

RIPPLE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Minutes of the Annual Meeting held 28 May 2021 at Ripple Parish Hall

Present: Cllr. M. Peters (Chairman), Cllrs R. Jones, C. Cozens, K. Weyman, M. Davis, M. Baum and T. Armitt, C. Cllr M Allen (left at 19:33), D. Cllr J Owenson

Attendees: Clerk/RFO M Hinde, and 3 members of the public

28.05.21.1 Introduction and welcome by the Chairman

Cllr. Peters opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance

28.05.21.2 To confirm and agree Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 17 May 2019

Proposed by Cllr Weyman

Seconded by Cllr Armitt

Council **APPROVED** the minutes from the meeting held 17th May 2019 and they were signed by Cllr Peters

28.05.21.3 Chairman's Report

Cllr Peters thanked Phil Aldridge for all his hardwork on the council.
Cllr Peters read out the report left by Phil Aldridge as per appendix 1

28.05.21.4 Introduction of Martin Allen, Councillor for Worcestershire County Council.

Cllr Allen advised that he had reviewed the following points:

Speeding – Cllr Allen has spoken to several officers but needs to speak to a specific officer who was unavailable. A speeding review linked to the new roundabout has been organised and it may have to wait until then to be addressed.

Saplings on A4104– Cllr Allen currently waiting to hear from the officer who originally controlled the project so the paperwork can be reviewed. Currently working on an alternative and will share once it has been discussed in a meeting with the chairman and clerk next week.

Buses – The county council must carry out a strategic bus review by October 2021 and implement a bus strategy. If the bus strategy does not increase the number of buses Cllr Allen will explore alternative options and share with the chairman. Buses will return to pre covid services from 21st June or when lockdown measures are eased.

28.05.21.5 Ripple Parish Council-Update on Finances

Cllr Peters shared details of council finances as per Appendix 2

28.05.21.6 Report on Malvern Hills District Council from Councillor Jeremy Owenson.

Cllr Owenson advised that Malvern Hills District Council has put in a plan that they want to build houses somewhere. The SWDP goes into how the houses should look and traveller policy so it is strongly advised that the parish council has their say.

Cllr Owenson advised there will be a boundary review on MHDC boarders. The number of councils will be reduced from 38-31. This will reduce the number of councillors which will result in the reworking of wards to ensure everybody is represented. From a Ripple perspective the council should consider the appropriate steps for the council such as merging with Upton or moving the boundary. Proposals for the new council will come out in late summer and go to consultation in the Autumn. New boundaries will be complete by the May 2022 elections.

Government has advised a large investment in shovel ready green projects. Ripple should consider things that would facilitate a lived environment such as looking at community forests to break up development land. The council should also think about shovel ready opportunities they can invest in.

C. Cllr Allen left at 19:33

28.05.21.7 Report on Planning issues in Parish

Cllr Jones provided a report on planning as per Appendix 3

28.05.21.8 Invitation to electors to raise any matters of interest

Member of the Public 1 – Ferry Lane has changed usage recently and has seen an increased amount of traffic to access Uckinghall Pool Car Park and an increased amount of dog walkers using the lane. The resident would like to know who is responsible for maintaining the road as temporary patching by the residents is not lasting.

Cllr Peters advised the council would take this away to look at.

Member of the Public 2 – Raised 2 points:

- 1) Requested the council push to see archaeological reports on the new roundabout.
- 2) Advised that that there are usually a lot more people at the Parish meeting. The buffet provided by the WI usually helps raise money for church yard maintenance. During covid there have been no donations to the church yard.

Cllrs Peters and Jones advised that they reviewed this last year and have been advised that the council can not legally give funds to the church. They advised they would consider parish events to raise funds for the church and this would be added to the agenda of the next meeting of the council.

28.05.21.9 Any other business

No other business was raised

Meeting Closed – 20:17

DRAFT

Appendix 1

Chairman's Annual Report: May 2020 to May 2021

The Chairman's Annual Report traditionally forms part of the public Ripple Annual Parish Meeting, which follows the Annual General Meeting, held in May of each year.

The 2020 public Annual Parish Meeting was cancelled due to the first Covid national lockdown. The postponed AGM was belatedly held on 24th August 2020.

The 2021 Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled for Friday May 28th but with public attendance necessarily restricted due to the social distancing measures that remain in place at Ripple Parish Hall.

Local Elections

Worcestershire County Council elections were held on 6th May 2021. RPC looks forward to working with Martin Allen, the newly elected councillor for our area (Croome Division). Martin replaces Paul Middlebrough. Many thanks are due to Paul for his work on behalf of Ripple Parish residents and support for the Parish Council during his four-year term of office.

Parish Council Personnel

- Lengthsman: Ben Perry was appointed and commenced his duties in Spring 2020.
- Chairman of RPC: My re-election for a second term was confirmed at the first face to face meeting after lockdown, held on 27th July 2020.
- Vice Chairman: Councillor Robin Jones' re-election was similarly confirmed on 27th July 2020.
- Co-opted Councillors: We are pleased to welcome Councillors Clare Cozens and Mark Peters, who were officially co-opted to RPC at the virtual meeting held on 18th January 2021. This meant that for first time in many years RPC had its full complement of nine councillors.
- Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer: Victoria Portch resigned her position as Parish Clerk with effect from Monday 5th April 2021. She had been in post for six years. We would like to thank Vicky for her work on behalf of the council over that period. Michelle Hinde was appointed as Parish Clerk with effect from Monday 1st May 2021. Shelley retains the same contact details as the outgoing clerk. Email : clerk@rpcworcs.co.uk / Mobile : 07498 076125.

Coronavirus Response

The COVID-19 restrictions over the last year have impacted on the way RPC has been able to conduct its business. However, we managed to hold five face to face meetings, five virtual meetings, and one virtual extraordinary meeting.

At the beginning of the Coronavirus outbreak RPC quickly took up the invitation to assist with the 'Stay Connected' scheme, jointly run by Upton Upon Severn Town Council and Upton Baptist Church. This proved to be an invaluable source of practical support for local residents with many volunteers in the parish pulling together to deliver food parcels and prescriptions. Early contact was also made

with the Beechwood Care Home in Ryall, who assured us that they were well resourced and coping well.

Many thanks are due to numerous individuals across Ripple Parish who ensured, to the best of our knowledge, that nobody was left without support during this most difficult of years.

Communications

All RPC meetings begin with Public Question Time. This has remained the case throughout the year despite residents being unable to attend face to face meetings. Questions have been invited via email and links were made available, on request, to residents who wished to attend recent virtual meetings.

All residents have received three newsletter updates delivered through their letterboxes, in May 2020, October 2020, and February 2021.

The official website is updated regularly and the Facebook Page @RPC2017 continues to attract in the region of 300 plus regular followers. By sharing to and from other local Facebook groups certain posts are seen by in excess of a thousand local people. This is still the most effective way to find and share up to the minute Parish news.

As an alternative to social media the RPC noticeboards provide a reliable source of information and we do try to ensure all official notices are displayed in as large a font as the space available allows.

The communications brief, including day to day administration of RPC's social media presence, has recently been taken on by Councillor Claire Cozens: clarecozens@rpcworcs.co.uk.

RPC Finances

RPC's precept for the 2021/2022 financial year is £22,015.00, a 5% increase from the £20,966.20 that we received in the last (2020/2021) financial year. The audited accounts will be posted on the website and copies made available at the RPC Annual Parish Meeting.

Planning

There are no new major applications for large housing developments within the parish.

Approved outline planning permission remains in place for 70 houses on land north east of Upton Marina. An extraordinary meeting was held on 17th March to consider a recently amended application regarding access to the development. Minutes of the meeting can be accessed on RPC's website: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/MyParish RPC's recommendations have been submitted. A decision from the local planning authority is still pending.

Following approved planning permission, construction has commenced on a small development of six houses, off the Ryall Court Lane.

No further sites for development within the parish have, as yet, been included in the recently reviewed South Worcestershire Development Plan.

Work is very shortly, due to commence, on a four- arm roundabout at the A38/A4104 junction. RPC has been supportive of this project and is represented on the associated Community Liaison Group where we are lobbying for the following additional measures to be included in or subsequent to the scheme:

- A reduction in speed limits along the A38 and A4104 approaches to the roundabout

- A pedestrian crossing point on the A4104 near to the layby
- Traffic calming measures on the Ryall Road to discourage its use as a cut through
- The creation of a cycle from the roundabout to Upton.

Decision on a cross-border application by Moreton Cullimore, to both Worcestershire and Gloucestershire County Councils, for mineral extraction at Bow Farm is still pending. The application was subject to a second Regulation 25 request seeking clarification on a number of issues relating mainly to environmental issues. This has now been provided. Residents and organisations who responded at the initial planning consultation stage have been reconsulted. RPC listened closely to the concerns raised by community group REACT (Ripple Extraction Community Team) prior to submitting its response.

Cemex have applied to extend gravel extraction at the Ryall North Quarry, off Ryall's Court Lane, Holly Green. The application includes restoration plans to the Fish Meadow site which include a rowing lake, suitable as a World Rowing (FISA) venue. It is anticipated the project will take two years with a further 12 months to complete restoration. RPC agrees in principle with the proposals but have raised issues for consideration regarding the impact on Holly Green residents during construction and long-term viability of the rowing lake with regard to its management and upkeep. Assurances are being sought that the restored site will remain accessible to all members of the local community, and regarding the suitable relocation of future Upton music festivals.

Residents should be aware of the government bill, intended to shake up the planning system, which is about to begin its progress through parliament. It promises to have an enormous impact on future planning across SW Worcestershire and within our parish. In a nutshell, local councils will be required to designate, through public consultation, a number of, 'growth', 'renewal', and 'protected' zones within which 'permission in principle' will be granted. Once the reforms become law, and are introduced, local councils such as ourselves will have no further say on developments that are put forward in their area.

Vehicle Speeding in the Parish

Speeding continues to be a significant issue, causing concern to residents, across the parish and particularly along the Ryall Road. Since their return to action, following the latest lockdown, Speedwatch volunteers have again clocked vehicles regularly exceeding the 30mph speed limit. It is hoped that increased traffic flow following the completion of the A38/A4104 roundabout will dissuade motorists from using the 'access only' designated Ryall Road as a cut through. We are also encouraged that the newly elected county councillor has stated, as a priority, his intention to try and improve the situation.

Working with Other Agencies and Groups

RPC is represented on a number of local committees:

- Upton Villages Together (UVT) – Upton Library. Current representatives: Cllrs Keith Wayman and Roger Sutton.
- Upton Town Partnership – current representatives: Cllr Roger Sutton and the RPC Chairman
- CEMEX Liaison Group – current representatives: Cllr Robin Jones and the Parish Clerk
- A38/A4104 Roundabout Community Liaison Group – current representative Cllr Marian Baum

RPC also seeks to actively engage with a number of community support groups, listening to their concerns and providing support where possible.

These currently include:

- REACT (Ripple Extraction Community Team) a voice for residents regarding local gravel extraction schemes
- UFAG (Uckinghall Flood Action Group) a support group representing those Uckinghall residents most at threat from extreme flooding
- Ripple, Uckinghall, & Naunton Community Broadband Project
- Friends of St Mary's Ripple – a non-denominational group established to raise funds to repair, refurbish and maintain the Parish church.

Footpaths

We are currently re-assessing the role of parish footpath officer, which due to the extensive area of the parish may be shared between our current footpath officer Brian Goddard and Cllr Roger Sutton who has also volunteered. It is the RPC footpath officer's role to monitor the condition of local footpaths, and liaise with local landowners and the County Footpaths Officer regarding issues that need attending to.

With increased use of the local footpaths during Lockdown we have been made aware of a number of situations regarding restricted access and stile maintenance which have been passed on to the County Footpaths Officer for further investigation and action.

Litter & Dog Fouling

Throughout lockdown there has been a noticeable increase in littering (particularly discarded face masks and plastic gloves) and in the number of fly tipping incidents. Dog fouling also continues to be a concern, especially the number of discarded, used poop bags littering the parish.

Fly-tipping incidents should be reported to malvern hills.gov.uk, who are usually very responsive.

RPC has recently undertaken to purchase additional or replacement litterbins to be located around the parish. We are currently liaising with MHDC regarding bin locations and to seek approval for refuse emptying. Work is ongoing on this project.

Tree Maintenance

Following a recent audit to help clarify which trees, in public spaces around the parish, RPC is actually responsible for, a policy has been produced regarding agreed procedures for the monitoring their condition and carrying out necessary maintenance.

Ryall Recreation Ground

RPC has plans to gradually improve this area as a facility for residents, but it is dependent upon raising sufficient funds. A start has been made by completely replacing the damaged perimeter fencing in order to secure the area above the dangerously steep slope to the adjacent footpath.

Chairman's Thanks and Farewell

This will be my final Chairman's Report. After five and half years as a councillor, and the last two as Chairman, I am standing down.

Ripple Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting 28th May 2021

Page 7 of

11

It has been a challenging but largely enjoyable experience, during which I have gained a far greater appreciation of the often-unseen work that goes on at parish council level. I hope that my contributions, particularly with regard to making RPC more communicative with and responsive to its residents, have been helpful.

I would like to thank councillor colleagues and parish clerks, past and present, for their, much appreciated, support, and all of you residents who actively engage with RPC, keeping us on our toes and ensuring that despite the annoying constraints and regular frustrations local democracy continues to be alive and well.

All the very best for the future.

Phil Aldridge

Chairman – Ripple Parish Council

DRAFT

Appendix 2

Ripple Parish Council Financial Statement For the Year Ended 31 March 2021 Opening Balance B/F

	2021	2020	2019	2018	
Opening Funds	14,446.66	13,760.42	16,217.64	12,624.22	
INCOME					
Precept	20,966.20	19,060.18	17,327.44	16,502.32	
Deposit Interest	2.77	5.76	5.73	4.65	
Lengthsman Scheme	-	-	-	1,791.00	
Grants	-	500.00	415.00	13,700.46	
Donations	-	189.61	228.63	236.58	
Grass Cutting	3,345.00	1,299.00	2,400.00	2,770.85	
Other Income (Vat Recovered)	2,540.93	-	-	300.00	
Total Income	26,854.90	21,054.55	20,376.80	35,305.86	
EXPENDITURE					
Subscriptions	1,013.98	1,044.85	881.76	804.10	
Newsletter	245.00	1,918.60	1,479.00	1,131.00	* Funds awaited
Donations	-	70.00	108.50	280.00	* VAT Refund
Insurance	583.86	583.86	574.67	535.07	* RPC WORCS Domain Hosting & Email
Grass Cutting/Trees	5,569.20	7,740.00	7,362.00	5,685.60	
Lengthsman	2,400.00	900.00	2,223.00	2,028.00	
Chairmans Allowance	-	-	-	25.99	
Prof Fees/ Audit	576.00	636.00	1,499.20	120.00	
Clerks Expenses	-	-	468.85	404.31	
Clerks Wages	6,472.08	6,458.41	6,091.08	5,874.12	
Annual Public Meeting	-	862.00	1,109.00	632.00	
Fixed Assets	-	-	-	14,132.25	
Hall Hire	224.00	24.00	536.00	60.00	
Repairs	298.36	233.64	138.69	-	
Vehicle Activated Sign	-	-	192.00	-	
Website	124.88	96.00	170.27	-	
11,035.28 Total Expenditure	17,507.36	20,567.36	22,834.02	31,712.44	
Closing Balance C/F	23,794.20	14,446.66	13,760.42	16,217.64	

Represented by

Appendix 3

2021 Annual Public Report-Planning

Since April 2020 around 40 planning consultations have been received by RPC over a range of planning issues from general house improvements to Mineral Extraction sites.

Essentially there have been no plans for any major housing Developments within the Parish and none are designated within the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review. Having said that MHDC are being challenged on whether they have the required 5 Year Housing supply going forward, so we will probably face a challenge on further development within the Parish.

In respect of Mineral Extraction Sites.

Cemex Ryall North.

WCC are still seeking further information from the applicant.

As the competent authority WCC commissioned a **Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)** which concluded that a **Appropriate Assessment (AA)** should be carried out.

The Appropriate Assessment has concluded that with mitigation there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the **Severn Estuary Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation/Ramsar Site**

WCC are consulting Natural England and the Environment Agency on this assessment.

Cullimore, Bow Lane.

The formal Consultations have now closed, but MHDC and TBC have asked for more time to respond.

When received WCC & GCC will make a joint decision whether they have enough information to proceed. The earliest date would be 6th July.

As with Cemex North A Habitat Regulations Assessment and Appropriate Assessment have been carried out to consider the effects of the Severn Estuary Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation/Ramsar Site, and Natural England have now confirmed they have no objections to the contents.

Emerging Worcestershire County Council Local Minerals Plan.

As far as RPC are aware this plan is still under Government Inspection. It defines the Parish of Ripple within The Lower Severn Strategic Corridor with potential for further mineral extraction.

It will be followed by a site allocation plan which will identify specific areas for which Planning applications for extraction would be considered. Following a "Call for sites" consultation for landowners, a significant number of sites in Ripple have been identified for potential Planning Applications for future development.

A4104 Roundabout

Ripple Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting 28th May 2021

WCC still awaiting Licence from Natural England to proceed re Greater Crested Newt.

There is a dedicated page on WCC Highways web site to update the public on progress.

Other. 2 sites in the parish which may require further investigation by MHDC Planners.

Establishment of Chalet accommodation Bow Lane- The approval is for Holiday Chalets.

Chalet, Naunton/Strensham junction. The Planning approval was for a temporary period which may now have expired.

DRAFT