

## Minutes of the Meeting of Rushock Parish Council

held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2025 at 7.15pm, Rushock Village Hall

### Present:

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

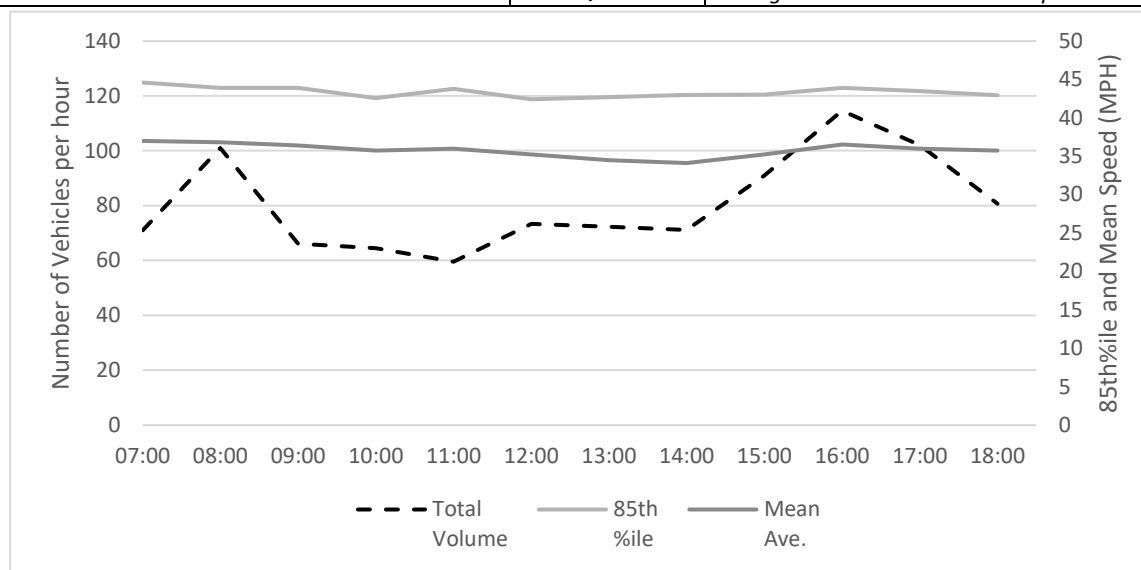
### Also Present were:

The clerk Mrs. B J Drew (BD), Cllr R M Drew (RD) (District Councillor)

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr M J Hart (County/District Councillor) Cllr Mr I Hardiman (District Councillor).
2. **Declarations of Councillors Interests:**  
None declared.
3. **Public Question Time:**
4. **Minutes:**  
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 25 were duly approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.
5. **External Meeting Reports:**  
TG reported on Parish Forum Zoom meeting which was very helpful. A CALC meeting was held the following day but TG/BD did not attend as it was covering the same things. Chairmans Meeting is being held on 15<sup>th</sup> May and TG will attend.
6. **County Councillor's Report:** *Report previously circulated*  
**Ongoing Issues**
  1. I have reported water ponding in Well Lane. I know this was raised as an issue as a result of the surface dressing potentially changing the levels and the water not running down the drain. I have previously said that if this is still an issue when we have heavy downpours let me know and I will get highways to investigate. I am advised there have been no recent issues.
  2. The huge pothole in Lunnon Lane has finally been filled, I did have to chase this a number of times.
  3. Our highways engineer has been out and indeed met with Terry to deal with the blocked drain by the parish gateway on Clattercut Lane. Hopefully this issue is now resolved.
  4. Further to my November report, I am looking to see if WCC will introduce a 30mph limit in the 'Rushock Wood' area. Below is the speed data. I am still chasing if this is enough to get a 30mph speed limit, especially as this is in a national speed limit. The delay has been due to the elections and a new highways engineer.

Site No.	24000254
Site Location (Click for Map):	<a href="#">C2018 Clattercut Lane, Rushock Green</a>

<b>Survey Period:</b>	From 28/11/2024 To 06/12/2024		
	<b>Daily Volume</b>	<b>Mean Av. Speed</b>	<b>85th %ile Speed</b>
<b>Southbound</b>	507	36	44
<b>Northbound</b>	566	36	44
<b>Combined</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<i>Figures above shown in miles per hour</i>	



## New Issues

There is an issue of ponding by some of the work done with the edge of carriageway scheme in Park Lane near the Clattercut Lane end that John Nicholls pointed out to me. I am going to bring the highways engineer to take a look.

## Wyre Forest Issues

Bewdley Bridge is back to operating one way over the bridge into the town for approximately 18 months whilst the Environment Agency (EA) undertake the work for the construction of the flood defences. This is now circa a £9.3m scheme, of which £500k is from WCC and the rest from the EA. The Government increased the capital funding by an additional £1.5m from the original funding grant for additional work.

## Strategic Issues County Wide

Cabinet considered a report at 6<sup>th</sup> February cabinet and agreed to deem the building surplus to requirements and to bring a report back asap in the first quarter of 2025-2026 to consider options for disposal.

WCC at its last full council meeting of this 4 year term on 13<sup>th</sup> February agreed its budget which sees a net revenue budget of £495million, the highest I can remember.

Council tax will increase by 2.99% with the adult social care levy of 2%. This is a poor settlement for WCC with the council receiving not one penny of a new £600 million pot it has made available for councils (Recovery Grant) with the money being diverted away to largely urban unitary metropolitan areas on the basis the Government wishes to fund deprivation and Worcestershire does not meet the criteria for being deprived.

Due to social care funding pressures, Home to School Transport and SEND we still have a £33,6m funding gap with further savings to be identified before budget setting takes place by Full Council on

13<sup>th</sup> February. These savings are to be made in due course and we will draw on some further reserves. In nearly 20 years serving on Worcestershire, I have never known a budget as challenging as this.

We are currently forecasting a £14.2m overspend for 24/25 which is 3.3% of our net revenue budget. We started the year planning to use £7.9m of reserves to balance the budget and this means we will use £22.1m of reserves this year to balance the budget. This is not sustainable.

We forecast for 25/26 pressures of £9.8m for children's and adult's social care and Home to School Transport, pay inflation of £4.5m, contract inflation of £20.9m, demand of £15.6m, investment of £21.2m, revenue to service the capital budget of £4.5m, which totals £76.7m, plus £15.3m of 24/25 pressures which gives a total of £92m for 25/26 pressures.

By way of a brief devolution and unitary update, the Government has now formally written to the County Council and the six district Councils with an 'invitation to reorganise'. However, only six councils are being taken through in the first tranche. We are in the second tranche and so elections to WCC of course took place as normal on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025. We believe there would be 'shadow' elections for the new authority on the first Thursday in May 2027 and so no District Council elections that year, their four-year term would be extended until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2028 when WCC would cease too and the new unitary authority would come into being.

WCC and the six districts worked together to put in their initial proposals by 21<sup>st</sup> March and final proposals by 28<sup>th</sup> November.

There was not total agreement across the seven authorities as some are supporting a unitary in the north and a unitary in the south and some support a unitary for the whole of Worcestershire. Worcestershire County Council's Cabinet met on 20<sup>th</sup> March to agree to support a Worcestershire Unitary Council and agree the interim plan. We now await to hear from Government on the next steps which is expected in the next few weeks.

Finally, a word on the elections that took place for all 57 seats on the new boundaries last week on 1<sup>st</sup> May. I am delighted to say I was re-elected for a 3<sup>rd</sup> term to represent Chaddesley. My majority was just 76 votes over Reform but given what was a very difficult day for my party both locally and nationally I was very pleased to get over the line.

In May 2021, in Wyre Forest, all 10 seats were won by the Conservatives, last Thursday 8 were won by Reform and just Chaddesley and Bewdley won by the Conservatives.

In May 2021 there were 45 Conservatives and 12 others, the make up as of last Thursday is as follows:-

27	Reform
12	Conservatives
8	Greens
6	Lid Dems
2	Labour
2	Independent ,

Full Council meets on 22<sup>nd</sup> May to appoint a new leader, Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Council and the various committee chairman and vice-chairman.

Watch this space over the next couple of weeks.

We have a new highways officer for Wyre Forest called Dean Caswell, who I am meeting next week.

I look forward to continue to keep working with you over the next 3 years.

TJ reported the water in Well Lane is still an issue.

TG reported that nothing has been done following a meeting with Barry Barnes regarding New Wood Lane condition of verge used as a passing place. Perhaps this can be discussed with the new Highways Officer. The speed limit situation is ongoing.

**7. District Councillor's Report:** *Report previously circulated*

We have been dealing with the usual casework, planning issues, planning enforcement issues and reporting litter on the main A roads.

Lunnon Lane Drive; WCC Highways are following up on this issue and they have requested a s278 application to formalise the access point.

Clattercut Lane; WFDC Enforcement Officers have a planned visit on 8th May to check if the clean up and removal of the horse has been actioned. Following this visit Officers will need to decide if further action is required.

WFDC Full Council meets on 14th May to elect the new Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Council and all the chairman and vice-chairman of the committees and appoint councillors to various outside bodies and set the municipal calendar for 25-26.

Local Government Reorganisation continues, and we await the response from Government to Worcestershire's proposal.

**8. Police Report:**

Report had been circulated.

RUSHOCK - Priorities April – June 25 – burglaries / wildlife crime

Nothing to report

**9. To approve re-appointment of Lengthsman:**

TG advised that Russell Peach has been re-appointed as Parish Lengthsman. He has signed his contract for 25-26 and his hourly rate is £17.00. TG has met with him to go through some work but all Cllrs need to be looking at work he could do. TJ suggested whether the Parish Council could provide him with a list of regular jobs that need undertaking.

**10. Finance:**

a) The financial spreadsheet was duly circulated, and it was in accordance with the bank statements. The bank balance as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 was £9,744.73.

b) The following were unanimously approved for payment: -

Already Paid;	
Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman January 25)	£142.80
Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman February 25)	£20.40
Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman March 25)	£40.80
Mrs B J Drew – Expenses	£36.40

2025/2026

Print-Serve – End of Yr Payroll Submission	£30.00
Worcestershire CALC – Annual Subscriptions	£116.50
Mrs Ruth Mullett – Internal Audit Fee	£200.00
To be Paid:	
Zurich Municipal – Insurance	£214.00
Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman April 25)	£108.00

**11. To discuss training requirements:**

RD advised there will be planning training later in the year.

**12. Update on memorial post:**

SD reported progress is being made and some carvings into the post completed. SD confirmed it is just for Rushock residents to use. Plaques will all be the same and SD is happy to get them. SD said all residents will be informed when it is in situ. DC suggested putting something in the magazine.

**13. To discuss Biodiversity Project / Nature Walk:**

There were discussions on future biodiversity projects and the possibility of a nature walk.

TG reported on a lot more flowers in all the verges this year. No daffodils have flowered in the Orchard this year, but the triangle and the gateways look fabulous. TG asked RD to contact MJH to ask to delay verge cutting until mid-June. SD will strim around the bench in the Orchard. TG reported on a Crab Apple tree looking sick. The possibility of putting mulch mats around the trees was discussed and it was agreed to do this. TJ to source for the 12 trees.

SD advised she has a number of ideas for the Nature Walk but a date really needs to be fixed. After much discussion it was agreed this would be 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

Ideas include a scavenger hunt, could do in DP or SD field. Also autumn artwork with leaves/berries, den building, fire, bark rubbing drawings, nature bingo and a walk with clues. SD advised that Theresa will do beating the bounds and is looking at making some parts of it accessible to all. TG is asking residents for feedback on the birdboxes, he will put in magazine and on WhapsApp.

**14. Planning:**

The Planning spreadsheet had been circulated.

Dormers Close – Discharge of condition 2 – Pending Consideration  
Foxhayes Farm – PNR For Info Only

Lowbridge Farm re consultation – TG spoke about alterations, less lorries, better track, landscape officer advises to let hedges grow higher, TG will provide a response.

**15. Highways and Verges:**

TG to ask MJH to delay verge cutting, also TG would like to meet the new Highways Officer. RD will forward these requests to MJH. TG will ask again about the New Farm Lane layby.

DP asked what the rules are regarding boulders at the side of verges. RD explained that nothing should be put on highway verges however it is difficult to enforce.

**16. Footpaths:**

TG reported on issues with overcropping and will keep an eye on overcropping footpaths. BD to report footpath at the back of the Church that is part of the Monarchs way.  
DC asked if anyone spots any tree problems on a footpath please inform Neil Cutler.

**17. Rushock Village Hall:**

TJ advised still waiting for heaters to be sorted. Pub night is tomorrow night.

**18. Agenda items for future meetings:**

TG/BD will look at dates for 2026.

**19. To note the date of the next meetings.**

11<sup>th</sup> September 2025

20<sup>th</sup> November 2025

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm

Signed..... (Chairman)

Dated.....