**Minutes of the Meeting of Rushock Parish Council**

**Held on Thursday 28th January 2016 at Rushock Village Hall at 7:30pm**

**Present:**

Cllrs. L. McCurrich, (Chairman) (LMc), T. Green, (Vice-chairman) (TG), J. Nicholls, R. Hampshire (RH), and D. Cutler (DC).

**Also Present were:**

The clerk Mr. Marcus Hart (MJH), District Cllr. I. Hardiman (IDH), the Lengthsman Mr. Bill Waldron (BW), PCSO Niall Ryland (NR) (NR left at 8:02pm) and Cllr. Chris Rogers, the Chairman of WFDC.

**1.Apologies for Absence:**

None received. TJ and GW were absent.

**Apologies were also received from:**

County Councillor Stephen Clee (SJC) and District Councillor Stephen Williams (SJW).

**2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:**

LMc and JN declared an ODI re: the churchyard grant in agenda item 12 as they are members of the PCC.

**3. Public Question Time:**

None as no members of the public were present other than those stated above.

**4. Minutes:**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th November, were duly approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

**5. Progress Reports:**

There were none as everything else was covered on the agenda.

**6. County Councillors Report:**

None.

**7. District Councillors Report:**

IDH gave the report on behalf of the Wyre Forest Rural (WFR) team and reported as follows:-

IDH reported that WFDC is consulting on freezing its portion of the Council Tax for 2 years. WFDC is proposing a £50,000 Localism Fund and a Community Leadership Fund of £33,000 for Councillors each to have £1,000 to be spent on projects within their ward and £500,000 capital funding for Worcester Street, Kidderminster to open this area up to traffic and create on street parking bays.

IDH reported that WFDC had an £800,000 (42%) reduction in its Revenue Support Grant (RSG), which is the money it receives from Central Government for this year.

IDH reported that WFDC had recently appointed 2 new civil enforcement officers, making a team of 7.

IDH reported that WFDC was having a crack down on fly tipping and fly posting and car parking offenders as a result of the strengthening of this team.

IDH advised that if a Parish Council or community group was holding a village or charitable event to contact WFDC at Green Street to let them know as there would be tolerance for signs to go up about a week or so before provided the signs are taken down afterwards.

IDH and MJH reported regarding the Muslim College planning application in Stone. DC asked some questions regarding this as she now had the information that she could give back to people who had asked her about this issue and there was a brief general discussion.

LMc raised the issue of 4 yearly elections and asked IDH’s view. IDH supported this proposal and said he would be supporting it. LMc asked what the arguments were for against. LMc said it seemed a sensible proposal and asked for the opinion of other councilors. There was a discussion about this matter and LMc proposed and DC seconded that the clerk write a letter to WFDC on behalf of the PC indicating the PC’s support for this proposal.

This was unanimously approved.

**8. Police:**

PSCO Niall Ryland advised the meeting that there had been a dwelling burglary very recently (7am today) in Rushock Village. An issue was raised regarding the delay in this appearing on the police database. On 25th January, a Robbery (domestic related) took place on the Rushock Trading Estate and a male has been charged and a theft also took place on the same date of 1500 litres of oil worth £400 from a tank on a farm.

**9. Planning:**

The planning schedule was circulated and this was duly noted.

**10. Highways:**

JN reported that the lengthsman had been busy with the normal winter business.

JN reported that 8 sites around the Parish had been visited and cleaned as we had the Jet cleaning company for a day recently. One of the sites tackled was the ongoing problem at Tudor Cottage. MJH reminded the PC that £500 towards the cost of the Jet cleaning company would be reimbursed by WFDC.

JN reported that we may need to use Drain Jet Surveys for a day for root cutting. They have a special machine that is needed. This may be able to wait until the next financial year.

JN stated that the verges at Park Lane are getting particularly dangerous. This was a call on the lengthsman funds.

JN reported that we would need to repair the current damage on Park Lane. JN and RH will have a discussion about instructing a contractor to do this before the end of this financial year as the PC had quite a bit of lengthsman funding which could be used to fund this work.

DC raised concerns that we should not be widening the lanes too much.

LMc raised the issue of a lack of passing places on Park Lane and suggested that the PC approach David Hunter(DH) at WCC in respect of this. This was unanimously agreed. MJH was tasked to contact DH in respect of this.

JN reported that there is a tree opposite Tudor Cottage which is troubling the drains on Simon Jenning’s land. JN said that it would be better if this tree was felled. There was a discussion in respect of this and JN agreed to go back to the land owner in respect of this matter.

JN reported that the sinking of the highway in Church Bank had still not been done and MJH undertook to raise this matter with DH.

JN raised the issue of the lengthsman’s hourly rate and proposed that it be increased from its current £13.50 per hour to £13.75. DC seconded this and it was unanimously resolved to increase the salary from 1st April, 2016.

TG reported on the ‘gating’ for Clattercut Lane. There was a discussion regarding the name ‘Rushock Wood’ and where the two gateways would go. There was also a discussion regarding the reduction in speed limit. It was agreed that the two gateways were probably best as indicated on the map provided by DH.

MJH advised that we almost certainly would have to fund the gateways ourselves but could use some of the Localism Grant that we had received from WFDC. MJH was to liaise with DH in order that we could discuss and progress this matter.

**11. Footpaths:**

TG reported that BW’s work was all done. TG reported that we would not be able to install the new sign include in this year’s scheme as it needs a visit from the Area Officer. TG reported that the footpath from Park Lane to Lunnon Lane is overgrown by a rape crop.  If this is not cleared by the landowner WCC may need to issue an enforcement notice .

There is also a piece of wood be added to the top of a stile adjacent to Clattercut House which has made access difficult.  This will need to be removed.

**12. Churchyard Grant:**

It was agreed to deal with this in the financial report.

**13. Rushock Village Hall:**

LMc reminded the PC that the PC are the trustees of the hall but there is a separate management committee. The PC do not run the hall. There has been some progress made regarding the maintenance of the hall recently.

LMc said that the management had some functions planned.

LMc reported that David Hamilton is still the chairman.

LMc had given the clerk the two legal documents to peruse regarding the Deed of Trust and the trustees responsibilities.

**14. Finance:**

The clerk circulated the financial spreadsheet and presented the latest bank statement which both agreed with each other.The balance on the Lloyds Bank Account was £5,596.19.

There was a discussion regarding the draft budget and precept for 2016-2017. The clerk talked through this item by item, with the exception of the proposed increase in the clerk’s salary which LMc dealt with.

The precept proposed was £2,310, which was a 5% increase on the 2015-2016 precept of £2,200. This meant a council tax levy on a Band D property of £30.80, an increase from £29.33 and therefore £1.47 per annum, less than 3 pence per week. The tax base of 75 remained the same and therefore the increase reflected on the bill would be 5%.

It was proposed by LMc and seconded by DC and unanimously agreed that the budget and precept be accepted and that the clerk’s salary be increased to £14 per hour, the annual payment for the village hall remain at £120 and a grant of £300 be made available towards the upkeep of the churchyard.

The following were unanimously approved for payment:-

CALC for DC’s training £30

Drain Jet Surveys £768

Village Hall £120

Lengthsman’s payment £209.22

**14. CALC and Other Meetings:**

TG reported on the CALC meeting held on 14th December at Bewdley Guild Hall, where Ian Miller, Chief Executive of WFDC gave a presentation regarding the budget and there was a report from Richard Levett from CALC and a discussion regarding the appointment of external auditors and whether to opt in or out of the national scheme.

MJH gave a brief report on the CALC AGM held on 25th November.

The next Parish Forum meeting will be held on 17th March. The next Emergency Planning Forum will be held on 16th March at 6pm at WFH. DC reported that she can’t go. RH may go on behalf of the PC.

**16. Minutes from Neighbouring Parish Councils:**

MJH reported that we had received minutes from Elmley Lovett PC and these were discussed briefly.

**17. Parish Localism Fund:**

There was a brief discussion about this fund and regarding the possibility of a new bin by the bench but having made enquiries, the landowner doesn’t want it and therefore it will not be situated here.

**18. Celebration of Queen’s 90th Birthday, 11th and 12th June.**

LMc referred to the letter received that the WFDC had received by e-mail regarding a Beacon Lighting Ceremony. LMc reported that at the PCC meeting they have agreed to hold a street party on Sunday, 12th June at lunch time. There would be a bring your own pic-nic.

The PC agreed to support this event and LMc proposed and DC seconded that up to £200 from the PC’s Localism Grant be used to support this project for things such as road closure applications.This was unanimously agreed.

It was further resolved that DC approach the village hall committee to see if they would organise the Beacon ceremony on 21st April. DC agreed to speak to Mark Hingley and or Margaret Green about this.

**19. Correspondence:**

The clerk circulated the schedule of correspondence and presented the correspondence to the meeting.

There was also a discussion about an email regarding the Acute Services Hospital review and it was resolved not to provide any response to this from the PC. Individuals could respond if they wished. There was also a brief discussion about Superfast Broadband and the issue of a champion. No one on the PC wished to undertake this role but there may be someone, possibly Giles Palmer, who the PC could appoint to be their representative and LMc was to approach them.

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

None raised.

**21. To note the date of the next meetings:**

All at 7:30pm at Rushock Village Hall

Thursday, 12th May 2016 (Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting)

Thursday 22nd September 2016

Thursday, 24th November 2016

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed………………………………….. (Chairman)

Dated……………………………………