

Minutes of the Meeting of Rushock Parish Council

Held on Thursday, 20th September, 2018 at The Old Post Office, Clattercut Lane, at 7.30pm

Present:

Cllr. T. Green (TG) (Chairman)
Cllr. D. Cutler (DC)
Cllr. L. McCurrich (LMc)
Cllr. R. Hampshire (RH)
Cllr. J. Nicholls (JN)

Also Present were:

The clerk Mrs. B J Drew (BD), Mr. Marcus J.Hart (MJH), and the Lengthsman, Mr. Bill Waldron (BW).

Not Present: Cllr. G. Wilson (GW).

1. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr. T. Jennings (TJ)

Apologies were also received from:

District Cllr. Stephen Williams (SJW) and District Councillor Ian Hardiman (IDH).

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

None.

3. Public Question Time:

No public present.

4. Minutes:

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th May, 2018 were duly approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

5. Progress Reports:

Quick start up guide for Dementia Friendly Communities was given out. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

6. County Councillor's Report:

County Councillor Marcus Hart had written a report that had previously been circulated and referred to it as follows:-

Strategic Issues County Wide

Work continues to set up the wholly owned company for Children's Social Care.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is an area of focus following a recent Ofsted and CQC inspection and WCC and the CCG's have 70 days to agree an action plan to ensure that areas of weakness are tackled. We have a shortage of special school places which we are working hard to address. Fifty places have now been found within existing Worcestershire schools, with the Wyre Forest Special School taking an extra 30 places. An action plan has now been signed off for SEND by the middle of August.

I am can report that Velo Birmingham 2019, will not be coming to Worcestershire, Warwickshire will have the pleasure instead!

Wyre Forest Issues

The public realm work for Kidderminster Town Centre is hopefully going to begin by the end of this calendar year. This is a £2 million project and will see Worcester Street opened up to traffic. This scheme is being funded by Worcestershire County Council, Wyre Forest District Council and the GBSLEP.

We have a new liaison engineer, Paul Green, who has taken over from Alex Clarke-Elson.

Lengthsman Duties – Clarification was given regarding the clearing gullies.

Rushock Issues

I have had a meeting with Paul Green on 5th September to discuss highways issues.

I raised the issue of the unacceptable state of New Farm Lane with Paul and he has advised that it should be resurfaced this November/December time, scheduled 21st – 23rd November .

Whilst technically in Stone Parish and indeed parts of Wychavon District, I have been able to persuade WCC highways to undertake a speed limit review of the A442 at Podmore with a view of reducing the limit from 50 mph to 40 mph which should improve safety around the bad bends.

I obviously deal with routine highways issues as and when I receive them.

LMc discussed local schooling expressing concern over possible changes to the tier system. The school for Rushock is Cutnall Green which is under Wychavon and they may change from a three tier system (first, middle and high school) to two tier system (primary and secondary) making Cutnall Green a primary school going up to Year 6. Year 7 children would either go to a secondary school or enter middle school at Year 7.

DC raised the issue of speed of traffic on Clattercut Lane and asked if the County Council would look at having a speed limit imposed, possibly between the two sets of white gates. MJH queried whether all other possible highway options, eg flashing signs had been investigated but will ask for A Speed Limit Review.

MJH reported that Worcestershire County Council are facing extreme pressures on adult and social care and will need to make significant reductions in other areas because of this.

7. District Councillor's Report:

District Councillor Marcus Hart reported as follows:-

Wyre Forest Issues

We are pleased to report that progress on Crown House is going well and we are exceptionally near to signing the legal agreements to commence demolition.

We are still committed to regenerating the Worcester Street area of Kidderminster and are applying to the GBSLEP for funding towards this project to open up Worcester Street to traffic.

We are pleased to report our first acquisition from our capital portfolio fund which are commercial premises at Worcester Street and High Street. We paid £1,000,000 for the buildings and they bring us in a positive revenue income and demonstrate our commitment to regenerate that area of town.

We are working closely with Cordwells to bring a multiplex cinema and leisure offer on the former Glades site and are also going to be securing market advice to look at what is best to redevelop the Bromsgrove Street car park and are considering all options including residential for this area and linked to this are considering ways to open up Worcester Street to Bromsgrove Street.

We are also determined to get the former Magistrates Court redeveloped.

Work on the £4,000,000 transformation and redevelopment of Kidderminster train station has commenced and there will be highway disruption around the Comberton Hill area whilst the highway parts of the scheme are done.

We are continuing to ensure that there is development on the Silverwoods site and have just seen a pub restaurant approved for that location and hope to see industrial units on the site soon too.

Our local plan consultation should commence in the Autumn. We will have to see considerable growth in the District over the next 15-20 years and inevitably this will mean releasing green belt land for development as we simply do not have sufficient brown field sites. The housing growth affects everybody to a lesser or greater extent and the key will be ensuring it is in sustainable locations where we can secure funding for road improvements, school places, parks and open spaces etc....

We still have £1.6,000,000 to find over the next 3 years in order to provide a sustainable and balanced budget without relying on reserves. This will inevitably lead to difficult budgetary choices moving forward but we have recently appointed a commercial manager as we have a relentless drive to grow our traded services and bring in income to the Council. It will mean driving the localism agenda more and working with Parish Council's whose ability to levy funding is still unhindered as there are no capping levels.

The next stage of our Local Plan is fast approaching and we should be going out to consultation on our preferred options at the beginning of November and the consultation will take place between then and Christmas. The minimum number of dwellings per year that the Government have recently announced is 253 per year. We will need to build circa 6,000 houses between now and 2036 and this will inevitably lead to the strategic release of green belt land as we do not have sufficient brownfield land.

Rushock Issues

We have been dealing with the usual routine casework, reporting litter on the main A roads and along the country lanes.

8. Police Report:

No police present and no apologies received. Clerk to write to Inspector Jacob Wright expressing dissatisfaction at no police attendance at Parish Council meetings.

9. Rushock Village Hall:

Thursfields Solicitors have prepared necessary documents which have been sent to the Charity Commission. The Parish Council has paid £1500.00 to date but there will be a final balance to pay. The Parish Council will then legally be Custodian Trustees of the Village Hall.

JN reported on renovations to the Hall. These started on 3rd September and are well in hand. They have sandblasted paint, ceiling is done, pine boards fitted, floor dug out, levelled, underfloor heating done, pipework completed, all re-wired except kitchen, new combi boiler installed, block flooring to be done and all works should be completed by the end of October.

TG asked for a Parish Council representative to attend village hall meetings. RH volunteered, Clerk to inform Rachel Jones, Chair – Village Hall and ask for RH to be informed of meeting dates.

10. Beacon Lighting:

LMc informed no action to be taken on this as insufficient time now to organise.

11. Parish Localism Fund:

TG reported that church signs are now up and are highly visible. He also requested that consideration be given on how to spend the £750.00 put aside to maintain the Parish and ideas be brought to next meeting.

TG enquired whether Localism monies could be applied for to cover legal fees as the Parish Council have incurred solicitor's fees in relation to the Village Hall. MJH strongly advised that an application to the Localism fund 2018/19 should be made outlining the hall as a vital community asset.

TG reported that maintenance of the churchyard will be discussed at the next meeting.

12. Superfast Broadband:

Vouchers are available from BT Open Reach for individual households, then with an allocation from the County Council it is hoped to pool funds to pay for a fibre insulation project. There is no idea for the timetable for this. DC to contact Tony Horton to pursue.

13. Smartwater:

TG reported over 30 smartwater kits have been sold and Mick Simpson from the Smartwater project is happy to supply seven A3 signs. A map showing locations of signs was discussed and locations agreed. The Parish Council will have spent less than budgeted when VAT has been reclaimed.

14. Planning:

One planning application since the last meeting for a proposed lean to vehicle valet unit at building 331 Rushock Trading Estate, application number 18/0556/FULL, which the PC recommend approval.

LMc reported on Planning Application 18/00957/Outline from the Potter Group for the erection of B1(c), B2 and B8 employment buildings, estate roads, parking, loading area and associated infrastructure which has been approved by Wychavon District Council.

15. Highways:

BW Lengthsman is very quiet at the moment. There have been no flooding issues, waiting for verges to be cut again, MJH will chase.

Highways Maintenance Review Panel Questionnaire.

TG explained that the District Council are trying to get Parishes to take on more services.

Rushock do not have any services, eg weed control, tree maintenance, grass cutting, hedge trimming, litter picking that Wyre Forest provide. MJH reported that Localism monies received could be used to buy black

sacks and litter pickers or to pay someone to do this. Rushock do not have any bins so there has never been any District Council budget for this so they will not pay towards it.

TG will complete the Questionnaire.

16. Footpaths:

TG reported that the Parish Paths Partnership grant did not go through and the Parish Council need to ensure this does next year.

There are 5 wooden signposts down in Clattercut Lane which have been reported but have no idea when they may be done. The Lengthsman had previously done signs but has now been told he cannot. TG to email MJH locations and he will pursue.

17. Finance:

The financial spreadsheet was duly circulated and it was in accordance with the bank statements. The current bank balance was £5,623.04.

The following were approved for payment:-

**01/06/18	£257.60	Refund for Annual Insurance Payment
**23/6/18	£750.00	Thursfields – payment on account of costs (Rushock Village Hall)
**05/07/18	£460.56	Smartwater Packs
**31/07/18	£750.00	Thursfields – further payment (Rushock Village Hall)
£331.90		HMRC – Final payment (MJH)
£497.67		Final Salary (MJH)
£190.0		Invoice for Disbursements (MJH)

NB ** Already approved at a previous PC meeting but for noting as now paid.

18. CALC and Other Meetings:

TG reported on a Chairman's meeting held on 12th September, 2018 at Wyre Forest House which discussed Wyre Forest District Council financial position and also regeneration project.

There had been a CALC meeting in June and also a Parish Forum meeting held on 17th September, 2018. Again there was a briefing on financial position with the Chief Executive of Wyre Forest District Council asking Parish and Town Councils to take on more services and increase Precepts and think about clustering with neighbouring areas. The next meeting will be in March 2019.

LMc queried whether anyone was attending the Parish Conference on 9th October, TG asked all to inform the Clerk if they wish to attend. LMc also mentioned the report from CALC on elections. TG will put this matter on the next agenda.

19. Minutes from Neighbouring Parish Councils:

These had been previously circulated.

20. 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 duly noted.

21. Agenda items for future meetings:

Dementia Friendly Communities
Maintenance of Churchyard funding
May 2019 Elections
Precept
Update on applying for a speed limit between gateways
Village Hall

22: To note the dates of the next meetings:

All at 7:30pm at Rushock Village Hall.

Thursday, 29th November, 2018
Thursday, 24th January, 2019
Thursday, 16th May, 2019
Thursday, 19th September, 2019
Thursday, 21st November, 2019

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Dated.....