

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF
RUSHWICK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 12 OCTOBER 2022 AT 7.30 PM
AT RUSHWICK VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Bryan (Chair), Cllr Hemsworth (arrived 7.40PM), Cllr Williams and Cllr Wise

In Attendance: Sharon Baxter (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
County Cllr Scott Richardson – Brown plus four parishioners

1. Two Councillor vacancies - To appoint by co-option – Two positions available.
Application forms had been distributed to interested candidates.
2. Apologies: To receive apologies and approve reason for absence
Cllr Haywood (personal) , Cllr Jenkins (work commitments) Cllr Hughes (work commitments) – Accepted
District Cllr Walton (personal) – Received
3. Declarations of Interest
 1. Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
 2. To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature - None.
 3. To declare any Other Disclosable Interests n items on the agenda and their nature - None
4. To Consider written requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation
(S33 of The Localism Act 2011) written requests to be with the clerk prior to the meeting – None

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Notes from Public Question Time are appended to these minutes

County Councillor Report - Cllr Scott Richardson Brown – The report was noted.

District Councillor Report - Cllr Daniel Walton – Circulated in advance of this meeting including updates on the SWDPR and Final Boundary review.

5. Minutes: Having been previously circulated, the minutes of The Parish Council meeting of 13.07.2022 were signed as a true and correct record.
6. Progress Reports: Matters arising from previous minutes and review of Action Plan
Cllr Wise and Cllr Hughes to look at setting up a link on the Parish website for Operation Snap where speeding vehicles can be reported at the time of occurrence.
A call for volunteers is to me made to progress with Community Speed watch.
7. Correspondence for Information/Action: Circulated by the Clerk
 - a. Letter from Harriet Baldwin MP – Financial support to Nora Parsons Day Centre – please refer to item 9.
 - b. Valuation Office Agency – Request for rent, lease or ownership details of Rushwick Village Hall – For update.
 - c. Parish Inventory – WCC are looking to update their records in relation to lighting assets on the highway that RPC is responsible for. There are none.
8. Parish Lengthsman Scheme: Work this month included cleaning and clearing rubbish from the underpass, cutting back verges at Upper Wick, Claphill Lane and along the Bransford Road and charging and checking the VAS sign.

The Lengthsman also conducted a grit bin audit around the Parish confirming the position of each bin regarding grit/salt replenishment. The Clerk recalls a surplus supply of grit salt in storage in a local farmer's barn. This will be followed up.

9. **RESOLVED:** To make a financial donation of £100 to support Nora Parsons Day Centre.
10. Finance
 1. Payment of accounts as per schedule were authorised for September and October 2022.
 2. Monthly Bank Reconciliation Statement – For Information Only
 3. Budget Monitoring QTR 2 – To 30.09.2021 – Reviewed and noted
 4. Conclusion of Audit year ended 31 March 2022 – For Information Only
11. Reports from representatives: The following updates were received: -
 1. Report from Village Hall Committee: Cllr Bryan
‘I didn't attend the Village Hall Management Committee Meeting on 28.09.2022 due to work commitments so won't have an update until the minutes are published later in the month.
The Lengthsman has kindly removed the bin located near the Whitehall pub following a formal complaint from a neighbouring resident.’
A suitable alternate location suggested was to utilise any spare bins at Worcester Gate housing development.
 2. Footpath Officers report: Cllr Williams
‘Over the Summer I have inspected and trimmed / cut back as necessary at the following locations. from Brookfield's to Bransford layby and back to Roots.
 - From the level crossing to the fields leading to Tanhouse Lane.
 - The Ash Path.
 - At the gateway near to Aymestrey fishing pools.
 - Oldbury Woods.
 - Behind The White Hall.
 - The path to Summer Hollow.I also have litter-picked at the four gateways in Claphill Lane and inspected the path down the orchard at Upper Wick Lane. Here I found the stiles to be in an unsatisfactory state and in urgent need of upgrading (it has been reported to me that the middle one is too small for a large dog).’
 3. Report of Play Area: Cllr Hemsworth
 - The park continues to be very busy and popular with visitors from within the Parish and further afield especially over the summer holidays.
 - Litter picking and sweeping of the stones for the drainage pits at the pump track continues to be a regular duty although installing the bins has had a positive impact on the amount of litter within the park.
 - I have been offered a long-term loan of a petrol lawnmower by one of the local residents who helps me maintain the park. This is on the proviso that the Parish Council agree to pay for the repair costs of £127.00 inc VAT to get it running (drive cable snapped etc)
RESOLVED: To pay £127.00 to get this petrol lawnmower up and running which will help to maintain the areas where Top Cut cannot get to round the play area equipment and at the top by the Pump Track. To be housed in the storage container at the park.
 - Oldbury Tigers U13s are due to start back using the Park for home matches for the 2022/23 season.
 - Top Cut continue to cut the grass bi-weekly for £80+VAT per cut on either a Thursday or Friday – This was paused during the hot weather & has only just re started.
 - The climbing net on the Tower play unit has been removed and now replaced by Reid's.
 4. Social Media Update: Cllr Hughes – No report available

5. School Representative report: Cllr Hemsworth (Temporary) – Nothing to report
6. Speeding Issues & Crime Prevention Update: Cllr Wise
 - a. Cllr Wise gave a progress update report on Community Speed Watch and Smartwater incentives. Awaiting further information from PC Dee Stanley with regards to the community speed watch program. 6-8 volunteers (including one parish member) are required to be able to have the training for equipment. PC Dee Stanley has contacted the CSW Co-Ordinator to advise on the next steps. A call for volunteers is to be made on social media.
12. To explain and discuss the 20's Plenty Campaign – Cllr Wise
 - a. Proposal to declare support for 20's Plenty for Worcestershire campaign and in particular Rushwick which includes Rushwick Parish Council: -
 - Supports the 20's Plenty for Worcestershire campaign
 - Calls on Worcestershire County Council to implement 20mph in Kempsey and will write to Worcestershire County Council to request 20mph speed limits on streets throughout Kempsey where people live, work, shop, play or learn, with 30mph as the exception on those roads where full consideration of the needs of vulnerable road users allows a higher limit. " - **ITEM DEFERRED** whilst areas are identified and a road map produced by Cllr Wise who will liaise with the County Councillor.
 - b. Proposal to purchase a quantity of speed awareness stickers to place on the wheelie bins to help promote speed awareness. (Cllr Wise) – **ITEM DEFERRED**
13. Update on the Parish Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Jenkins
Suggested amendments and comments from David Clarke (MHDC) are under review and being incorporated into this document.
14. Planning: The following planning application was considered: -

Planning Appeal - Written representations by 19 October 2022.
Planning Inspectorate Ref: - APP/J1860/W//22/3299771
Proposal: Proposed conversion of former gymnasium to independent relative unit
Site at Aymestry Court Bromyard Road Crown East
No further comments to submit.

New Street Name Request – West of Worcester Site, Phases 2 & 3 – Site falls within Rushwick Parish Council and Lower Broadheath Council Boundaries
(Total 17 new street names of which 8 are within Rushwick Parish Council Area)
To decide on work approach for this request and suggestions from Lower Broadheath.
The consensus from the Parish Council was that they were happy for Lower Broadheath to take the lead naming the new street names. The following suggestions were put forward should they wish to be used associated with Edward Elgar born in Broadheath having many associations with Worcester as a suggested theme. In no particular preference :-
Gerontius, Nimrod, Enigma, Carillon, Hope, Glory, Sospiri, Polonia and Pomp

(Cllr Wise left the meeting at 9.32PM)
15. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas
A parishioner requested that the rickety wooden stiles along one stretch of Rushwick's footpaths be replaced with more modern and accessible steel kissing-gates as identified back in January 2021. Support is to be offered to the local farmer to help progress issues with these gates and stiles.
West Mercia Police Charter- Policing Priorities for 1st October – 31 December 2022 were agreed for Submission to include anti-social behavior and speeding.

WCC Consultation request - Proposed 30mph speed limit - Colonel Drive/Mere Close - Rushwick Parish Council strongly supports 20mph limit based on the following:-

1. The design, layout and usage of the roads, particularly the parking etc
2. We have previously discussed contacting 20splenty.org to investigate increasing the coverage of 20mph limit through the village. We should progress this.
3. The SWDP review recommends 20mph limit along Bransford Road
4. Research carried out by Atkins for DfT in 2018 concludes that implementing 20mph limits get strong support from residents/users and gets a high level of compliance. The research report can be found on 20mph research study - process and impact evaluation: headline report (publishing.service.gov.uk).
5. We believe the cost element of implementing 20MPH shouldn't differ or be any more than if 30MPH were introduced.
6. Support from the County Councillor as Rushwick has many 20MPH speed restrictions already on various roads throughout the Parish.

Please take these comments into consideration as part of the consultation process

A request was made from Cllr Williams to place the Queens Green Canopy in Worcestershire on the next agenda for discussion.

RESOLVED: Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting(s)) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press from discussions only in respect of agenda item 16. as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

16. **RESOLVED:** To act upon specialist advice and implement contractual changes.

Meeting closed at 10.15 PM

Signed Chairman..... Date.....

Standing Orders were adjourned

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Parishioners raised concerns with the proposed railway halt and housing numbers. They were seeking some guidance on the SWDPR.

They were advised a public consultation is in the process of being arranged which will take place in November 2022 (date and time TBC) to offer guidance.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT – DANIEL WALTON – (posted the following on Rushwick Village News 10.10.2022)

SWDPR – Rushwick Update – October 2022

The number of houses that are required to be built and the need for a plan is set out by the Government and given to District Councils to determine. The last plan, SWDP (South Worcestershire Development Plan) determined house building between 2020 and 2030 and you can see that development across Crown East and Lower Broadheath and coming into Rushwick with 2,500 new homes. Having this plan should always help to end speculative development in areas and, in theory, builds areas in the right way – with infrastructure and community buy in.

There is a requirement now for a further plan to begin development 2030 and to take us to 2040. This is known as the SWDPR and the location of Rushwick as a site for new developments was suggested pre-2019 on the basis of its proximity to Worcester City and being on a rail line.

You'll remember there was a presentation in 2019 on initial plans, at the village hall.

The SWDP revision, determined by the Joint Area Planning group (JAP) – a number of councillors and officers from Malvern, Wychavon and Worcester City Councils – has been named a Rail Based Approach with the concept that infrastructure concerns can be overcome by using rail. The major development is taking place at Worcester Parkway with the new station mitigating travel concerns.

In Rushwick the mantra has always been that no building would take place until the rail holt is in place.

Since becoming Councillor I've been shared several prospective plans for development highlighting areas where landowners have come forward and I've been involved for a number of years in passing on feedback and thoughts from residents and the Parish Council. In essence I've been the voice to ensure that any development that does happen only happens in line with what is wanted by residents and what could work. At the same time, we've fought several planning applications in Rushwick. As well as everything the two main stands have been to protect Rushwick's identity as a village in its own right – and not an extension to Worcester and to protect the views that Rushwick enjoys, as a village.

Two key wants from residents and everyone, in terms of land, were that the land now taken by Lioncourt was not built on and that this great green corridor remained untouched for residents. Another was that the land where we currently and previously have had planning applications on them, beside Coronation Avenue, is also not touched to deliver a much greener plan. I'm minded that this piece of land is best left as open space to give us another great biodiversity corridor between what would then become the rail holt and existing housing.

Other concerns I've had are around the supply of secondary school places. Existing schools would struggle to accommodate these further houses on top of the developments at Lower Broadheath. I am hugely concerned that two separate primary schools in one village does not work for residents, or the schools and I believe that all employment land should be in one place and not being placed next to existing sports facilities, old people's residences and our great play area.

The plan which has just been published is not a final plan and that's important but it has me concerned for several reasons. Since it was published, I've had several meetings with several senior people to try and clarify some of the changes agreed by JAP to the last plans myself or the Parish Council have seen and also to ensure that concerns we've raised have been listened to.

There's a lot I could cover here but I just want to focus – mainly – on the two points of extra land that's been added to this plan and to the Rail Holt. I'll come, firstly, to the Rail Holt.

One of the issues with the delivery of the Rail Holt is that if it's not delivered in good time it means that large areas of commercial land (shops etc) by the rail holt won't be delivered leaving the village not only without a rail holt but also without important shopping infrastructure. This means that delivery of the rail holt is not only imperative to give the transport needs of a rail-based strategy to Rushwick but also the commercial needs in the case of providing shops needed to support a larger village.

The railway station is pivotal to the proposed expansion of Rushwick. Policy SWDPR 53 is clear that delivery of the railway station is required within the Plan period and that development will not begin until the land necessary for the station and associated infrastructure has been secured.

I am, obviously, not happy with this as it's changed the game/ moved the goal posts. For a rail based strategy and one where the head of planning has stated that no building will begin before the rail holt is built – simply acquiring the land doesn't count.

We've been told that because of upgrading needed to signalling the building of the rail holt will happen but that it is not all in Worcestershire County Council's control so an exact date can't be given. I have been told, elsewhere, that this shouldn't stop or delay the building of the rail holt but that is the current line between County and Network Rail. I believe it has to happen before anything is built. I have asked, however, that a statement outlining the building of the rail holt is provided to residents signed by the District Council, Worcestershire County Council and National Rail. The third one being particularly important as without them on board it doesn't happen and the promise is broken.

So, as it stands now, we wait on that guarantee. When it comes to the public consultation in November it's upto all residents to voice their concerns in regards to this. Will you be happy with a signed promise of a station between 2030 and 2040 or should, as promised, no planning be started until the rail holt. As I've said above it does have other effects on infrastructure and no building should happen until the required infrastructure is in place.

The one thing I've not wanted to do is leave this open ended. I believe we should still have no building until the rail holt is in place to guarantee infrastructure and also support roads which I don't believe can cope with all this extra traffic, even with mitigating active travel routes from the site.

In regard to land, It was agreed that the initial versions of the draft Rushwick Concept Plan didn't propose the Lioncourt Homes (CFS 0582) or Custom Land (CFS 0651) sites for development because we didn't want to compromise the on-going planning appeals.

However, following the Appeal decision which granted consent for 120 dwellings on the Lioncourt Homes site it would seem logical to now include those dwellings within the allocation for 1,000 dwellings, so the current housing development proposal for Rushwick is for 880 homes and no longer 1,000 as 120 have been allocated as part of this plan.

We now have a planning application in for 8 houses by Custom Land and that is currently being determined. I can't talk to this as it is a live application. But prior to this I have asked to ensure that no land at the end of Coronation Avenue is built up – to allow for a green corridor and biodiversity corridor to remain between existing housing and the rail holt further down the line. I've stressed that building houses here does not work – as it didn't at Claphill Lane and it destroys the plan. It will be an important active travel route from the village to the rail holt but shouldn't include housing.

I can't speak to the current planning application, but I'm minded to believe that this would ruin this route.

Two other areas of land have appeared on the plan which weren't there before. It is a fact that more space has appeared on the map for less houses and this needs to be fully clarified but I have been working hard on expressing my disappointment in the land being proposed off Coronation Avenue for the above reasons and because, historically, this land was not shown.

There are currently no numbers of houses allocated to each patch so we have an opportunity to have certain areas removed where larger areas could, feasibly, accommodate more.

Again, at public consultation it will take residents to voice an opinion on this land and the other two areas but there remains the strong, same case, as below for this not to be included.

And finally, Worcestershire County Council advised that the proposed expansion of Rushwick will require a new Primary school with a minimum land requirement of 2 hectares. With the existing Primary school at Rushwick having insufficient land to meet this requirement, a new Primary school will be required.

The Concept Plan proposes around 0.65 hectares of retail space – around 0.17 hectares next to the Village Hall where a convenience store is envisaged and around 0.48 hectares for mixed use (e.g. start-up units, farm shop, café) near the railway station.

There is, wrongly, no concern about secondary education.

In conclusion, for now, this is a concept plan and not the final plan. It can still be affected and as I've, briefly, said above there are issues that still need to be addressed. The plan will go to a vote next week at Council and I would expect it to pass given that many Councillors are reasonably unaffected, whilst they'll also want to protect against speculative development.

It will then come to public consultation in November where you'll get to have your say. I've asked that a presentation be given to residents in Rushwick at the start of this consultation. I'll also make sure I hold a similar get together so we can discuss the above further.

Finally, if you want to any specific questions or have any other thoughts do not hesitate to email me – daniel@olpro.co.uk .

Comments were expressed concerning the Final Boundary Commission report where the outcome of the result is not good as Rushwick is kept with Leigh, Bransford, Alfrick and Suckley as there is no synergy between Rushwick and these parishes and this makes things difficult for the future. The Parish Council agreed not making a submission to the consultation was a missed opportunity. An FOI request was received on this item which the Clerk responded to.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – SCOTT RICHARDSON – BROWN

Claphill Lane /Junction A44 – Looking a various options to allow access into and out from the new development presently under construction to the north of A44 Bromyard Road – still unclear if Claphill Lane will form part of this roundabout.

Confirmed he is not supportive of a blanket 20's Plenty campaign with his aim that current speed limits should be adhered to. He was however supportive of Rushwick being an exception to the rule already having many roads with 20 MPH speed restrictions.

Standing Orders were reimposed.