

Minutes of the Meeting of Rushock Parish Council

held on Thursday 11th September, 2025 at 7.00pm, Rushock Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. T. Green (TG) (Chairman)
Cllr. D. Cutler (DC)
Cllr. S. Davies (SD)
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) PCSO Becky Ruston, Dave Foden.

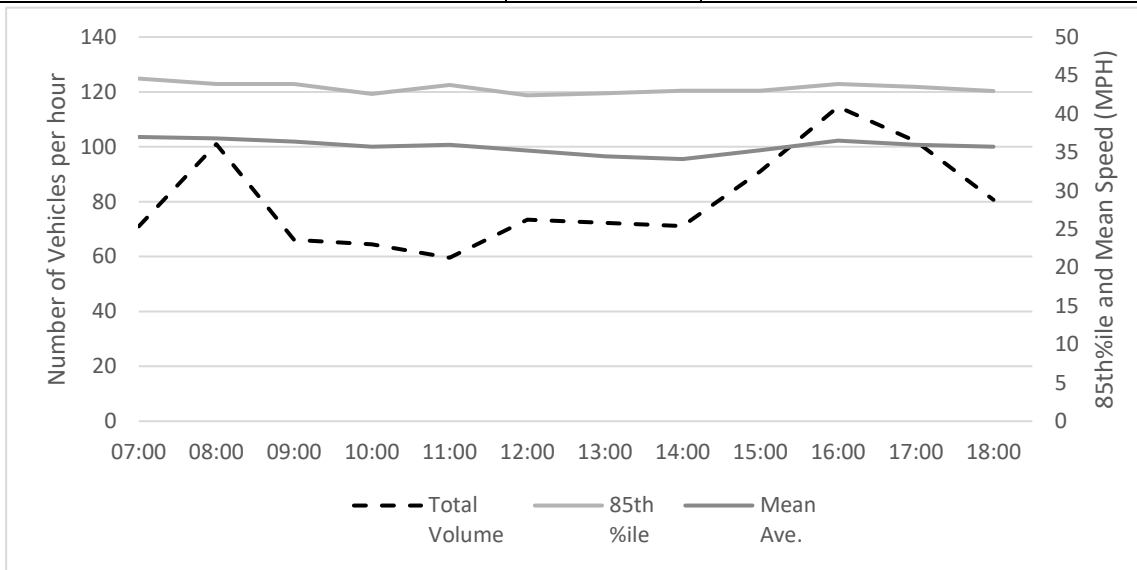
1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr R Hampshire, Cllr M J Hart (County / District Councillor) Cllr I Hardiman (District Councillor).
2. **Declarations of Councillors Interests:**
None declared.
3. **Public Question Time:**
A Parishioner raised why some of the roads in Rushock do not have a nameplate and no one knows what lane they are in. Cllr Drew advised that he would do an inspection of all roads in the Parish and request any signs that are missing from Wyre Forest District Council.
Also raised was why Rushock never sees a road sweeper. Cllr Drew will report this to Wyre Forest District Council. The Parishioner asked if the Parish Council have a new Lengthsman. TG advised that the Lengthsman is Russell Peach who wears an orange Hi-Viz when he is working in the Parish.
4. **Minutes:**
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th May 25 were duly approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.
5. **External Meeting Reports:**
TG reported on Chairmans meeting held on 15th May which was very useful and a recent CALC / Parish Forum meeting which covered nothing of importance
6. **County Councillor's Report:** *Report previously circulated*
Please find herewith my report to the Parish Council. I would be grateful if you could circulate this report to the Parish Councillors and that it is read out at the meeting, if I am not present.

Rushock Issues

Ongoing Issues

1. Further to my November and May reports, I am looking to see if WCC will introduce a 30mph limit in the 'Rushock Wood' area. WCC do not believe that speeds currently support an introduction even on a relatively short stretch of Clattercut Lane in the built-up area. Perhaps we keep this under review.

Site No.	24000254		
Site Location (Click for Map):	C2018 Clattercut Lane, Rushock Green		
Survey Period:	From 28/11/2024 To 06/12/2024		
	Daily Volume	Mean Av. Speed	85th %ile Speed
Southbound	507	36	44
Northbound	566	36	44
Combined	1,073	Figures above shown in miles per hour	



New Issues

1. Whilst not within the Parish but it does have ramifications due to rat running and no doubt Rushock residents drive here, there has been another set of 4-way lights at Mustow Green a couple of weeks ago. Whilst there was a permit for the works, the lights were not needed and there was unauthorised work on the pavement. I constantly lobbied WCC in respect of this and to be fair WCC were repeatedly onto Severn Trent to get their contractors to remove the lights. This did happen after lunch. Severn Trent were issued with a fine by WCC.
2. Again, whilst not in the parish but it affects local residents with rat running and diversions, I have had a new gully installed on the A448 opposite Fox Lane at Chaddesley to allow more capacity when we have heavy read which should help prevent flash flooding here and the road being flooded and closed.
3. I have raised the issue of verge cutting not being done too early. I know verges and whether to cut or not cut is controversial but I know the Parish Council like them to be left as long as possible and I have said this and asked the second cut not to be done too early. With the hotter summer this has helped to stunt the growth!

Wyre Forest Issues

Bewdley Bridge is now open to two-way traffic. This happened over the summer holidays.

Strategic Issues County Wide

Full Council met on 22nd May to appoint a new leader, Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Council and the various committee chairman and vice-chairman. The new Leader of the County Council is Cllr. Jo Monk, from one of the Redditch Divisions and the Deputy Leader of the County Council is Cllr. David Taylor from the same Redditch Division and he has cabinet responsibility for 'One Worcestershire'.

There are 10 members in the Cabinet, 4 from Redditch, 3 from Wyre Forest, 1 from Worcester City, 1 from Malvern Hills and 1 from Wychavon. The Leader was elected unopposed by all members of the Council. The new Chairman of the Council is Cllr. Louis Stephen, from the Green Party representing one of the Worcester Divisions and the new Vice-chairman of the Council is Cllr. Paul Bennett, from the Liberal Democrats Party, representing one of the Malvern Hills Divisions were elected by majority vote.

The constitution was amended to allow for substitutes on the scrutiny panels and to allow 14 members to sit on the main Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board, up from 9, this is to allow the 5 Vice-chairman of the scrutiny panels to sit on the Board too. The Chairman of the panels are made up from the opposition parties and the administration have the Vice-chairman. On a personal note I was very pleased to be elected Chairman of the Economy Panel.

In respect of local government reorganisation WCC and the six districts worked together to put in their initial proposals by 21st March and final proposals by 28th 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.

Given that the Leader has appointed a Cabinet Member for 'One Worcestershire' I had assumed they supported a one unitary authority for Worcestershire. However, their position is still not clear and we are advised it will be confirmed in September.

As it presently stands the Government are scheduled to make a decision in April 2026 albeit I can see this being delayed until after the local elections in May 2026. Between 28th November and their decision they need to undertake statutory consultation.

There appears to be a complete lack of clarity on the new administration's capital programme as to what commitments they are going to continue with and which ones they will scrap.

Regarding county hall, they have deemed this surplus but it's future proposed use appears unclear, they are considering future options including potentially building the new Worcester Secondary School on part of the site. There is a huge demand for secondary school places in the city and their current plan is to bus pupils to Malvern where there is capacity! Car parks have been rented out for use by the neighbouring hospital. This is something that was planned pre-May.

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

Cllr Drew reported that he is liaising with TG on enforcement issues.

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 been following up on enforcement issues and reporting back directly to the Chairman.

Wyre Forest Issues

WFDC handed over the Piano Building on 27th August to our contractor Speller Metcalfe (who are doing the Town Hall work too) and they are starting on internal work and work that doesn't require planning permission. The planning application was approved at the September meeting and work has well and truly begun and the building is being actively marketed for office space on the first and second floors and food and beverage on the ground floor. The project should be completed by September 2025.

WFDC have let the contract for the next phase of the Connectivity Project and work has commenced on the construction of the urban park. The contractors are Shropshire based building and civil engineering contractors McPhillips (Wellington) Limited and as of 21st August they were mobilising. The main body of the work should be done by the end of the year, the project was due to finish this July but will be December now due to unforeseen groundworks.

Since the official opening of The Old Court on 30th January we have held an open day to the public and we now have a number of tenants with leases on office space, including a company called Beta Den and the Kidderminster BID team.

Work on the £2.4m HLF project at Brinton Park has finally commenced and the artificial badgers sett has been constructed.

The Old Pals shelter has been demolished and a planning application for its replacement will be considered soon.

Work has commenced to dig out where the duck pond will be. Work is due to complete next year.

There will be a new café and toilet facilities and a changes places toilet.

WFDC commissioned a feasibility study for Worcester Street, Market Street, the former Crown House site and Lionfields (former Glades site) and cabinet has in principle agreed for to be residential development on this site and at its September cabinet meeting it will further consider this subject with a view to circa 150 residential units here.

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 its initial feedback from our initial submission.

WCC and the six districts worked together to put in their initial proposals by 21st March and final proposals by 28th 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 20th March to agree to support a Worcestershire Unitary Council and agree the interim plan.

Given that the Leader has appointed a Cabinet Member for 'One Worcestershire' we had assumed they supported a one unitary authority for Worcestershire. However, Worcestershire County Council's leader has yet to confirm their position.

The seven councils have recently conducted a public engagement survey and the results were mixed but a majority of residents in Wyre Forest just supported a one unitary model as opposed to two.

As it presently stands the Government are scheduled to make a decision in April 2026 albeit I can see this being delayed until after the local elections in May 2026.

8. **Police Report:**

Report had been circulated. Nothing of note to report.

Priorities –Burglaries / Wildlife Crime. It was agreed to add Speeding Clattercut Lane.

DP reported there had been fly tipping in Park Lane and DC enquired whether Wyre Forest District Council have any cameras. Cllr Drew advised that they have seven cameras, some covert and some labelled.

TG provided a car registration linked to someone lurking in a layby.

The Police advised to be aware coming into darker nights. DC will do a reminder in the magazine.

TG invited the Police to attend the coffee mornings on the first Tuesday of every month.

9. **Finance:**

- a) The financial spreadsheet was duly circulated, and it was in accordance with the bank statements.
The bank balance as at 27th August 2025 was £9,058.13 with one unpresented cheque of £200.00.

Already Paid;

Zurich Municipal- Insurance	£214.00
Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman April 25)	£108.00
Mrs B J Drew – Norton Antivirus	£20.00
Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman May 25)	£86.40
Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman June 25)	£64.80
Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman July 25)	£140.40
Bannuttree – Strimming	£200.00

To be Paid;

Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd (Lengthsman August 25)	£43.20
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- b) To note new pay scales. Noted.
- c) Online Banking – BD / TG to pursue.
- d) Withdrawal of My Parish Website – BD reported that the website we use hosted by Worcestershire County Council will cease on 1st September 2026. BD suggested having a look at Broome PC website which was created by James Lungley. BD will get costs for a new website.

10. Consultations:

- a) Survey on Local Government Re-Organisation – TG has completed this. CALC has suggested introducing Locality Groups which would only be another layer of administration and TG is not keen on this.
- b) Draft Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy – deadline 26th September.
- c) Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan – deadline 26th October. TG has responded for Rushock

BD to forward links.

11. Update on memorial post:

SD reported that Mike is back working on this and as an apology for the delay he will carve the back of the post for free.

12. To discuss Biodiversity Project / Nature Walk:

SD reported that the Nature Walk has been postponed due to it being the same day as the Harvest Festival. SD suggested looking at a date in March / April on a Sunday 2-4pm. It will be advertised in the magazine.

TG reported that he had sent Kevin Jones, Churchwarden some information about Natural Networks but had not received a response. DC commented on a paper that had been presented by the Vicar at her Church about sustainability in our Churchyards.

It was agreed to send a copy of the paper to Kevin and offer to support the Church in its aim to increase biodiversity in the Churchyard. The Parish Council would be willing to fund specific projects such as wildflower plug plants and will work alongside the PCC and offer advice but will not give direct donations.

TG reported that TJ had put mulch mats in the Orchard which has helped the trees.

13. Planning:

The Planning spreadsheet had been circulated.

TG reported that Foxhayes Farm application had been granted. The application for The Old Dutch Barn, new agricultural building for the storage of machinery and fodder had been refused. Application 25/0604/PNC, buildings Lunnon Lane was for information only

TG had circulated the approval for Adam Hewitt which had lots of conditions.

TJ had been told that they have put a car spraying booth in, he also questioned if they should have started planting by now. Cllr Drew will have a look at the site.

14. Highways and Verges:

TG commented that Worcestershire County Council do not believe that speeds support a reduction in the speed limit in "Rushock Wood" area.

TG reported that the first verge cut was left until late June and was only 1m which is better for biodiversity. The second cut was right up to the hedge line which is excessive.

TJ reported that a lot of farmers are not cutting hedges this year as a protest about inheritance tax. DC asked about the big branch hanging on to Margaret Pickens tree. TG said it has been reported. TG advised that many road closed signs have been thrown in verges. Cllr Drew will report this.

15. Footpaths:

TG advised he had reported three items on 9th July and nothing has happened. The footpath on the Monarchs Way has not been cut but it is well used so is ok. The Lengthsman has cleared around the stiles.

16. Rushock Village Hall:

TG mentioned they are getting heaters in.

SD advised the room had been double booked tonight and suggested looking into some form of calendar.

DC is doing the Nativity again and asked if the Parish Council would pay for the Chocolate Santa's. This was agreed but BD advised we need to check the comments from the Internal Audit report to ensure it is done lawfully.

17. Agenda items for future meetings:

Nature Walk

18. To note the date of the next meetings.

20th November 2025

Possible 2026 Dates – TG/BD to discuss and circulate.

15th January

7th May

10th September

3rd December

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.56pm

Signed..... (Chairman)

Dated.....