

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF
RUSHWICK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 7.30 PM
AT RUSHWICK VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Jenkins (Chair), Cllr Hemsworth (arrived 7.40pm) , Cllr Lowe, Cllr Williams and Cllr Haywood.

In Attendance: County Cllr Scott Richardson Brown (arrived 7.42pm) and District Cllr Peter Whatley Sharon Baxter (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer)

1. Apologies: Cllr Griffin- Blugher (Personal) - Accepted and District Cllr Rouse (Personal) - Received.
2. To appoint a councillor vacancy by co-option - Three councillor vacancies are currently available. One potential new councillor has been identified by Cllr Jenkins.
3. Declarations of Interest
 1. Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interest.
 2. To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature - None.
 3. To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in 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

No Questions for Public Question Time

County Councillor Report - The report was noted.
District Councillors Report - The report was noted.

5. Minutes: Having been previously circulated the minutes of The Parish Council meeting of 09.10.2024 were signed as a true and correct record.
6. Progress Reports: Matters arising from previous minutes - None
The Action Plan was reviewed and updated. A good meeting took place with David Holley, the Headmaster of Rushwick Primary school opening communication channels between the school and the Parish Council. The Parish Council can expect to receive a quarterly redacted newsletter to be kept informed. The Clerk has placed an order for some salt for the Lengthsman to replenish the grit bins for the winter.
7. Parish Lengthsman Scheme: Tim has been busy this month clearing vegetation from signs at Claphill lane, cutting back verges and footpaths along Bransford Road, charging and changing the VAS sign and tidying the underpass.
He has agreed to take on some additional paid footpath work to assist Cllr Williams who is also the Footpath Officer.
8. Finance
 1. Payment of accounts as per schedule were authorised.
 2. Monthly Bank Reconciliation Statement - For Information.
 3. Budget Setting for financial year 2025-2026 was discussed. To be finalise in January 2025.
9. Reports from representatives: The following updates were received: -
 1. Report from Village Hall Committee: Cllr Jenkins/Cllr Griffin-Blugher
 - a. Update on the transfer of ownership status
Some progress has been made. In the absence of Cllr Griffin-Bugher, for update at next meeting.

2. Footpath Officers report: Cllr Williams
 ‘This month: I have inspected the Brookfields path (path 518 (c)). It has now been replaced by contractors.
 I have requested that the Lengthsman inspect the Summer Hollow path (path 513(c)) for encroaching vegetation.
 It has been reported to me by a dog walker that the footbridge over the brook below Edmond’s Orchard (path 530 (c)) becomes quite slippery when wet, let alone icy. This has been reported to WCC Countryside Access Services.’

3. Report on Play Area: Cllr Hemsworth
 The new play area is all complete and a success. The official opening is to be organized. It’s lovely to see that people are using the perimeter path again. Unfortunately, some minor vandalism has taken place to the new Tower unit. This has been reported to the police. Clerk to invoice OPT for pitch use.

4. School Representative report: Position Vacant
 A helpful, productive meeting took place with Cllr Hemsworth and Cllr Jenkins and the Headmaster to startup dialogue between the school and the Parish Council.

5. Speeding Issues & Crime Prevention Update: Vacant
 Speeding/Parking issues reported to Scott Richardson Brown who will try to address.

- 10 Update on the Parish Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Lowe
 Cllr Lowe met with Andrew Ford yesterday and is now aware of the procedure to follow. Andrew Ford to offer guidance/contact addresses of statutory consultees that the Parish Council will need contact as part of this exercise. In addition, it is anticipated that an advert will be placed on social media and perhaps a household leaflet drop, to alert people on how to find the plan to comment on.
 It is also anticipated to publicize the plan at the Whitehall Inn, the Village Hall and at Roots Farm shop.
RESOLVED: To adopt the draft Neighbourhood Plan and start the Regulation 14 approval process.

11. WCC Highway Issues - Progress Update: Cllr Jenkins
 Referred to County Cllr Scott Richardson Brown to help address.

12. Planning: The following Planning Applications was considered: -

 Notification of Planning Appeal
 Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/J1860/W/24/3353894
 Proposal: Permission in Principle for proposed new build development within the garden of Hillcrest, of up to three houses.
 Site at: Hillcrest Bromyard Road, Crown East, Worcester WR2 5TR
 As our comments remain unchanged, no further submission required.

13. Correspondence for Information: Circulated by the Clerk throughout the month.

14. Councillors’ reports and items for future agendas: None

The meeting closed at 8.27 pm.

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

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

County Councillor Report – Scott Richardson Brown

John Hudson has left WCC under the fire and rehire scheme.

Huge budget deficit due to special educational needs. This is expected to be reduced.

Rural Parishes - Roll out of on Demand bus service to try to help those people with no access to public transport.

He will chase WCC Highways for a response concerning the roundabout (the one that does not link up with Claphill Lane) to establish what is happening.

Parking Issues Scott to address visibility issues from cars parked on Grange Lane and on the Bransford Road.

District Councillor Reports – Peter Whatley & Sarah Rouse

District Cllr Whatley shared concerns over the future of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review and the contents of the plan. WCC were supposed to produce a transport plan by June, but they've now said they will have one in December which will delay the plans even more.

A review of the South Worcestershire Development Plan first began in 2017 and has seen its adoption date pushed back several times to December 2024. The plan would see over 1,000 homes being built between Rushwick and Lower Wick as well as at other sites in the region, such as the highly anticipated Worcestershire Parkway development which will create a new town on the outskirts of the city.

Cllr Whatley also shared concerns about the contents of the plan having been informed that a large part of the strategy could be rail-based. The problem with that is, that Rushwick doesn't have a railway station and no one is going to be able to afford to build a new station, which could cost tens of millions. While the new development is expected to almost double the size of the village, little progress has been made in developing infrastructure for new families moving to the village.

Worcestershire County Council are working with the South Worcestershire Councils and National Highways to complete the transport modelling of the plan to the deadline set by the planning inspectors of December 31, 2024. Once this work is completed it will be published on the Local Plan examination website.

It was reported that the Leader of MHDC, Tom Wells, is stepping down. His resignation comes amid growing political unrest at the Council. He will continue in the role until a successor is appointed at the authority's next full council meeting on 26 November 2024