

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF
RUSHWICK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 9th MARCH 2016 AT 7.30 PM
IN RUSHWICK VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Deakin (Chairman), Cllr Parker, Cllr Williams (departed at 8.00pm), Cllr Rowley, Cllr Wigglesworth and Cllr Haywood

In Attendance: County Councillor Grove, District Councillor Chambers and Mrs Tilling.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr Bennett (Personal) – accepted
District Councillor Godwin (Personal) – received
2. Declaration of Interests
 1. Members were reminded to update their register of interests.
 2. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary: None
 3. Other Disclosable Interests: None
3. To consider written requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011): None requested.

The meeting was adjourned for Public Question Time, notes of which are appended to these minutes.

4. Minutes: Having been previously circulated the minutes of The Parish Council meeting of Wednesday 10th February 2016 were signed as a true and correct record.
5. Progress Reports: No matters arising from previous minutes. The Action Plan was reviewed and updated.
6. Parish Lengthsman Scheme: An update was received as per worksheet
RESOLVED: To renew Lengthsman's Contract of Services for 2016/17.
7. Reports from representatives: To receive an update
 - 7.1 County Councillor – Cllr Grove
 - Flooding – This is still an issue within the County. WCC and The Environment Agency are working together to try to resolve.
 - Financial Difficulties - £11m savings still need to be found. Areas of County Hall have been rented to HMRC and DEFRA generating additional revenue of £800- £1 m.
 - Syrian Refugees – The County is to home 200 refugees over the next 4/5 years. First 50 due to arrive in May 2016 and placed in urban areas such as Worcester, Redditch and Wyre Forest. A training course has taken place for volunteers to help when the Syrian refugees arrive.
 - School Funding – A National Consultation debate is underway. It is envisage extra funding will be available for school pupils from September 2017.
 - Health Volunteer sessions available to raise awareness and help people with Dementia. National non-smoking day is today.
 - Grant monies available of £1.7M for footpath improvements. Please contact Cllr Grove to apply.

7.2 District Councillor – Cllr Chambers

- The SWDP was adopted on 25th February 2016. The next stage is to go to Judicial Review. ‘Full Weight’ has now been attributed to it. Must ensure 5 year land supply is maintained.
- The Parish & Town Conference is to take place on Monday 18th April 2016 6-8.30 at The Council Chamber.
- An extended version of the 5 year plan will be available in due course.
- Discussions are taking place in respect of planning portfolio – selling/renting to increase capital reserves.
- Review on Waste Management ongoing during 2016.

7.3 Report from Village Hall Committee – Cllr Rowley

- An order has been placed for 50 new chairs and a trolley.
- The defibrillator is under discussion.
- Increase in numbers to the Supporters Club
- The Committee is in favour of erecting a flag pole in memory of Colonel John Reynolds.
- Quotes are to be obtained for stage curtains.

7.4 Footpath Officers Report - Cllr Williams

- Confirmed he had walked every path within the Parish and will approach WCC to report any faults/defects.
- Hoping to devise an official Rushwick circular walk consisting of 5 miles.
- To arrange attending an Induction course organised by WCC

7.5 Report from Playscape – Cllr Parker – Nothing to report due to wet weather conditions.

a. A draft sub-lease and tenancy notice has been prepared by the solicitors.

Cllr Deakin to obtain insurance details from Oldbury Park Tigers Football Team.

7.6 School Representative report – Cllr Wigglesworth – Nothing further to report.

8. Finance

8.1 Payment of accounts as per schedule were authorized.

RESOLVED: Following a request from St Thomas’s Church to pay £1K to assist with their Development Project which includes provision for a toilet facility and kitchen.

RESOLVED: To support Playscape with £2K to assist with maintenance works.

9. Planning: The following planning applications were discussed:-

Planning Application No: 16/00161/FUL

Proposal: Conversion and extension of an existing outbuilding to form holiday let

Location: Crown East Cottage, Bromyard Road, Crown East, WR2 5TR

Comments: No objections

Planning Application No: 16/00225/HOU

Proposal: Rear extension and internal alterations, plus alterations to external finishes

Location: Nursery Bungalow, Upper Wick Lane, Rushwick, WR2 5SN

Comments: No objections

Planning Application No: 16/00278/REM

Proposal: Reserved matters application for a new 3 bedroom dwelling with passing bay.

Location: The Brambles, Upper Wick Lane, Rushwick, WR2 5SN

Comments: Comments attached

Planning Application No: 16/00234/FUL

Proposal: Renewal of planning permission 13/00005/FUL to confirm use of pre-school building and outdoor area.

Location: Rushwick Primary School, Upper Wick Lane, Rushwick, WR2 5SU

Comments: No Objections

10. Progress Update – Memorial for Colonel John Reynolds
The Reynolds family is positively delighted at the suggestion of erecting a flag staff. The Clerk confirmed following enquiries with MHDC Planners that planning permission is not required. Cllr Elcock to research costs.
11. The Village Tidy-Up will take place on Saturday 2nd April 2016, meeting at Playscape at 10.00am.
It is anticipated the Village Tidy -Up will last approximately two hours. Cllr Bennett to co-ordinate.
12. Correspondence for Information: Circulated by the Clerk electronically.
In addition the Chairman referred to a letter received from Robin Walker MP about concerns with maintenance of the 420 bus service.
13. Councillors’ reports and items for future agendas – Councillors discussed how to celebrate the Queens 90th Birthday celebrations. Subject to availability they would like to book the Village Hall for a children’s Afternoon Tea Party with disco. Item to feature on the April agenda.

Meeting closed at 10.00 pm
Sharon Baxter
Clerk

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

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Abigail Tilling

Requested if the projector screen could be installed in the Village Hall before Palm Sunday.
Thanked County Councillor Grove on behalf of St Thomas’s Church for his grant of £750.00.

COMMENTS FROM RUSHWICK PARISH COUNCIL 18.03.16

Rushwick Parish Council (RPC) has made previous comment regarding this application which are still pertinent, but will reiterate and expand here.

RPC has concerns relating to this application and objects on the following grounds;

- 1 OVERDEVELOPMENT
- 2 ACCESS
- 3 SAFETY

1 OVERDEVELOPMENT

There are already 4 large houses built in this specific location along the Ash Path (at The Birches), 2 houses granted planning for large extensions and planning permission granted for 2 new houses on an adjacent plot.

In the wider Parish Rushwick has been subject to considerable speculative housing development in last few years.

The Rushwick Parish Profile shows that in the decade up to 2011 Rushwick had an increase of 35 new houses. In the years since 2011 Rushwick Parish has seen the building of or planning permission granted for almost 60 new houses. In the next decade and up to 2030 The SWDP proposes the building of almost 70 new houses within village boundary; 18 on Bransford Road and up to 60 between the A4440 and Laugherne Brook and Bransford Golf Course. In the West Worcester Development the Parish will see almost a 1000 new houses built within it's boundary.

With this scale of development in mind RPC does not feel that these houses are required.

2 ACCESS

RPC has 2 concerns relating to access, in that vehicular access to these houses is along a Public Footpath, number 520, that this may be;

- In breach of Section 34 of The Road Traffic Act 1988
- Cause detriment and neighbour nuisance in the immediate area of the development.

This Public Right of Way, which is known locally as The Ash Path, is an agricultural track.

This development will require vehicular access along a Public Right of Way, for developers and subsequently for new home owners. Representations made by Parishioners has identified that:

- The maintenance of The Ash Path is the responsibility of home owners who currently reside along the Ash Path, or whose properties in Christine Avenue back onto the Ash Path.
- They are also the only ones with vehicular 'rights of access' over the Ash Path through the part that relates to their property.
- This is all outlined in detail in their Property Deeds.

RPC would ask Planning Officers to consult with Highways and other relevant MHDC Officers to consider this point of law.

The outcome on the Ash Path of all this development traffic and subsequent increase in vehicle movements, related to new home ownership and service/support requirements, is causing neighbour nuisance. Damage to the surface of the Ash Path for both users and the local home owners who have financial responsibility for its upkeep.

RPC considers that this is unfair as none of the affected home owners could reasonably foresee this outcome and increased costs.

NB

The issue of access is referred to by the Developer in their Planning Statement at point 4.4, identifying that the access was the main issue that had a previous planning application refused in 2003. They go on to report that, 'the altered junction (of the Ash Path with Upper Wick Lane) and its reconfigured design has ensured that adequate visibility is now achieved'.

RPC would challenge this view as this junction has not been completed as was originally required under planning conditions laid down for the development of 4 houses at The Birches.

At point 4.9 the Planning Statement reports that following discussions with WCCHA, 'The visibility splay from the junction with Upper Wick Lane is suitable for the proposed development, and accessing surrounding properties.'

RPC would like to point out that the visibility splay might be suitable but the main ongoing problem is that the construction and layout of the junction does not allow for a car to wait within the junction whilst a vehicle accessing it from the Upper Wick Lane turns in and also waits to use the Ash Path. The vehicle on Upper Wick Lane must wait on the main carriageway thus obstructing it until car in junction exits.

This makes access an issue and unsafe.

3 SAFETY

RPC's main point regarding safety going forward with this development is that of safety of pedestrians using Ash Path in light of;

- a) increased vehicular movements
- b) degradation of the track surface
- c) lack of safe passing places for pedestrians and cyclists
- d) lack of safe passing places for vehicles, except for the one proposed

The Ash Path connects with 2 other Public Rights of Way, Footpaths 518 and 521, serving the large residential areas within the Rushwick of Christine Ave and Grange Lane.

Many children and Parishioners use this route to go to and from;

School

The village play area at Playscape

Village bus stop

Village Hall

Village Pub

Visit their friends and neighbours

Walk their dogs

Go for a stroll

RPC is going to approach the MHDC Footpaths Officer for an opinion on what a relevant surface for this Public Footpath, in these new conditions, ought to be.

RPC also notes comments from The Ramblers Association and recommends them to MHDC Councillors and Officers.

RPC considers that this development makes the area less safe for its Parishioners.

RPC objects this planning application and recommends REFUSAL.

Rushwick Parish Council.