

RUYTON XI TOWNS PARISH COUNCIL

7 JULY 2020 MEETING MINUTES

An ordinary meeting of the Parish Council was held online at 6.30 pm on Tues 7th July 2020.

Parish councillors in attendance: Mr S Denyer, Mr B Edwards, Mr S Gittins (Chairman), Mrs A Hall, Mrs A Lister, Mr D Shearan, Mr D Spicer (Vice Chairman).

Also in attendance: Nick Bardsley (Shropshire County Councillor), Lydia Bardsley (Clerk), Public: 4

Meeting started at: 6:30pm.

31/20. Welcome by Chairman

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

32/20. Apologies

The Chairman reported that apologies for absence had been received from the following councillors: Mr T Allison, Mr I Pinner, Mrs A Sanders Royle. These were accepted by the Council.

33/20. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests and Dispensation

No declarations received.

34/20. Public Session

Residents spoke on the Yardley application, and shared their disappointment about the lack of information provided, and voiced concerns on several issues. These included: Known highways safety concerns; Corporate governance– putting looked-after-children (LAC) into unsafe situations; National Planning Policy Framework – application is against para. 108b and SC6-; SC's handling of the application and lack of clarity; validity of supporting comments not on planning portal; timing of proposed drop-in session – 3 months after purchase and during pandemic; legality/appropriateness of a drop-in session being organised entirely by the applicant, and the lack of notice to community. It was **NOTED** that residents were also still waiting for information that had been promised, e.g. turning circles for staff changeovers, proposals to demolish the garage to create extra parking, widening access to the driveway, electric gates, fences along highway etc.

Cllr Bardsley explained he had still not received the information that the Yardley Liaison Group had asked for, and it was not known whether any steps had been taken to arrange the drop-in session yet, let alone timetables etc. It appears that no steps have been taken to start addressing the highways concerns.

One of the members of the public passed on apologies on behalf of another neighbour who was not able to attend meeting, and emphasised they are not ambivalent to this application. The clerk pointed out that the neighbour in question has already commented on the planning portal, so their views are known.

It was **RESOLVED** that agenda items 38/20b Shropshire Councillor Bardsley report and 40/20(1) Yardley planning application would be brought forward.

38/20b and 40/20(1). Yardley

Shropshire Cllr Bardsley (NB) gave a summary of the minutes of the Yardley Liaison Group meeting held on 1st July 2020. *These notes will be available as an appendix to the Parish Council meeting minutes.*

NB was very apologetic that he didn't have further updates and was very disappointed that there was no clear timetable for the proposed drop-in session. He felt strongly that the applicants (Children's Services) should be talking to the Planning Case Officer to discuss extending the consultation period. Given the location of the property and the planning history, it is especially important for the applicants to communicate openly, transparently and within normal procedures, and particularly if there is a substantial change to the application, as it appeared there would be. In similar situations applicants might withdraw the application and submit a new one. NB echoed concerns about the practicalities of holding a drop-in session during the covid-19 pandemic. NB was very unhappy about the current muddled situation and will be speaking to Shropshire Council portfolio holder Ed Potter.

Cllrs raised questions about whether holding a drop-in session after the consultation has already expired was lawful procedure or not. There was a general feeling that the drop-in session is a token gesture of engagement, knowing that members of the public will not attend during the covid-19 pandemic. There seemed to be little motivation for the applicants to find solutions for the valid concerns raised by neighbours and Parish Council.

It was **AGREED** that the Council cannot comment on the application until after the drop-in session, and because the necessary details relating to the proposed changes were not yet available. The clerk would email the Planning Case Officer to explain why the Parish Council cannot comment yet.

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council will send a letter to Shropshire Council Children's Services to:

- express disappointment in how this matter has been handled,
- request a firm date for extension of the consultation period,
- request details on proposed application changes as soon as possible, with reasonable amount of time to digest this before the Parish Council responds,
- suggest the applicants withdraw the application and resubmit once they have all the correct information
- ask about legality of deviating from normal planning process.

It was **NOTED** that it is likely that the application will go before the Northern Planning Committee, in September at the earliest. The way the application has been dealt with will have to be explained at Committee.

The members of the public left the meeting at 7.15 pm.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue with the normal agenda order.

35/20. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm that the Council [minutes dated 9th June 2020](#) were accurate and would be signed at a future date.

36/20. Coronavirus

It was **NOTED** that despite easing of lockdown measures, NALC guidance was for remote meetings to continue for the time being unless face to face meetings were absolutely necessary. Cllr Hall and clerk were looking into bringing in a phone dial in option for councillors and members of public who could not access meetings online.

Council discussed VE/VJ Day 75. It was **AGREED** that from an insurance perspective, the Parish Council should not organise/help coordinate/endorse any commemorative activities/gatherings in public as there would not be enough time to organise these properly with necessary risk assessments even if they are permitted by government lockdown rules before the August bank holiday. The clerk would share resources

for marking the anniversary from home if people wished to commemorate the anniversaries within the scope of lockdown rules in place at that time (e.g. with bubbles, socially distanced outside, etc.)

It was **AGREED** that councillors will contact the clerk if they want to respond to the CRT survey re. support during pandemic.

37/20. Policies to review and approve (appendix A).

After review it was **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the following policies.

- a) **Complaints Procedure (updated)**
- b) **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure (updated)**
- c) **Training Policy (updated)**
- d) **Councillor-Clerk Protocol (new)**
- e) **General Reserves Policy (new)**

38/20. Reports – Council to consider and agree actions.

a) Clerk's update report (appendix B)

RESOLVED to note. Clerk reported that the VAT refund would hopefully be paid back to the council within the next few weeks.

b) Shropshire Councillor Nick Bardsley, including Yardley (appendix C)

Yardley had been discussed earlier in the meeting. NB spoke about the updated timetable for the Local Plan Review, and emphasised the importance of considering the documentation that will come out on 10th July. He was particularly keen to see if the cross-subsidy exception sites policy had been updated, as the draft policy from 18 months ago was very ambiguous. NB had asked the Planning Department both formally and informally that the policy be clarified, as it is a major issue for development in rural parishes, and the Parish Council need to consider this carefully.

NB congratulated the Parish Council for pushing for a bus replacement service during the Church Street closures, and he was pleased to see the road works took less time than planned.

NB is liaising with the primary school to arrange a remote Multi-Agency Group meeting in Sept hopefully.

c) Local Police Report

Council **RESOLVED** to note the report. It was **AGREED** that the clerk would ask if police reports could include more detail e.g. crime pattern analysis, police response to criminal activity, etc. The clerk would also ask if reports could be sent 1 or 2 weeks before meeting so that any concerns can be discussed informally with police before meeting.

39/20. Parish Matters – Council to receive updates and agree actions.

a) Casual Vacancy

It was **NOTED** that Cllr Harrison had resigned from office in order to start teacher training and SC had been notified. The 14-day period for requesting an election for filling the vacancy ends on 9th July so no decisions could be made at this time.

b) Rural crime

The chairman gave an update on discussions with West Mercia Police rural crime commissioner Graham Donaldson re. the sudden increase in rural crime. Wykey Farm and other neighbouring farms had been

burgled Sunday night/Monday morning. Despite calling 101 immediately and having CCTV footage of the perpetrators, initially they were told that police would only come out to the property if trespassers entered residential buildings, as it was outside their remit. Eventually the police did attend and were helpful, but overall there seemed to be very little proactive action to tackle the recent surge in rural crime.

It was **NOTED** that there are now Smartwater packs for businesses and farm, which include more liquid. It was proposed that the Parish Council put in a request for some kits and ask businesses to pay a contribution to recuperate costs.

It was **AGREED** that the Council will order 15 SmartWater packs for businesses/farms, and the chairman will talk to local businesses and arrange distribution of the packs. Clerk to check VAT implications.

It was **AGREED** that the clerk will speak to Estelle Stock at West Mercia Police about the police's previous offer to register kits remotely and post out residential kits, and what the process would be in terms of covid-19 and data protection implications.

Cllr Hall reported a positive story about recent help from local police officers, and emphasised how grateful she was for police intervention.

c) Neighbourhood Plan

No update at the moment.

d) Safer Roads Group

SRG know what measures they would like in the parish, but more information is needed regarding the Yardley application before this can progress.

e) Wild flower seed sowing on Queen Elizabeth II Field

Chairman had offered to donate some wild flower seed mix for this purpose. SC currently mow a path through the field for dog walkers, but otherwise the field is left a bit wild. It was suggested that the PC arrange to sow seed over the whole site (apart from the mown paths) just after the grass has been cut closest. There was a discussion about how to sow to best effect, and it became apparent that it is quite a big job, and concerns were raised about getting equipment onto the site through narrow gateways. It was **NOTED** that a member of the public in the village has the necessary equipment so the PC may wish to approach him for a quote for preparing the field. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk will ask SC first what they can do to help us get the ground ready for sowing.

f) Improving cycle routes in the parish

No actions needed at this point.

g) Mountain bikes on the Cliffe

Chairman had attended a meeting with SC, Great Ness & Little Ness Parish (GN&LN) Councillors, and residents on 18th June, and had also met subsequently with Cllr Shearan and other local residents and riders to discuss mountain bikes. There are mapped out routes used by local riders that have been passed to SC's Outdoor Partnerships Team. It was **NOTED** that whilst the meeting did focus on MTB, it was important to coordinate with GN&LN PC and SC across all affected sites, and that it should be a mixed user group that decides which routes should be designated as cycle ways or not. There had been no response from SC as yet.

Concerns were raised about damage to landscape/ecology, erosion etc., and Cllr Shearan had already suggested that this should be a criteria for establishing whether a route is suitable for mountain biking or

not. It was **NOTED** that some affected paths were not in Ruyton XI Towns parish anyway, and Cllr Shearan is sharing information with GN&LN PC so there is a coordinated approach across all sites.

Concerns were also raised about how to police and parking. More updates would be provided in due course.

The clerk spoke about a request for secure fixing for bikes at the bottom of the Cliffe. It was **AGREED** that Clerk would talk to Shaun Burkey from SC to see if anyone else does anything like this.

40/20. Planning applications – Council to consider and agree a response.

1. [Yardley, Brownhill](#), ref: 20/01988/COU

Proposal: Change of use from residential dwelling (Class C3) to a children's home (Class C2).

Consultation expiry date: 12/06/2020

This matter was discussed earlier in the meeting.

It was **NOTED** that an application had come in after the agenda had been published but it could not lawfully be discussed without proper notice. If any councillors had views to share, the Parish Council will use the scheme of delegation to discuss this over email and submit any comments to SC. Comments would be ratified at the next available meeting.

41/20. Shropshire Council Planning decisions – Council to note.

The Council **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the following:

1. Proposed Development [West Of Darlee Cottage](#), ref: 18/02858/REM

Proposal: Reserved matters for residential development of two detached houses (14/04168/OUT).

Decision: Pending consideration

2. [Shelvock Coppice](#), ref: 20/00673/FUL

Proposal: Erection of agricultural building for storage of machinery, produce and housing of livestock.

Decision: Awaiting decision

3. [Park Cottage, The Rough](#), ref: 20/01016/FUL

Proposal: Erection of two storey rear extension and internal alterations incl. relocation of staircase.

Decision: Grant permission

42/20. Payments – Council to consider and approve

a) Invoices/reimbursements to be authorised

On the basis that the Parish Council might not be meeting in August it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments in advance, on the understanding that August salary, clerk allowance, and pension payments would not be processed until August.

- Clerk, July salary: £540.65 (no VAT)
- Clerk, July expenses: £18.00 (no VAT)
- NEST (direct debit), July pension contributions: £40.21 (no VAT)
- Clerk, Aug salary: £540.65 (no VAT)
- Clerk, Aug expenses: £18.00 (no VAT)
- NEST (direct debit), Aug pension contributions: £40.21 (no VAT)

b) Urgent invoices to approve after publication of agenda

None received.

43/20. Finance – to consider and approve

Council **RESOLVED** to note and approve the following. Hardcopies of documents would be signed retrospectively once face to face meetings had resumed.

- a) Receipts & payments report June 2020**
- b) Bank statement for June 2020**
- c) Bank reconciliation for June 2020**
- d) 1st quarter budget monitoring report and general reserves update**

44/20. Future agenda items

Councillors are requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas.

Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.

Yardley – Parish Council agreed to provisionally schedule a meeting for August in case matters move forward which need discussing before September. If this is not needed then a meeting will take place in on 1st September instead.

45/20. Next Council meeting – Council to agree

Next meeting provisionally scheduled for Tues 4th Aug or Tues 1st Sept 2020 at 6.30 pm (venue/online TBC).

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 20.05 pm and thanked everyone for their participation.

Confirmed as accurate: _____ Chairman, Cllr Simon Gittins. Date: _____

Appendices

- A. Policies to review**
- B. Clerk's update report**
- C. Notes from Yardley Liaison Group meeting (01.07.2020)**