

Ruscombe Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Parish Council

Held in the William Penn Room, Loddon Hall, Twyford

On Wednesday 6th March 2024 at 7:30pm

Councillors Present: Mr M Evans (Chair), Mr G Merrick, Mr P Evans, Mr P Cassidy, Mrs E Cameron and Mrs A Hasted.

Others Present: Mr G Wise and Mr N Barnes

Clerk in attendance: Minutes taken by Mrs A Hasted (in absence of Clerk)

7:30pm Mr M Evans opened the meeting.

41/24 Apologies for Absence: Mr G Winder, TPC Representatives.

42/24 Declaration of Interest: Mr M Evans as director of CPRW. Gave a reminder that CPRW has funds available to fight developments that the RPC could call upon if needed.

43/24 Minutes: The minutes of meeting held on 7th February were not available to be signed.

Mr P Cassidy requested that final minutes should be available within a week of each meeting.

Action: Request to be passed to clerk.

44/24 Public Comments sent to the Clerk or Councillors:

Mr Jeremy Hardman was not able to attend the meeting in person but sent two comments by email.

1. The 850 bus has been very erratic with many last minute cancellations. Mr Hardman has taken the matter up with Stephen Conway who agreed to get the traffic team at WBC to contact Arriva,
2. He requested that if the RPC were still supporting Readibus with donations this should be stopped as they do not supply any service to Ruscombe residents. He requested instead that any such money allocated should be donated to Keep Mobile as an alternative service.

Action: Clerk to write to Arriva with a complaint about the 850 service. Keep Mobile donation to be noted.

Mr David Williams contacted the Clerk by email pointing out that the RPC website looks very out of date, particularly regarding the new transport links from Twyford on the Elizabeth Line.

Action: Mrs Hasted offered to update the website text. Clerk to send her an editable copy of the text.

45/24 Councillor Vacancy: Mr N Barnes had circulated to council his details in support of his application.

Mr M Evans proposed co-opting Mr Barnes, seconded by Mr Merrick and approved unanimously.

Action: Clerk to send required forms.

46/24 Presentation of Sign Board: Mr Gerry Wise brought to the meeting the draft proofs of the images and text to go the sign board to be erect by Ruscombe pond. He explained that one of his aims in designing the board was to attract children to look for the flora and fauna that can be seen around the pond. The sign board met with general approval of the council. Mr Wise suggested that a copy of the poster is placed on the website. Mr Wise will submit an invoice to cover the production of the board and his incidental expenses. Mr Merrick suggested that the board could be erected and set in concrete by CR Landscapes while they are doing maintenance of the pond rails.

Mr Wise was thanked for his valuable work and stayed for the meeting.

47/24 Update from Twyford Parish Councillor: None in attendance.

48/24 Update from Wokingham Borough Councillors: None in attendance.

49/24 Matters Arising

Replacement of Benches by St James' Church: CR Landscapes have quoted to replace two benches using sustainable teak. One of the existing benches has a commemorative plaque attached which will have to be removed. Mr Merrick agreed to try and contact the family and confirm that they are happy for us to replace the bench. A proposal was made to go ahead with the project and the quote from CR Landscapes (£1169.32 +VAT) subject to approval from the family.

Proposed Mr P Evans and seconded by Mr M Evans

Church Lane Flooding – the Clerk has contacted the authorities responsible.

The Clerk has produced a list of matters arising. It was agreed that these should be incorporated in the project management documentation.

Action: The Matters Arising agenda item should be used to track actions agreed at the previous meeting (highlighted in red for this meeting)

50/24 Planning Applications:

240438 – Already actioned.

240318 – 26 Orchard Estate. No comment agreed.

Action: Clerk to respond to latter.

51/24 Projects:

Ponds - Mr Merrick that the project to straighten the pond rails is in hand.

Stanlake Lane Footpath – Mr Merrick reported that he had talked to Linda Turner about the possibility of a footpath along her boundary hedge. This would need to be managed by Wokingham Highways dept.

Action: Clerk to write to WBC Highways – MR Merrick to provide the text

Village Sign – There has been some confusion about an invoice received from McNeil Homer for dealing with the planning application for the village sign. It appears that a quote was sent in November but not received by RPC. After much discussion it was agreed that the invoice should be paid, once the plans are submitted, as their input into the planning process is important.

Mr Merrick showed the plans from McNeil Homer for the position of the sign and there was general agreement on this.

Mr M Evans had heard from Hurst Parish Council that they had problems with WBC highways in agreeing position of the sign.

Action: Mr Merrick to ask McNeil Homer to check this point out when they submit the application

52/24 Finance - CIL Spending

Clerk has circulated our current spending

Quote from CR Landscapes for Bee Highway ((£1469 +VAT)

Go ahead on this Proposed Mr Cassidy, Seconded Mr Evans

Action: Clerk to chase up Hanging Baskets contract as nothing has been received.

53/24 Finance – Payments to Consider

Clerk Wages and Expenses £1,068.77 #1/2

SCS Pennfields Orchard (Feb) £36.60. #2/2

CR Landscapes (Pond Work) £372.00. #3/2

SSE (Feb) £55.00: Paid Direct Debit #4/2

These payments were approved by Council.

54/24 Reports From Liaison Reps:

Mrs Cameron went to a meeting entitled "Nature Recovery". The meeting was about increasing biodiversity and attended by about 20 people (no landowners plus a few farmers+ other interest groups). There was some talk on Government Bio-Diversity net gain legislation requiring developers to increase biodiversity of a site by 10%

NPCG – Mr M Evans reported that Sonning Parish Council were considering hiring a Hurricane aeroplane for D-Day on June 6th and were other parishes interested. No interest was shown.

Meet the Councillors Session Saturday 9th. Mr P Evans and Mr Merrick will try to attend.

55/24 Any other business:

We need new logos for websites and publicity material

Action: Mrs Hasted to speak to Sally Castle

Clerk's ageing Hardware

It was agreed that the Clerk could look into new hardware costs (computer and printer) together with a new phone and present figures at next meeting.

Action: The Clerk

Annual Parish Meeting

Agreed Date 24th April at 7.30

Action: Clerk to book Twyford Room and notify council when done.

Possible speakers

Church warden at St James

Action: Mr M Evans to contact him.

Alex – Ruscombe Ponds Ecology

Action: Mr Merrick to contact

Poster for notice boards and Facebook

Action: Mrs Hasted to draft

Mr M Evans is sadly resigning as Chair at the next meeting (3rd April), Councillors are asked to express their interest in taking over the Chair by contacting the Clerk before the next meeting.

Chair Signed_____

Date_____

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 3rd April 2024

Chair initials_____

RPC Minutes 6th March 2024