

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 Cllr M Hart (MH).

1. **Apologies for Absence:** District Cllrs I Hardiman, L Jones, Rebecca Ruston, West Mercia Police.

2. **Declarations of Councillors Interests:** None

3. **Public Question Time:** None

4. Minutes:

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21st January, 2021 were duly approved and will be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record when “lockdown” measures have been lifted.

5. Progress Reports:

TG reported on meeting attended by Clerk and Chair with Ian Miller on Localism. This does not affect Rushock now as there are no services that the District Council provide that Rushock can take over. Await further information on this in due course.

Derek Killingworth, Chairman Worcestershire CALC at recent CALC meeting discussed the possibility of Council’s going to Unitary which may result in clustering smaller councils.

6. **County Councillor’s Report:** MH reported
Rushock Issues

I am pursuing a junction improvement scheme for Clattercut Lane and the A448 with additional warning signage and slow markings on the road.

I am still liaising with highways regarding the flooding issue and they are liaising with Severn Trent now regarding potential contamination of the water course and asking them to investigate. I am awaiting an update.

I was contacted by a Clattercut Lane resident regarding a manhole cover which is cracked. One along the Lane has been replaced and this one is still deemed safe and will be kept under review.

I have raised the drainage issue at the bottom of Church Bank to highways and this is in hand.

Wyre Forest Issues

WCC highways work on the Churchfields is virtually completed.

As reported previously, the additional funding for the Hoobrook island has now been agreed as part of the budget and if you have driven that way you will see that this work is now clearly underway on this

£3.6 million project and we will see the 3 A road arms be signalised. Further to my March report, work is progressing well.

Strategic Issues County Wide

The County Council has been heavily involved in the response to the Coronavirus pandemic working with our other statutory partners.

Worcestershire has a fantastic website Here2Help which is a community action response to Coronavirus. There is also a dedicated phone number 01905 768053 for those without access to the internet. There is now a Here2Helpbusiness scheme as well. (simply google Here 2 Help Worcestershire and it comes straight up.)

Our household waste sites both remain open and the Worcester Road is still operating a booking system.

Libraries are now open as a result of the changes on 12th April.

Council meetings are still taking place virtually.

We are in purdah now and the County Council elections will take place on 6th May, together with the Police and Crime Commissioner election. Please wear a face mask and take your own pencil to vote. Therefore, please accept my apologies for the meeting on 6th May as I have a job interview!

Councillors discussed the proposed drain survey and it was felt that, out of courtesy, any landowners along the course of the drain should be made aware that the survey may take place. No dates have been given by WCC for the survey so far'.

7. **District Councillor's Report:** MH reported Local Issues

We have been dealing with the usual routine casework, reporting litter and fly tipping on the main A roads and along the country lanes.

We have reported fly tipping in Cakebole Lane recently.

Wyre Forest Issues

WFDC's cabinet has extended the PSPO and you can now walk up to 6 dogs, as opposed to the original 3.

All refuse and recycling services have been severely affected over the last few weeks due to major staff absence at the depot due to a Covid-19 outbreak. Things are improving slowly.

Wyre Forest House is closed to the public. The Progressive Alliance are still considering disposal of the site but are determining how much office space they will need post Covid with the new working from home arrangements.

The Progressive Alliance have indicated they want to reduce the funding that Parish Council's receive from them to undertake grass cutting and litter picking and bin emptying and phase this out completely over the next couple of years on the basis that Parish Council should be precepting for this work accordingly. We have quite a strong view about this!

Council meetings are still operating virtually but things will be coming to an end over the next couple of months as we resume to face to face albeit we had an extraordinary meeting of full council on 21st April to confirm that the AGM on 12th May will be held virtually.

MH advised that regarding Derek Killingworth's comments at the CALC meeting, the white paper has been delayed due to co-vid, it is not a priority and will not happen any time soon and Parish and Town Councils will grow in strength if Unitary happens.

8. Police Report:

Written report circulated – TG queried why the break in at The Dell was not on the report. Clerk to check with Police.

The Parish Council have been asked to provide their top 3 Police Priorities for Rushock. After discussion it was agreed theft from outbuildings, wildlife crime and speeding at both ends of Clattercut Lane. Clerk to advise.

9. To discuss further progress with Biodiversity Project:

DC reported that everything that has been planted is growing. Slightly disappointed with the daffodils but the tulips look wonderful. The two Cherry trees have been planted and this area will be extended with two Pear Trees. Although originally concerned over the severe cutting all are now agreed that much more light has now been let in. There are lots of bluebells and wild garlic. Additional posts are being put on the village green and some cowslips have been planted. Remaining funds will be used for installing posts and possibly expanding bulb planting. The possibility of inviting families to contact the Parish Council detailing projects for their own garden, eg planting, bird box, insect hotel etc and perhaps receiving a small grant, perhaps £10 has been discussed. Clerk to ascertain if this would be allowed. TG urged all to keep an eye when verges are being cut. TJ suggested the possibility of painting the posts white at either end to protect the areas from being cut. This has been done previously in areas. Clerk to ask Paul Green. SD advised the sign will be erected shortly. DC suggested putting reflectors on the posts at the corner of the triangle, this was agreed.

10. Planning:

TG reported on Planning since the last meeting;

21/0092/AG: Proposed agricultural storage building at field at Lunnon Lane. The Parish Council were originally consulted then informed it was for information only.

20/0856/FULL: Callimore Farm. MH confirmed WFDC are awaiting additional Highway Information. It has not yet been determined.

11. Highways:

JN advised nothing to report.

Clerk updated on Lengthsman Scheme. Funding has been confirmed at £1938.58. Timesheets have been revised and now need to be coded and submitted electronically via an excel spreadsheet or pdf word file. This has not been well received as many Lengthsman do not have the necessary IT equipment or skills. This will result in additional work for the Clerk. It was agreed to include a small Admin charge towards the end of the financial year which can be recorded in the paperwork.

12. Footpaths:

TG reported that the Parish Paths Application has been received and will be completed and forwarded by the Clerk.

13. Finance:

The financial spreadsheet was duly circulated and it was in accordance with the bank statements. The bank balance as at 31st March 2021 was £5944.92.

The following were approved for payment:-

<u>Already Paid:</u>	
Mrs B J Drew (Cherry Trees – Primrose)	£56.97
Mrs B J Drew (Expenses to 31st March 2021)	£83.85
Print Serve (End of Year Submissions)	£25.00
<u>To Pay:</u>	
Worcestershire CALC (Annual Subscription)	£103.40
D M Payroll (Internal Audit)	£55.00
ICO Fee (by DD)	£35.00

14. Rushock Village Hall:

TJ reported that a new front door is imminent, and the only outstanding work is to re paint the kitchen. TG asked if there was any progress on the final legal documents relating to the hall. MH reported that unfortunately there had still been no contact from Julian Field at Thursfields Solicitors, he will chase again.

15. Correspondence:

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

16. Agenda items for future meetings: Biodiversity Project.

17. To note the dates of the next meetings:

Thursday, 9th September 2021, 7.30pm, Rushock Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10pm

Signed..... (Chairman)

Dated.....