

Minutes of the Meeting of Rushock Parish Council

held on Thursday 24th November 2022, 7.30pm, Rushock Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. T. Green (TG) (Chairman)
Cllr. D. Cutler (DC)
Cllr. S. Davies (SD)
Cllr. R. Hampshire (RH)
Cllr. T. Jennings (TJ)
Cllr. J. Nicholls (JN)

Also Present were:

The clerk Mrs. B J Drew (BD), Parish Lengthsman Mr. Bill Waldron (BW), District Councillor Mrs L Jones (LJ).

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr M Hart (County / District Councillor), Cllr I Hardiman (District Councillor) and West Mercia Police.
2. **Declarations of Councillors Interests:**
None declared.
3. **Public Question Time:**
No Public Questions.
4. **Minutes:**
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th September, 2022 were duly approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.
5. **Progress Reports:**
Nothing to report.
6. **County Councillor's Report:** *Report previously circulated*
Rushock Issues

I have reported the paintballing signs around the Parish and these have now been removed although I did spot one in neighbouring Cutnall Green recently which I have reported.

I have arranged for some redundant highways barriers at the side of the A442 by the Rushock Trading Estate to be moved.

I have liaised with the PC and WCC regarding the granting of consent for a bench on Lunnon Lane.

I have made a grant of £1,000 from my councillor's devolved divisional funding to the village hall to support keeping the coffee mornings going and for the Christmas Bag appeal.

Wyre Forest Issues

The planning application for the proposed Quarry at Lea Castle, Wolverley, which was refused is now the subject of an appeal to the planning inspector.

The planning application for a proposed 89 space car park at Blakedown to the WCC planning committee has now been formally withdrawn and WCC is not proceeding with this project at the current time.

WCC are applying for large scale funding for infrastructure for major road schemes, one of which is the North West Worcestershire Corridor 'NWWC', in essence, the A450 from the Black Bridge to Cross Keys and the A456 from Kidderminster to Cross Keys and the A491 from Hagley to the Motorway junction. This affects Rushock indirectly as there is a proposal to have a much larger traffic island offset from where the current one is. I have touched upon this before as there were high levels designs as part of LTP 4 and in the WFDC local plan due to the Kidderminster East urban extension of 1,400 homes between the A456 and the A448 as a ribbon development at Offmore. Outline business cases have to be prepared and a timeline for land acquisition is late 2023/ early 2024. There is currently a public engagement exercise running until midnight on 25th November. If you go on the WCC website, the details are there. I am keen to hear the Parish Council views too.

Strategic Issues County Wide

The County Council has been heavily involved in the response to the Coronavirus pandemic working with our other statutory partners.

Worcestershire has a fantastic website Here2Help which is a community action response to Coronavirus. There is also a dedicated phone number 01905 768053 for those without access to the internet. There is now a Here2Helpbusiness scheme as well. (simply google Here 2 Help Worcestershire and it comes straight up.)

Here2Help is now also co-ordinating our Ukrainian Refugee programme working with the 6 District Councils. We now have several hundred refugees in the County and a number of families have now come to the Wyre Forest and young people are taking up places in local schools.

The Government are giving a greater freedom on Council Tax for February 2023 budget setting, allowing up to 3% and a further 2% for adult social care and therefore a total of 5% without the need for a local referendum.

Adults social care, SEND and home to school transport continue to overspend in year given the sheer volume of demand. Virtually every shire county in the country is in the same position. We do welcome the proposed additional monies for Education and Adult Social care announced in last week's mini budget and await details on the exact additional quantum of cash for Worcestershire.

JN expressed concern about the verges on Park Lane, TG advised this would be discussed under agenda item 15. Highways and Verges.

7. District Councillor's Report:

Cllr Mrs L Jones reported,

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.

The Callimore Farm Planning Application -

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Adam Hewitt against the decision of Wyre Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0856/FUL, dated 16 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is change of use of land for the storage of agricultural machinery, use of agricultural buildings for storage and retention of commercial buildings for offices.
- Decision :- The appeal is dismissed due to Green Belt harm and loss of versatile agriculture land.

Wyre Forest House is open to the public through the reception facility only, Green Street Hub is not open as a walk in Hub, appointments must be pre-booked save for dealing with housing and homelessness applications and 'urgent' issues.

At full council 21 September councillors agreed a recommendation to increase all staff pay points by 5% with effect from 1 October 2022.

The District Council have completed grant application forms and are awaiting confirmation from the Legal Department to send them out to organisations. Grants will offer up to £1000 for organisations during this period to cover expenses of the Warm Spaces. The Council are also collating all the Warm spaces information to put on the website to promote for people in the local area.

A number of larger planning applications are now flooding in for determination on land which has been removed from the green belt now that the WFDC local plan has been approved.

Green Street have launched a new "Thoughtless Dog Owners We are Watching You" dog fouling campaign across the district. We have forwarded the pack and poster to the Clerk and have asked for posters to be forwarded when they are available.

"A popular dog fouling campaign is coming to Wyre Forest this next week, aimed at those few dog walkers who don't scoop the poop. Wyre Forest District Council has joined forces with environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy in a bid to reduce dog fouling in key problem across the district. The campaign sets its sights on irresponsible dog owners, with recent research showing that dog walkers are more responsible and pick up after their dogs, when they think that they are being watched. In 2014 Keep Britain Tidy conducted a campaign pilot, funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), working with land managers across the country. This pilot saw an average reduction of 46% in the levels of dog fouling, with up to 90% reduction in some areas since.

Feedback suggests that dog fouling tends to occur at night time and during the months with shorter days, as some dog owners feel that they can't be seen 'under the cover of darkness'. Wyre Forest District Council has signed up to the edgy and uncompromising campaign to tackle dog fouling hotspots. The 'we're watching you' series of signs are visible after dark and use innovative cutting edge materials."

8. **Police Report:**

Please find our October police report for Rushock. Fortunately there is nothing to report for the area, but we wanted to make you aware that our colleagues who look after the Purshull Green area (Droitwich – C division) are monitoring badger setts that have previously found to have been blocked up.

We are experiencing burglaries and vehicle crime in other areas of our beat, so encourage people to lock doors, and windows, leave lights on timers and remove valuables from vehicles

9. **Finance:**

a) The financial spreadsheet was duly circulated, and it was in accordance with the bank statements.

The bank balance as at 31st October 2022 was £8863.69.

b) Clerks Pay

The new payscales for 22/23 were agreed early November, and SCP 20 rose to £14.75 per hour. Clerks Salary was therefore agreed at £14.75 x 116hours = £1711.00.

c) To authorise any expenditure and cheques for signing
Already Paid;

Mr W Waldron £22.50

(Re – Issue of cheque 000247 Lengthsman May 22)

Mrs B J Drew (Clerks Expenses 01/04/22 – 31/08/220)	£86.80
Bannuttree Landscaping & Gardening Services Ltd (Strimming Lunnon Lane)	£140.00
Bannuttree Landscaping & Gardening Services Ltd (Strimming / Mowing Triangle)	£110.00
Gee Tee Bulbs (Various Bulbs)	£96.00
HP (Laptop)	£688.87
<u>To Be Paid:</u> Mrs B J Drew (Clerks Salary 01/04/22 – 31/03/23)	£1368.80
HMRC (Tax and NI 01/04/22 – 31/03/23)	£342.20
Print Serve (End of Year Payroll)	£20.00

It was agreed to support purchase of chocolates for the Crib Service.

- d) Parish Councillor E Mail Addresses.
Clerk had obtained quote from a company “Parish Council Websites” who come highly recommended by Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council and Worcestershire CALC. They can help with setting up a .gov.uk domain and the e mail accounts. The cost will be £120.00 plus VAT for the initial 2 year registration plus £19 plus VAT per month for hosting and support. It was unanimously agreed to proceed. Domain name chosen was rushockparishcouncil.gov.uk and initial and surname on e mail address, eg tgreen@rushockparishcouncil.gov.uk. BD to instruct Parish Council Websites to proceed.

10. To discuss New Code of Conduct:

This had been circulated to all and will become effective after the May elections. The Council will need to consider adoption of this code. The chairman reminded councillors that it is important that decisions made by the parish council should be respected by them as should the wishes of residents expressed in the Parish Poll.

11. Parish Council Elections 2023:

Parish Council Elections will be held on Thursday 4th May. TG asked councillors to give consideration to their own position and also filling the vacant seat.

12. To update on bench and discuss and agree style and location of memorial post:

TG reported that the Parish Council have received the licence for the bench but need to give the Highways Liaison Engineer seven days notice when the bench is ready to be installed.

SD advised that sleepers have been purchased and a neighbour has offered to cut and shape the wood. SD will send pictures to ensure all Cllrs are happy. It will be approx. 1.5m long. There was discussion on whether to put a litterbin by the bench but it was agreed just to monitor litter levels at present.

No update on Memorial Post.

13. To discuss Biodiversity Project:

TG expressed thanks to SD for organizing the bulb planting and thanks to TJ for providing details of the supplier who were considerably better value for money.

SD advised of one possibly dead Pear tree in the Orchard. This will be replaced if there are no signs of life in Spring.

TG asked all to consider any other areas that could be planted or any other Biodiversity projects.

14. Planning:

TG reported on Planning since the last meeting;

There has only been the appeal dismissed for Callimore Farm and two approvals – Lunnon Cottage, Lunnon Lane and Little Gains Farm, Clattercut Lane.

15. Highways and Verges:

The verges on Park Lane were discussed and concern expressed that they urgently need attention. The Parish Council have, in the past, used Lengthsmans grant to build up the verge at strategic points to make it safer and provide passing places as it is quite busy with industrial estate traffic at certain times. The drop from the road surface onto the verge was made worse when WCC resurfaced the road but we were unable to persuade them to do anything about it although they eventually agreed to put the 'Soft Verges' signs up. The Parish Council would like to be able to do more of this work, ideally using the Lengthsmans money, or parish funds. BD to raise with County Councillor.

The Parish Council have talked a lot about the cutting of the verges and, again, would like to take control of this which has been allowed in many other parishes. TG enquired whether Mike Rouse, the new Highways Cabinet Member may be more receptive to this than his predecessor. BD to pursue with County Councillor.

Blocked Drain - Bill has looked at this but cannot lift the drain cover. It is on the East side of Clattercut Lane in the area of the white gate - What.three.words for the blocked drain is bagels.lavender.rainwater appropriately enough. BD to report to County Councillor.

16. Footpaths:

TG reported no issues. BW / TJ to provide Parish Paths Invoices to Clerk, they need to be reclaimed by 31st December.

17. Rushock Village Hall:

The AGM has been held. The committee are continuing to do an excellent job. They are replacing the front door. The next coffee morning will be held on 6th December and a pub night on 10th December.

BD has chased the outstanding land registry legal documents for the hall but they have still not been received.

JN reported concerns over the cost of gas and the hall are trying to source a cheaper option.

18. Correspondence:

The clerk had circulated the schedule of correspondence and presented the correspondence to the meeting. Several items had already been discussed and the schedule was noted.

19. Agenda items for future meetings:

TG - Kings Coronation. Any other items to be forwarded to Clerk.

TG reminded all Councillors that 2023/2023 Budget and Precept will be on the next agenda. Any items to be included in the budget should be sent to the Clerk.

20. To note the date of the next meetings.

Thursday 19th January 2023

Thursday 11th May 2023

Thursday 7th September 2023

Thursday 23rd November 2023

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed..... (Chairman)

Dated.....