

Minutes of the Meeting of Rushock Parish Council

held on Thursday 9th September 2021, 7.30pm, Rushock Village Hall

Present:

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

Also Present were:

The clerk Mrs. B J Drew (BD), District Cllr Mrs L Jones (LJ) and Parish Lengthsman Mr Bill Waldron (BW).

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr. J Nicholls due to holiday, Cllr I Hardiman (District Councillor), Cllr M Hart (District/County Councillor) and West Mercia Police.
2. **Declarations of Councillors Interests:** None
3. **Public Question Time:** None
4. **Minutes:**
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 26th April and Extra-Ordinary Meeting held on 4th August, 2021 were duly approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.
5. **Progress Reports:**
Localism Funding - Clerk gave an update following meeting held on 7th September between Parish Councils and Ian Miller, Chief Executive Wyre Forest District Council. Wyre Forest are proposing a phased reduction in financial support to Parish Councils who undertake Bin Emptying/Litter Picking and/or Grass Cutting on behalf of the District Council with no funding after the end of the current contract. This does not affect Rushock Parish Council but does affect many of our neighbouring parishes.
6. **County Councillor's Report:** *Report previously circulated*

As this is my first report since the May County Council elections firstly let me say I am delighted to have been re-elected for a further 4-year term and will do all I can to assist you on County Council matters.

Rushock Issues

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

I am advised the drainage issue at the bottom of Church Bank to highways has been resolved.

Elmbridge Lane should be open with its junction of Clattercut Lane. It appears the road closure signs were left up in error! There has been further Severn Trent work on hydrants along the lane since, but none that needed or indeed had an approved road closure.

I am aware of verge cutting issues in Lunnon Lane and the poor quality of the cutting. I have been in liaison with a local resident about this and am pressing officers at WCC highways in respect of this unacceptable quality of service.

Wyre Forest Issues

WCC highways work on the Churchfields is virtually completed.

As reported previously, the additional funding for the Hoobrook island has 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. If you drive along this location you will see that work has progressed really well and we are in the last month or so of work. New lanes are going in and the traffic lights are installed albeit of course not operational yet.

Strategic Issues County Wide

I started by saying I was delighted to have been re-elected.

As you will be aware, elections took place across Worcestershire on Thursday 6th May for all 57 Divisions. The make up of the new Council is the Conservatives have 45 seats, up from 40 in 2017, Labour have 3 seats, down from 10 in 2017, the Liberal Democrats have 4 seats, up 1 from 2017, the Greens have 3 seats, up 1 from 2017, the Independents have 2 seats, up 1 from 2017 and Health Concern lost their 1 seat.

Locally in Wyre Forest the Conservatives held the 8 seats they already had and won the remaining 2, one from the Liberal Democrats (Cllr. Fran Oborski) and one from the Independents (Cllr. Mary Rayner).

I have been re-appointed as Cabinet Member for Education.

7. **District Councillor's Report:** *Report previously circulated* Cllr Mrs Lisa Jones 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.

Callimore Farm Planning Application - The application has been received by the District Council and is still to be determined. We will update you when we have been informed of the decision.

We had a fabulous time catching up with residents at the village church fundraiser afternoon, we were very pleased it was a huge success and being part of the event.

Lisa attended Sylvie's Art Exhibition at her house, Sylvie is hugely talented and Lisa thoroughly enjoyed meeting her and viewing her work.

Wyre Forest Issues

Wyre Forest House is still closed to the public as is the Green Street Hub save for dealing with housing and homelessness applications.

Green Street have again been experiencing staff shortages due to COVID Isolation and illness and have had limited operatives working in the depot. They have worked incredibly hard to continue with bin emptying and general tasks including grass cutting, litter picking and collecting fly tipping from the lanes.

Localism – We are extremely concerned that our Parish Councils are being asked to take on litter picking and parish bin emptying contracts without being given grants to assist with the additional financial expenditure. We will continue to campaign on behalf of our residents and Parish Councils on this matter.

District Council committee meetings are now face to face, the first Planning Committee Meeting was held in August which Marcus and Lisa sit on.

Cllr Helen Dyke who is part of the Progressive Alliance is the new Leader of the District Council and Cllr Graham Ballenger is the Deputy Leader. Cllr John Aston is the new Leader of the Council and Cllr Peter Dyke is the Deputy Chairman.

At full council, members voted on the revised management structure, the timetable for implementation as well as details of further reviews which will be taking place. The Chief Executive is continuing to be the head of paid services and head up the management team.

Members attended a special forum with the Corporate Director for Economic Prosperity and Place regarding an update on the Levelling up Fund and the Community Renewal Fund for Kidderminster Town Centre, he also updated members on income generation proposals.

A planning application has been submitted for the complete re-development of the former Magistrates Court in Kidderminster. It will transform the building into a cultural and creative hub which would create performance and production spaces, this has been made possible through the future high streets fund.

We are extremely pleased that the Environmental Enforcement Team have a new Crime Not to Care Fly Tipping campaign which is to assist residents avoid accidentally passing their waste to rogue traders and contributing to fly tipping. We hope that this campaign will educate residents and ensure that checks are made to ensure rubbish is disposed of legally.

The Neighbourhood Watch Team have launched a new Protect your Dog from theft campaign with the increase of recent dog thefts, more information on the campaign can be found on www.ourwatch.org.uk/protectyourpooch .

We recommend that residents sign up to West Mercia Police's Neighbourhood Matters for neighbourhood watch and local police alerts. The link to register is www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk. It is very quick and easy and has a huge amount of information.

There is a new scheme from our local libraries to tackle loneliness which include, Library Service at Home where books are picked and delivered to residents at their home, Connect Bubbles which are small chat groups using zoom and Reading Friends which are one to one calls for residents who would prefer to chat over the telephone. Residents can sign up to this fantastic service by emailing ReadingFriends@worcestershire.gov.uk or visiting www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ReadingFriends or by telephoning 01905 822722.

8. Police Report: *Report previously circulated*

Theft – Clattercut Lane – Police ref 115_I_29062021 – Sometime overnight an Ifor Williams Trailer, 14ft, Triple Axel has been stolen from a yard in this location. The trailer was not attached to a vehicle at the time. Offenders have caused damage to a locked gate, and have taken a route across two fields, and driven through a fence.

Officers have also done speed enforcement in various locations across all our beats over the past month. The below areas were included with other areas that were targeted, and the results are listed below of those issued Traffic Offence Reports (TOR) across the East & North areas

IN EXCESS OF SPEED LIMIT

Castle Road, Cookley - x 1
A449 Wolverhampton Road – x 2
A456 Birmingham Road – x 1
A449 Chester Road South – x 1
A456 Hodge Hill – x 2
Stanklyn Lane – x 10
Canterbury Road x 0
Hoo Road x 3

Speed enforcement will continue to be on our agenda over the coming months

Policing Priorities – It was agreed to keep these as Speeding, Thefts (Outbuildings) and Wildlife Crime.

Safer West Mercia Plan – Clerk and Chairman to complete.

Smart water signage - No further communication - Clerk to chase.

9. To discuss further progress with Biodiversity Project:

SD reported that residents seem happy the area by the apple trees has now been cut. DC felt the cutting of the triangle was too early – TG advised it was done at end of July. It was agreed it is difficult to get the balance right with cutting to avoid looking untidy but encouraging wildlife.

RH will chase posts and SD will organise sign.

It was agreed to purchase more bulbs, perhaps native daffodils, tulips, and bluebells, also 3 Pear Trees. TG advised the Biodiversity Group will meet to organise this.

Clerk to check whether the Parish Council can give a small grant to families, eg £10.00 who undertake projects in their own gardens such as bird boxes, insect hotels, planting etc.

10. Planning:

TG reported on Planning since the last meeting;

21/0525/FULL 20.05.2021	Land off Clattercut Lane, Rushock: Agricultural access track
21/0563/HOU 03.06.2021	Dormers Close, Church Lane, Rushock: Single storey infill extension to Rear
20/0856/FULL 26.07.2021 REVISED	Land at Callimore Farm, Droitwich Road, Rushock: Change of use of land for the storage of agricultural machinery, use of agricultural buildings for storage and retention of commercial buildings for offices
21/0678/HOU 17.08.2021	Land at Upper Hyde, Rushock: Proposed new orangery to replace existing on site
21/0855/FUL 31.08.2021	Leylands Cottage, Clattercut Lane, Rushock: Erection of Agricultural Building

Clerk had circulated the decision notice received earlier today on 20/0856/Full, Callimore Farm which was Recommend Refusal.

11. Highways:

BW has been busy in the Parish.

Verge cutting was very early this year – TG to raise with MH.

The Grit Bin needs filling, RH to arrange.

TG advised of residents, Sue and John Hunt of Glenwood, Clattercut Lane who have been regularly litterpicking – Clerk to send letter of thanks.

TJ expressed concern over the behaviour of cyclists riding locally along the lanes, some often being very rude and aggressive. TG queried whether there are any warning signs available.

12. Footpaths:

TG advised that we have been asked to submit Parish Paths Invoices by 30th September if possible.

TJ will cut behind Church, Clerk to advise of amounts payable.

13. Finance:

The financial spreadsheet was duly circulated and it was in accordance with the bank statements. The bank balance as at was £7165.62

The following were unanimously approved for payment:-

Already Paid;

Zurich Municipal (Insurance)	£257.60
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Rushock Village Hall (Hire of Hall for Mtgs 9th Sept/25th Nov 2021)	£60.00
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Mr W Waldron (Lengthsman Work June 21)	£37.50
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Mr T Green (Copy of Death Certificate / Land Registry Fee)	£17.00
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P R Haskell (Planting of 2 trees - Lunnon Lane)	£28.00
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To Pay;

Mrs B J Drew (Expenses to 31st August 2021)	£70.70
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Mr W Waldron (Lengthsman Work August 21)	£90.00
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TG enquired of any village projects. SD mentioned perhaps a memorial bench, possibly on the triangle. TJ also suggested by Orchard, Lunnon Lane or by circle garden by village hall. SD to investigate.

14. Rushock Village Hall:

TG stated how nice it was to be back in the village hall. The recent fundraiser went extremely well, and the first coffee morning was very well attended. TJ advised the committee are organising a Macmillan Coffee morning, also the re-introduction of pub nights.

TG reported that there is still one outstanding Trustee Signature to be obtained on the Village Hall documentation. It was agreed Clerk write again, offering a meeting to discuss this especially if there are any issues with the documentation. If this fails, the Council will need to seek legal advice to consider next steps. Obviously this is not the preferred option as it would result in further legal costs which would have to be met by the Parish Council and ultimately the residents of the Parish.

DC suggested details of Covid 19 grant be sent Village Hall committee – Clerk will forward information.

15. Grit

RH will fill the grit bin. TG asked for any further potential sites for bins to be considered.

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: Grit Bins / Projects / Biodiversity

17. To note the date of the next meetings:

Thursday, 25th November 2021, 7.30pm, Rushock Village Hall.

Dates for 2022 meetings were discussed and the following suggested;

- Thursday 20th January 2022
- Thursday 19th May 2022
- Thursday 8th September 2022
- Thursday 24th November 2022

Clerk to check availability with Village Hall and confirm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed..... (Chairman)

Dated.....