

Minutes of the “Virtual” Annual Parish Meeting of Rushock Parish Council held on Thursday 6th May 2021 via ZOOM at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs. T. Green, (TG) (Chairman), S Davies, (SD), R Hampshire (RH), and Cllr. J Nicholls (JN).

Also Present were: The clerk Mrs. B J Drew (BD).

- 1. Welcome from Parish Council Chairman Cllr. Terry Green.**
- 2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st May, 2020.** These were duly approved and will be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record after “lockdown”.
- 3. Chairman’s Report.** The Chairman reported as follows: -

Firstly I would like to thank all councillors for their continuing help and support over the last year along with the willingness with which you have all adapted to the our new virtual way of meeting. This has enabled us to continue to work effectively throughout the last year. Everybody has shown full commitment which has helped to get new projects underway and keep the parish moving forward. None of this would have been possible without Bev’s rapid mastery of the new art of ‘Zooming’ that has kept the show on the road. Bev continues to keep us operating within the law and uses her extensive experience to provide me with a lot of help and support. Her excellent network of contacts at both District and County Councils enables her to contact the right people to get information that we need promptly. I would also like to thank our County and District councillors who are always accessible and supportive.

Meetings

All meetings were held remotely via Zoom. The Council has held four Council meetings and five Planning Committee meetings. We have also been well represented at CALC meetings, WFDC Parish Forums and WCC meetings.

Planning

There have been six planning applications, one of which was recommended for refusal and is awaiting a decision from Wyre Forest District Council, one related to minor amendments to an approved application, three were notifications regarding the erection of agricultural buildings and one was a retrospective application that was approved.

Finance

It was agreed that we did not need to increase the precept this year as our tax base increased due to three new properties in the parish. We have received £500 from our County Councillor, Marcus Hart and £200 from District Councillor Lisa Jones towards the Biodiversity Project along with Lengthsman’s scheme funding and a grant from the Parish Paths Partnership. No councillors have claimed personal expenses.

Highways

Our Lengthsman, Bill Waldron, has continued his sterling work which has ensured that rainwater is quickly drained off the carriageway. Problems with flash flooding in Clattercut Lane have been investigated by Worcestershire County Council Highways Department along with Fiona McIntosh from NWWM. The ditch has been inspected and is fit for purpose as it is now capable of taking water away effectively and the road has not been affected during heavy rain. WCC are to carry out a survey of the drains running into this area as water is currently piped from adjacent fields into a WCC drain, although this has been in place for many years. WCC have also carried out drain jetting in various locations. Effective gritting of the designated lanes was carried out by WCC during the winter weather and Richard Wheeler cleared snow from the major routes in the parish. Highways were not able to resolve the problem of the soft verges on Park Lane but warning signs have been installed at each end of the lane. Worcestershire County Council would not allow us to use the surplus Lengthsmans’ grant to make improvements to the roads this year.

Footpaths

These remain in good condition generally and have been well used by both residents and walkers exercising during the lockdowns. There have been no problems with crops this year as many fields were not cultivated in 2020. Some repairs to stiles and signage have been carried out. The Parish Paths Partnership grant was used to cut back vegetation in some areas.

Biodiversity project

This has been under discussion for some time and, after being granted permission by WCC, planting of pollinator friendly trees, native bulbs and a shrub has been completed. All plants seem to be doing well and have attracted a lot of supportive comments. This project was funded using grants from County and District councillors along with sponsorship from a local building supplies company. Further planting will be carried where suitable sites are identified.

Community

The Parish Council worked with the Village Hall Committee to set up a support system to ensure that all residents had a point of contact for any help needed during the lockdown. Residents have been kept informed via the Parish Noticeboard, Four Square magazine and the parish website which is well maintained with prompt updates. A WhatsApp group was set up as a further means of communication when the Covid 19 lockdown came into effect and has proved popular for both information and entertainment. The village hall, of which the Parish Council are custodian trustees, now has an effective and proactive management committee who have made good use of the lockdown period and government grants to further improve the hall.

4. Reports to Annual Parish Meeting.

All reports received at meeting 26th April 2021.

5. Resident's Open Forum. No questions.

Meeting Closed at 7.35pm