

Ruscombe Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Parish Council

Held in the William Penn Room, Loddon Hall, Twyford

On Wednesday 1st November 2023 at 7:30pm

Councillors Present: Mr M Evans (Chair), Mr P Cassidy, Mr G Merrick, Mr P Evans and Mr J May.

Others Present: Mr M Andrea (TPC)

Clerk in attendance: Mr G Winder.

7:30pm Mr M Evans opened the meeting.

178/23 Apologies for Absence: Mr G Howe and Mrs A Hasted

179/23 Declaration of Interest: No new interests to declare.

180/23 Minutes: Minutes for 4th October 2023 circulated via email but not approved as late changes required. Will be amended and signed at next meeting.

181/23 Public Comments sent to the Clerk or Councillors: None.

182/23 Update from Twyford Parish Councillor: Mr Andrea informed Council of the next Meet the Councillor event will be on the 11th November 2023. He also invited Council to consider events for the upcoming 80th anniversary of D-Day next June.

183/23 Update from Wokingham Borough Councillors:

The following update was received from Mr Howe via email:

The bin strategy is now in a 'Task and Finish group' of Management O&S.

There is a plan to exit Shute End. All indicators are that they want to go to the old Marks & Spencer building.

There is a lot of spend on consultations.

Due to a lack of Local Plan, developers are going to planning appeals invoking unbudgeted large legal costs that are not defensible due to lack of Local Plan.

184/23 Ruscombe Neighbourhood Plan: Mr M Evans updated Council that a meeting on the 18th October was attended by himself, Mr P Evans and Mr Cassidy plus three volunteers. The current situation was discussed and the way in which publicity will be organised was covered prior to the referendum set for 7th December 2023.

It was noted that Mr Merrick has run through requirements with Leani at O'Neill Homer and she will draft a 2xA4 document.

Volunteers have been busy on their document and another meeting is planned for the 8th November 2023.

Mr M Evans will write a plain note to RG10 and other publications.

Mr Merrick will contact estate agents for printing and distribution.
Permitted Council spend on the referendum is limited to £2600.
A local resident has offered to pay for publicity. It was proposed to offer this to the volunteer team. This keeps spend separate from the RPC budget.
The Chair confirmed to Council that there IS NOT a minimum turnout required for the referendum.

Action: Clerk to ensure that referendum leaflet versions are on the web site and social media.

The Chair will inform Volunteer Lead that the RPC leaflet will be a broad background on how we got here.

185/23 Planning Applications:

232561 Rolson. Mr Merrick proposed that RPC enter no comment.

186/23 Ruscombe Ponds: Mr Merrick informed Council that the main crossroad pond was awaiting excavation work delayed due to injury.

Saplings have been cleared.

The church pond could have the willow removed from front taking every other stump at the discretion of CR Landscapes.

MR Merrick spoke with Alex Cruikshank and he has produced six topics in words but graphics still need to be sourced.

187/23 Pennfields Orchard: Grass has been cut now but wild flowers left for the birds.

188/23 SID Maintenance: All working, no issues.

189/23 Trees: Mr Barnes will replace The Queen's Tree.

190/23 Loddon Hall RPC Rep: Mr Merrick shared with Council that the recent meeting was fairly short. Trustees were present and proceedings were somewhat curtailed by an argument about two constitutions in use as the new version had not been run past trustees. Another meeting has been scheduled to discuss this.

There is still no master plan but committee are currently concentrating on re-covering the seats.

191/23 CIL Money:

Town Sign – New local resident has offered to pay for the sign although Council may still consider spending CIL money and perhaps look for other projects.

A contact of Charles Stevens asked to see the proposed design but the message is that it is still being finalised after which the Council would be happy to share.

192/23 Finance: Payments to consider:

Mr Cassidy Expense (Sign) £36.00 Paid #1/10

Econet Pond Clearance £60.00 Paid #2/10

Clerk Wages and Expenses £896.86 Paid #3/10

SSE (Oct) £55.00: Paid Direct Debit #4/10

These payments were proposed by Mr G Merrick, seconded by Mr P Evans and approved unanimously.

193/23 Reports from liaison rep:

Mr M Evans attended the TPC Meet the Councillor event and was asked by a resident about overgrown hedges and grass cutting which has already be carried out.

194/23 Any other business:

The 'Have Your Say' communication was discussed briefly.

Reading Transport Strategy – Chair asked Council to look at it and feedback to Mr Merrick or the Clerk.

Mr Merrick raised the concern about the traffic speeding along Northbury Avenue. He proposed contacting Highways regarding this.

Action: Mr Merrick to send proposals to Clerk for forwarding to Highways.

The Chair advised Council that he had been asked by a nearby resident and landlord of Royal Oak if another streetlight could be installed near the pub, possibly on opposite side for road.

Action: Clerk to look into steps needed.

8.31pm Mr May joined meeting.

Mr May proposed a possible joint venture with TPC to erect a wooden fence similar to one installed near Asda to protect pedestrians around the A4 junction, Piggott roundabout as it would benefit Ruscombe residents.

Action: Clerk to speak with Highways.

Mr M Evans closed the meeting at 8:40pm

Chair Signed_____

Date_____

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 6th December 2023