

**A Virtual Meeting (via email & Teams) of Ripple Parish Council
to be held on Monday, 18th January 2021 at 7.00pm
(Email responses required by 18th January at 5.00pm)
in order to consider the following business:**

Public Question Time:

In normal circumstances from 7.00pm residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman, before the start of the Parish Council Meeting. This will be a virtual meeting as a result of the COVID-19 situation and any Public Questions are to be submitted 5 days in advance of the meeting in writing or by email to the clerk for the Chairman's consideration.

Minutes

Participants: Cllrs Aldridge, Armitt, Cozens, Davis, Jones, Peters.

County Cllr Middlebrough & District Cllr Owenson

- 1 Apologies - To receive apologies and to approve reasons for absence.
Cllr Baum & Mrs V Portch – Clerk (without broadband). Cllr Baum submitted a full written response to the agenda, raising a number of points and questions which were considered during the meeting.
- 2 Declarations of Interest: Cllr Aldridge
 - a. To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
 - b. To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.

Councillors who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or any Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of paragraph 12(4) (b) of the Code of Conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items.

None
- 3 Confirmation of co-option and welcome to New Councillors: All
Confirmation of co-option of Cllr Clare Cozens & Cllr Mark Peters was unanimously agreed.
Proposed: Cllr Armitt Seconded: Cllr Jones
- 4 Minutes - Approval of the minutes of the Virtual Meeting held on 14th December 2020 Cllr Aldridge
including minor adjustments circulated by Cllr Jones. To be signed by the Chairman at the next appropriate meeting.
Proposed: Cllr Armitt Seconded: Cllr Davis
- 5 To receive report from District Councillor Cllr Owenson
A verbal update was given by Cllr Owenson. This included the information that progress is being made towards a solution to save the Malvern Hills College building as an educational establishment. With regard to a question tabled by Cllr Baum, regarding unaddressed 'snagging issues' on the Taylor Wimpey development, Cllr Owenson felt it was best to address these on a case-by-case basis. Any residents requiring support regarding outstanding snagging issues should be advised to contact Cllr Owenson directly.
- 6 To receive report from County Councillor Cllr Middlebrough
circulated in advance of the meeting: Cllr Middlebrough added further information that Cabinet is proposing a 1.5% Council Tax increase and that the WCC Internal Gold Meeting briefings are currently being held twice weekly. He requested that the briefing notes be circulated to all councillors.
- 7 Progress reports from:
Clerk: General administration of correspondence emails and post. Uploading of documents to WCC website with assistance of Cllr Jones. Monitoring and conveying various agencies COVID information. Follow up on on-going matters and exploring

potential flood fund opportunities. Communication with WCC Highways regarding on-going issues of Ryall Road verge infringement – on-going, grit bin relocation in Uckinghall – clerk advised by WCC to ask a local farmer to re-locate the bin WCC do not have resources. Further letter sent to WCC regarding the Section 106 payments outstanding from Taylor Wimpey. Provision of documentation for co-option of new councillors. Discussions with ISP regarding updating additional web storage and additional email – current facility only permits 10 email addresses and currently RPC has issued 9. A requirement for additional storage space for contents of clerks mailbox also required. Meeting with WCC Highways, David Harrison and operatives regarding Uckinghall road flooding and drainage issues. Discussion with MHDC regarding the delivery of sandbags to Ripple Parish Hall rather than The Cross and outside Thoulds Barn in Uckinghall. Preparation of meeting arrangements for this meeting and liaison with the Parish Hall Committee. Communication with WCC regarding Footpaths Officer and discussion with Brian Goddard. Discussions with Lengthsman regarding verge outside The Bungalow and other areas in need of attention.

Management: Setting of the agenda for this meeting. Review of minutes of last meeting. Discussions regarding Flood Grant. Review and updating of draft budget for 2021/22.

Finance: Preparation of updated budget analysis for 2021/22 and creation of calculations for precept setting for 2021/22. Precept to be agreed at this meeting by Councillors. Ledger updated and cheque for The Bridge Magazine distributed. Liaison with VAT office regarding the outstanding refund. Advised it will be paid within the next 30 days, COVID and Brexit challenges have delayed their process. Claim confirmed as on the system. (Subsequently received)

Urgent Decisions: None.

Staff and Training: Preparation/circulation of CALC training schedule.

Planning: Councillors are requested to review applications/documents online please. Due to clerks lack of internet access Cllr Jones will provide details of current and on-going planning matters.

Cheques for Approval:-

Chq No	Payee	Amount	Purpose
1298	Smartcut Ltd	£428.40	Grasscutting – 13/10/20 final cut 2020
1299	Ben Perry	£1,840.00	Lengthsman – May – Oct 2020
1300	Upton Glazing	£298.36	Naunton Bus Shelter Repair
	Total	£2,566.76	

These payments were approved – Proposed: Cllr Davis Seconded: Cllr Jones

8 Bow Lane Gravel Extraction Cllr Jones

Update previously circulated: Cllr Jones provided background information for the new councillors.

9 A38/A4104 Roundabout Update Cllr Jones

Cllr Middlebrough commented that the previously reported archaeological finds had put back the hearing for the planning application, which had previously been scheduled for December. The new date is 2nd February, with a view to work commencing in March. He addressed questions raised by Cllr Baum and Cllr Armitt regarding the impact on Ryall Rd residents, suggesting a possible 20 mph speed limit might be something we should push for. However, speed limits of this type will not be considered until the planning application has been passed. At that point RPC should contact Cllr Middlebrough to assist us in making a case for traffic calming measures during the construction period.

- 10 Parish Enhancements & Flood Grant All
 Cllr Middlebrough clarified the situation regarding the flood grant money. RPC are now able to bid for up to £1,500 rather than the previously issued figure of £500. UFAG had suggested the purchase of a community diesel pump. However, a local resident who has a degree of technical expertise, had suggested to the Chairman that this would now be surplus to requirements, following the installation of a wider diameter drainage pipe. Councillors had also voiced concerns about ownership, storage, maintenance and health and safety issues. A more recent suggestion, also put forward is for an improved hard standing area for Environmental Agency vehicles attending the Uckinghall floodgate. The Clerk, an Uckinghall resident, has also suggested an adjacent, watertight, storage unit for sandbag storage be provided. Some consideration was also given to whether RPC should commission someone from the Environment Agency to draft a bespoke Flood Action Plan – separate from our existing all-embracing Emergency Action Plan. Cllr Middlebrough indicated that these may be reasonable things for RPC to bid for and that we should look into getting some quotes. Cllr Jones also raised the question as to whether some of the £1500 might be paid to RPC and ring fenced for future flood damage/prevention expenditure in the Parish. Cllr Middlebrough suggested that RPC present him with a written submission of suggestions, for his consideration. Cllrs Aldridge and Jones to action.
- 11 Parish Trees Policy Review Cllr Jones
 Review approved.
 Proposed: by Cllr Peters Seconded: Cllr Cozens.
 Some concerns had been raised by Cllr Baum as to whether RPC councillors, as lay-persons, were qualified to carry out visual inspections of trees in the parish, and whether by doing so might lay RPC open to legal action if a subsequent tree related accident occurred. Cllrs Armitt and Aldridge felt the wording of the policy was such that by carrying out visual tree inspections councillors would not be giving any assurances that trees in our care were in a safe condition but merely seeking to be proactive in identifying any that appeared insecure and reporting them to a specialist tree surgeon for professional advice.
 Cllr Peters offered to draw on his professional expertise and consider RPCs insurance cover in respect to this. Clerk requested to forward appropriate documentation to Cllr Peters.
- 12 Grants Awarding Policy Review Cllr Aldridge
 Review approved – including minor additions proposed by Cllr Peters and circulated ahead of the meeting.
 Proposed: Cllr Armitt Seconded: Cllr Davis.
 Cllr Aldridge had received, delivered by hand, a completed application for £500 from St Mary’s Churchwarden - towards urgent re-roofing. There was considerable debate regarding the grey area of RPC funding either the maintenance of an open churchyard and or the upkeep of an historical building of architectural importance, belonging to the Church of England. It was decided that the application be put on hold while Cllr Jones investigates further the legalities of the situation. It was also agreed that Cllr Aldridge inform the Churchwarden that RPC requires more time to gather advice from CALC before making a final decision on the grant application. (CALC directive circulated by the Clerk)
- 13 Winter Newsletter All
 The minor typos fed back to Cllr Aldridge had been amended and the 2021/22 Budget figures will be adjusted to take account of tonight’s agreed changes. It was agreed that the Newsletter be printed and distributed by the 1st week of February.
- 14 Approval of Precept 2021/2022 Cllr Aldridge
 5% increase in Precept approved. A request to MHDC for a precept sum for 2021/22 of £22,015.00. (2020/2021 precept figure £20,966.20).
 Proposed: Cllr Armitt Seconded: Cllr Peters.

Alterations to the Budget Allocation were agreed as follows: The heading 'Churchyard Maintenance' be removed. The heading 'Grants/Donations' be added with an allocation of £600. 'Other Expenses' be separately itemised as follows: 'Website - £1000', 'Admin Training - £1000', 'Clerk's Equipment - £1000'.

Proposed: Cllr Jones Seconded: Cllr Baum.

15 AOB: Councillor comments and items for next agenda

All

None

Signed:-

To be signed when COVID restrictions permit

Phil Aldridge – Chairman

Ripple Parish Council

Approved by: Cllr Peters Seconded by: Cllr Armitt

Date of Next Meeting – 1st March 2021