

RUYTON XI TOWNS PARISH COUNCIL

15 OCTOBER 2019 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

An ordinary meeting of the Parish Council was held at The Barn, The Talbot Inn, Ruyton XI Towns at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 15th October 2019.

Parish Councillors in attendance: Mr T Allison; Mr S Denyer; Mr S Gittins (Chairman); Mrs A. Lister, Mr I Pinner; and Mr D Spicer (Vice Chairman); Mrs A Hall.

Also in attendance: Nick Bardsley (Shropshire Council Councillor); PCSO Carroll (PCC Representative), Lydia Bardsley (Acting Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

PUBLIC SESSION – A member of the public raised a question about adding extra names to the War Memorial. This will be put on agenda for the November meeting.

- 64.19 WELCOME BY CHAIRMAN – The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present to the meeting. The chairman informed the Council that the outgoing clerk is not well and that the Lydia Bardsley will be taking minutes in her place. The councillors introduced themselves and welcomed Lydia to the council.
- 65.19 APOLOGIES - The Chairman reported that apologies for absence had been received from the following councillors: Cllrs A. Sanders Royle (personal), Mr R Harrison (university), Mr R Edwards (unwell), Mr D Shearan (holiday). These were accepted by the Council. Clerk Sue Hackett was wished a speedy recovery.
- 66.19 COUNCILLORS DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS & DISPENSATIONS – None declared.
- 67.19 LOCAL REPORTS
- a) Local Police Report – Chairman Cllr Gittins notified the Council of a large horse box fire at Wykey possibly on 3rd October, which the Fire Brigade believe could have been arson, but it is not conclusive at this point. Cllrs discussed unofficial reports of aggravated robberies at Harmer Hill and other locations in a short period of time. Nothing had been reported in the press, and it was believed that nobody was harmed. PCSO Stuart Carroll arrived and gave his report. With regard to the recent burglaries discussed earlier he emphasised that prevention and vigilance were very important. The Council asked PC Carol his opinion on Smart Water, he informed the Council it was very effective as a deterrent, and that the figures show a reduction in residential burglaries in areas using Smart Water, with a definite impact in rural areas as well as more urban areas. He informed the Council that the UV light tunnels and readers in police stations show very clearly if anyone has been in any contact with stolen goods marked with Smart Water, which is the first step on the path to prosecution.
- He clarified that there should be no ongoing cost once kits have been purchased by Councils. Chairman thanked PC Stuart Carol and he left the meeting 18.53.
- b) Safer Roads Group – Cllr Spicer informed the Council that the group hadn't had a meeting recently, but he updated the Council on his Freedom of Information request re. the contract between Shropshire Council and WSP, and that he had not gotten anywhere despite reporting them to the Information Commissioner's Officer. Shropshire

Councillor Nick Bardsley offered to pass Cllr Spicer contact details for a Parish Councillor who also works for WSP.

Cllr Spicer also informed the Council that the SRG's campaign on emptying drains had been quite successful, and noted that Victoria Doran at Shropshire Council was a very helpful contact.

- c) **The Cliffe – The Cliffe Crew Volunteers –**
- i) Cllr Allison informed the Council that volunteers did 2 hours work on the Cliffe last weekend, with up to 10 volunteers at one stage. They are rotating the areas being worked on.
 - ii) Re. the request for a **memorial bench** on the Cliffe it was **AGREED** to defer this matter until next meeting.
 - iii) Re. the request for the Council to **clear a bridleway as access to residential property**, no further information had been received from the complainant, and it doesn't appear they have any written rights. It was noted that the legal searches made in the process of the Council's purchase of the Cliffe verified that the Council had no obligations in this matter.
 - iv) **Mill Lane** – The chair notified the Council that he will arrange to cut one side of the hedges. It was noted that it would not be a good idea to cut both sides or too often, as this might encourage vehicles to use the lane, and the Council does not want it to become a green lane.
 - v) **Fallen tree** – Cllr Hall notified the Council that a tree (believed to be an American redwood) had fallen, and supposedly this species are not to be chopped down without the necessary permissions, but if they have fallen naturally, the timber is worth a lot of money. Cllr Hall will investigate this further and report to the next meeting.
- d) **Doctors Meadow - Bridge Painting Project** – Chairman gave an update. The wet weather had prohibited the start of work. The health and safety and environmental aspects of carrying out the work from above were discussed. It was noted the bridge would need to be de-mossed, and then treated later. **It was AGREED that the clerk will ask David Peate for a quote for doing the work.** It was noted that the rest of the work may need to be left until next year.
- e) **Multi Agency Group** – Update by Cllr Bardsley. The September meeting had been postponed, but they would be meeting this Friday 18th October, and David Gradwell and David Spicer will be attending.
- f) **Hedgehog Crossing Warning Signage** at Platts Bridge – It was **AGREED** that Cllr Denyer will install the signs in the proposed location.
- g) **Improvements to Queen Elizabeth II Field**, Platts Bridge – Wild seed meadow. It was **AGREED** to defer this until Feb/March meeting, as it is better to deal with this in spring.
- h) **Doctors Meadow** – Council to consider fencing of sand pit following quotes provided. Concerns were raised about possible costs of properly certified fencing. It was **AGREED** that clerk will investigate the safety requirements. It was **AGREED** that the Chair will contact David Sheldon for a quote.
- i) **Lamp post Poppies/Wreath** – Cllr Denyer report that Cllr Shearan has these, and that none were damaged last year so no more need to be purchased. It was **AGREED** that Cllrs Denyer and Shearan will liaise about putting them up again.
- j) **Oswestry Area Committee Report** – The Council **NOTED** Cllr Hall's update. The clerk will share a digital copy of the Village Survival Guide with council. The need for a contingency plan in place in cases of staff illness was discussed and will be an agenda item for November. Cllr Hall also noted Shropshire Council's Tree planting initiative

which will be on agenda for the next SALC area meeting, and may be relevant for the Cliffe. It was noted that the BT Telephone kiosk consultation did not impact the parish as the kiosk in Ruyton XI Towns is not on list to be removed.

- k) **Highways England Mile End Consultation.** It was **AGREED** that the Council would not respond to the consultation.
- l) **Baschurch Railway Station** – Cllr Bardsley gave a report on the last meeting, and informed the Council of the beneficial impact that instating the railway station would have on other villages in the catchment area e.g. Ruyton XI Towns, Bomere Heath, Little Ness, Great Ness, Myddle, etc. The station would be about half way between Gobowen and Shrewsbury, and there is already a precedent on the Chester route of stopping every few miles e.g. Chirk, Ruabon, Wrexham etc. The need for a decent sized car park was noted; the land currently proposed only allows for 70-80 cars, and it is thought 100+ parking spaces would be needed, which would mean re-planning the development to slightly reduce the number of houses.

It was AGREED that Council will support the proposal to set aside more land for a bigger car park for a new station at Baschurch.

- 68.19 SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR's REPORT – Cllr Nick Bardsley had nothing further to report that hadn't already been discussed earlier in the meeting. It was noted that, with regard to Cllr Spicer's Freedom of Information request, WSP tender prices are commercially sensitive, but these could easily be taken out of the information that has been requested.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION - *PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960*
Pursuant to Section 1(2)

- 69.19 RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE – It was **RESOLVED** to formally approve the appointment of Lydia Bardsley as the new Clerk/RFO. The outgoing clerk had identified a need for a Sickness & Absence Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy and H & S Policy. Acting clerk notified the Council that she had some policies that could possibly be adapted by Ruyton XI Towns Parish Council.

70.19 FINANCE

- a. 6 Month Budget Monitoring Report & Bank Reconciliation – The Council **RESOLVED** to approve these. It was noted that no grant applications had been put in for SRG, and that there was contingency that could be used towards Smart Water. The Council made special note of how appreciative they were of the outgoing clerk's work as RFO over the years.
- b. Strategic Plan/Main Aims – Council to consider future spending priorities for budget 2020. It was **AGREED** that Councillors will think about priorities over the next few weeks in time for the November meeting, e.g. The Cliffe, play areas, SRG, etc.
- c. External Audit Report for 2018/19 Accounts – Council noted satisfactory completion of audit in September and its publication.
- d. Council **RESOLVED** to authorise the following invoices/reimbursements for payment and to **retrospectively** authorise those already paid in September*:

Date of Issue	CHQ/SO	Payee	Description	£	VAT £
01/09/2019*	987	PKF Little John LLP	External audit Fee	240.00	40.00
01/09/2019*	988	HMRC	Second Quarter NI	32.70	
25/09/2019*	SO	Employee	Net Salary	756.17	
15/10/2019	989	I Pinner	Reimbursement of mileage costs re training	11.25	
15/10/2019	990	Clerk	Reimbursement of mileage, Home Office, postage and Hedgehog signage costs.....	195.80	8.90

15/10 2019	991	Ruyton XI Towns Village Hall Committee	Donation to Home Grown Shown	150.00	
15/10/2019	992	SALC	70 th AGM dinner x 2	57.00	
15/10/2019	993	Shropshire Council	The Cliffe maintenance fee	3000.00	

The Council noted that an additional invoice from David Peate was received prior to the meeting which would be authorised in November. Cllr Lister suggested salvaging the begonias from the hanging baskets to overwinter them to future use on the Cross. Cllr Lister will remove the 1 remaining basket from the bust stop to store with the others.

- e. **New Financial Regulations** (Appendix C.) It was **RESOLVED** to adopt these.
- f. **Banking arrangements:** The new clerk had spoken to Barclays and HSBC and gathered feedback from other clerks about council bank accounts. Barclays was not an option as eligibility criteria has changed for community accounts, and HSBC was poorly rated by other councils. Unity Trust has accounts designed for town and parish Councils and is used and recommended by many Local Councils in Shropshire (Pontesbury, Bishops Castle, Wem, Selattyn & Gobowen, etc.). They charge £6 per month for turnover up to £100k (charged quarterly), there is no interest paid, and they need an opening credit of £500. Other clerks rate them very highly as an excellent bank to deal with for councils. It was noted that cheque payments would still be possible, and the clerk would be able to set up online BACS payments which councillors could authorise online. It was noted that Pontesbury Council has 4 signatories and 2 of them will authorise payments at any given time (to allow for absence/annual leave etc.) It was noted that there are no branches but cash can be withdrawn from RBS and NatWest branches. The clerk had checked that Ruyton XI Towns meets the eligibility criteria, and should hopefully be able to switch from existing Bank account with Bank of Ireland.

It was **RESOLVED** that the new clerk will progress opening an account with Unity Trust. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllrs Simon Gittins, David Spicer, Trevor Allison, and David Shearan would be signatories on the new account. The new Clerk will liaise with signatories to get the information required to submit the application.

- 71.19 PCC CAMPAIGN – “WE DON’T BUY CRIME” – Council to determine whether to buy into the campaign, following the presentation received in August, estimated costs provided in the Clerk’s Report and feedback received from West Felton PC. It was felt that a lack of understanding and residents not using the website might be the reason for the lack of interest in Smart Water up to now. It was proposed that the Council set up a public meeting, print flyers, divide up parish, and knock on doors to promote the offer. Another suggestion was having a councillor attend coffee mornings, Amateur dramatics, etc. to talk to residents, as well as flyers to go home with children after school. It was noted that the Council needed coverage of 80% registration of Smart Water kits in order to get the free “We Don’t Buy Crime” signage from police. It was noted that West Felton Parish Council said that PCSO’s have helped with knocking on doors to promote Smart Water as well.

It was **RESOLVED** to take up the Smart Water offer in principle and aim to set up public meetings in November.

The Chair will liaise with the police contact to confirm details of the Smart Water offer and to check what support will be available.

- 72.19 CONFIRMATION & ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: It was **RESOLVED** to confirm that the draft minutes of the council meeting held on 13th August 2019 were accurate.

- 73.19 CLERK'S UPDATE REPORT & COMMUNICATION – See Appendix A. **Noted.**
- 74.19 CONSULTATIONS CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS – Council to consider:
- SC Youth Support Consultation (Deadline 12-11-2019). Cllr Bardsley informed the Council there could be an impact on funding for Great Ness and Little Ness youth club that is used by Ruyton residents. It was **AGREED** that the clerk will write to the youth club to ask if there are concerns about funding being withdrawn. It was **AGREED** to defer a consultation response until the November council meeting.
 - SC POST 19 Transport Policy – It was **AGREED** to make no comment.
 - Shropshire Playing Fields Association "Freedom to Move" Strategy – It was **AGREED** to make no comment, but to consider the proposals put forward by Cllr Shearan at the November meeting.
- 75.19 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN/RIGHT MOVE RIGHT PLACE –
It was **AGREED** to defer this matter to the November meeting when Cllr Shearan will be back and Cllr Harrison might also be back. It was noted that Cllr Shearan had specific proposals to help decide whether the council should commit to supporting a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 76.19 PLANNING MATTERS – Council to consider any application which may be received following the date of issue of this agenda:
- Reference: 19/04238/FUL (validated: 30/09/2019)
Address: 1 Meadow Court Barns, Wykey, Ruyton XI Towns
Proposal: Erection of a single storey side extension and shed
View online at: <http://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=PYAQ4TTD11S00>
- It was **RESOLVED** to make no comments.
- Reference: 19/03738/FUL (validated: 01/10/2019)
Address: The Old Congregational School, School Road, Ruyton XI Towns
Proposal: Conversion to form one dwelling
View online at: <http://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=PWL7YZTD0BN00>
- It was **RESOLVED** to make no comments.
- Council also to note the following planning decisions as notified by Shropshire Council:
Reference: 19/03351/FUL (validated: 26/07/2019)
Address: Wykey Farm, Wykey, Ruyton XI Towns
Proposal: Installation of a renewable energy heat pump ...**SC Decision: Passed**
- It was noted that Planning Application 19/00075/FUL has gone to Appeal, and that the PC had made no comments in Feb'19.
- 77.19 SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA – The following matters were discussed:
- Severn Trent arrived in Wykey last night and closed the road due a supposed emergency leak, although the leak in question has been issue since last April. The road closed for 2 days instead of just over night and caused chaos. The Chair would like to write a letter to complain about the lack of notification and inconvenience caused.
 - Scottish Power had undertaken trimming of trees in the village (Brown Hill area) as they were too close to wires, but no debris had been removed. The Council was not sure if

they are obliged to remove waste in these situations. It was noted that the SC contact was Gary Parton if the Council has problems with Severn Trent, Scottish power, etc.

- Cllr Lister informed the Council she was now a signatory for Basnett, Matthews & Minton charity Trust. They have identified a potential recipient for support, but the family have decided it is not a good time to intervene.
- Cllr Allison passed on feedback re. hedges needing cutting in Baschurch for Shropshire Cllr Bardsley as the footpath not wide enough for pushchairs.
- Next meeting 26th November in Victoria Rooms, Ruyton XI Towns.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.33pm and thanked everyone for attending.

Confirmed as accurate.....

Chairman of the Council Cllr Simon Gittins Date

Appendix A Clerk's Report; Appendix B 6 Month Budget Monitoring Report; App C Finance Rules