

## Ruscombe Parish Council

### Minutes of Meeting of the Parish Council

Held in the William Penn Room, Loddon Hall, Twyford

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 7:30pm

**Councillors Present:** Mr M Evans (Chair), Mrs C Bulman, Mr G Howe, Mr G Merrick and Mr P Evans.

**Others Present:** Twyford Parish Councillor, Mrs L Jarvis.

**Clerk in attendance:** Mr Graham Winder.

7:30pm Mr M Evans opened the meeting.

**162/22 Apologies for Absence:**, Mr P Cassidy, Mr J May, Mrs J Holmes

**163/22 Declaration of Interest:** No new interests to declare.

**164/22 Minutes:** Minutes for 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 circulated via email, approval proposed by Mr Merrick, seconded by Mrs C Bulman and approved unanimously.

**165/22 Public Comments sent to the Clerk or Councillors:** None received.

**166/22 Update from Twyford Parish Councillor:** Mrs Jarvis shared news that TPC had donated £210 to each of Age Concern and The Community Centre as well as donations to Lions regarding car parking services.

Mrs Jarvis also shared the observation that they are experiencing increased energy costs for street lighting. She also stated that TPC had picked up costs for removal of asbestos for allotments on Hurst Road and London Road amounting to £1950.

Mrs Jarvis shared news that burial ground records will be digitised for all churches in the Twyford and Ruscombe areas for a cost of £1453.

Mrs Jarvis shared TPC thoughts and suggestions for marking the coronation next year, some of these included bunting, knitting, gifts for school children, party in the park and showing a singalong film.

Mrs Jarvis informed Council that TPC will be holding a Meet Your Councillors event in a gazebo outside Waitrose on the 10<sup>th</sup> December.

Regarding the Winter Crisis, Mrs Jarvis advised that cost of living help leaflets have been delivered to residents.

Mr G Howe joined during this item at 7.37pm.

**167/22 Update from Wokingham Borough Councillors:** Mr Howe advised Council that he noted the parking issues being discussed including the Milton Way resident comments. He also informed Council that the increased train station parking charges would be the equivalent of a 5% tax on an average salary of £24k and advised that each parish needs to file its thoughts on this matter.

Mr Howe warned that an extra 250 houses at Charvil will result in a local impact of 800 cars on the roads and as junctions at Twyford and Ruscombe are difficult to change, there will be an impact on Ruscombe. In addition, the added 200 houses in Hurst will also impact Ruscombe not just Twyford.

Mr Howe advised Council to keep a close eye on the Planning site for these two key developments as timing can be acute.

Action: Clerk to add monitoring to weekly tasks.

Sheeplands Nursery: Mr Howe advised that although a change of use has been communicated as the main change to permission for site, it has actually resulted in a re-classification as a garden centre and may be up for sale.

Budgets: Mr Howe shared that there has been much discussion about the possible move to three-weekly rubbish collections. He also shared that short term saving may be difficult to achieve as some costs are locked in for a period, for example vehicle leasing and contracts. He shared the progress made in spending for Year 7 admissions and SEN which is now on the road to a 'good' rating, so it is important to keep investing as there is no 6<sup>th</sup> From provision south of the borough. The initial agreed cost of £5.5M has inflated to £7.5M although the reasons for this increase are unclear and the subject of BC debate.

Mr Howe strongly advise Councillors to sign up to Wokingham Direct and to encourage residents to do the same to keep informed on all these important matters.

Action: Clerk to sign up and share details with Council.

**168/22 Twyford Neighbourhood Plan:** Mr M Evans summed up that RPC did comment while consultation was running. He confirmed that RPC is not happy with proposal to divert traffic through Ruscombe and has formally commented to TPC.

**169/22 Ruscombe Neighbourhood Plan:** Mr M Evans advised that borough council planners raised issues with the examiner. RPC were sent a copy of the comments and WBC are now having a peer review of the comments. O'Neil Homer are having a look at the report and RPC awaits their feedback.

Action: Clerk to request an update from O'Neill Homer before next meeting.

Council discussed ways of getting the message about the NP out to residents and felt that a regular 'drumbeat' of communication via public meetings, a timely newsletter, quarterly use of RG10 and social media.

Action: Clerk to approach RG10 for space to provide regular PC copy and messages.

**170/22 Planning Applications:**

223384, 79 New Road Ruscombe. No issues raised.

223424, Tree Works at Allotments by St James' Church. No issues raised.

Mr Merrick proposed that RPC enters 'no comment' to both applications which was seconded by Mr M Evans and unanimously approved.

**171/22 Ruscombe Ponds:** Mr G Merrick shared an update on his tour of the ponds with Mr N Barnes which concluded that the area is a mess including the willow

cuttings deposited by Econet against a neighbour's fence which will involve a cost to clear.

It was also noted that the road drain is blocked. Mr Barnes will make a number of proposals including a price for digging out the seat posts, remove tree stumps from the pond and adding a post and rail fence to the verge at the front to define the edge.

Mr Barnes will submit proposals and prices for January meeting.

Mr Merrick suggested that RPC should ask WBC if we can remove signposts.

Action: Clerk to confirm to Econet that no work should be carried out without prior request from RPC.

Action: Clerk to obtain update on bullrushes clearance before January meeting.

Mr Howe left during this item at 8.47pm

**172/22 Pennfields Orchard:**

Action: Clerk to call CR Landscapes for proposal update.

**173/22 Hardship Fund:**

Action: Clerk to circulate the leaflet for information.

**174/22 SID Maintenance:** Council discussed moving forward with using solar panels for SID power.

Action: Clerk to forward emailer regarding solar panels for SID with Mr Merrick.

Action: Clerk to find email regarding SID survey and share with Council.

**175/22 Trees:** Mr Merrick advised Council that the commemorative Beech tree will be arriving in the coming week and that he will consult with church regarding the position. Council discussed an appropriate ceremony and photo for RG10 to mark the planting.

Action: Mr Merrick to email with possible dates.

**176/22 Grant Application – Keep Mobile:** Council approved a grant of £350.

Proposed by Chair and seconded by Mr Merrick and unanimously approved.

**177/22 Twyford Parking Survey:** Council discussed that it was now possible to report issues via the portal.

Action: Clerk to record and share the link.

**178/22 Loddon Hall RPC Rep:** Nothing heard and nothing to report.

Mrs Jarvis left during this item at 9.03pm.

**179/22 CIL Money**

Glebeland: Map of land on offer has been received from the church and RPC awaits contact from their agents, Bidwells.

Boundary sign: Clerk to reopen conversation and find out when the sign can be ready.

**180/22 Finance:** Payments to consider:

Econet Donation: Rejected.

Window Flowers: Revised quote part approved.

CR Landscapes £126: Paid #1/12 2022  
Kennet Engraving Services £139.20: Paid #2/12 2022  
Former Clerk Backpay £305: Paid #3/12 2022  
Clerk Wages and Expenses £539.27: Paid #4/12 2022  
SSE (Nov) £54.78: Paid Direct Debit

These payments are proposed by Mr Merrick, seconded by Mr M Evans and approved unanimously.

**181/22 Reports from liaison rep:** Nothing to report.

**182/22 Any other business:**

Mr P Evans suggested making a contribution to a permanent, planted Christmas tree at the church.

Mr Merrick suggested collaboration with TPC for coronation celebrations. Councillors to propose members of a working group to organise with TPC.

Ebike project. Council discussed and agreed that this offering is probably not applicable to Ruscombe area.

Bank payment authorisation.

Action: Clerk to add Mr Merrick, Mr M Evans and Mr P Evans to signatory list.

Mrs Carol Bulman resigned from Council and received grateful thanks from Chair on behalf of the Council.

Action: Clerk to post vacancy for new Councillor

Mr M Evans closed the meeting at 9:50pm

Chair Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023**