

RUYTON XI TOWNS PARISH COUNCIL

4 JULY 2023 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

An ordinary meeting of the Parish Council was held at Victoria Rooms, at 6.30 pm on Tues 4th July 2023.

Parish councillors in attendance: Mr T Allison, Mrs T Bibow (arrived: 18.59), Mrs K Coldwell, Mr S Denyer, Mr M Eyles, Mr N Kynaston, Mrs A Lister (Vice Chairman), Mr L Penton.

Also in attendance:, Lydia Bardsley (Clerk), Nick Bardsley (Shropshire County Councillor), Public: 16

Meeting started at: 6:30pm.

38/22: Welcome by Chairman

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman Cllr Lister took the Chair. She formally opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

39/23: Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Spicer (health concerns), Cllr Bibow (clashing appointment), and Cllr Hamlett (attending a funeral). It was **RESOLVED** to note these.

40/23: Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests and Dispensation

None received.

41/23: Public session

Members of the public spoke on the following agenda items: 46/23g - CIL Road Safety Scheme for Ruyton XI Towns. The following concerns were raised (in no particular order):

- Impact on access for garage, and ability to work on vehicles during school drop off times
- Frustrated that CIL project has delayed resurfacing in parish
- Concerns traffic will speed up to get through proposed priority system
- Children will have to cross road amongst backed up traffic
- Impact on access for residents and commercial businesses
- Pollution and noise while vehicles are idling
- Concerns about increased congestion through village when traffic diverted from A5
- Parked vehicles on Church Street will exacerbate impact of priority system on traffic
- Lorry drivers have to stick to pre-planned routes, don't believe they choose to come through Ruyton as a shortcut
- Fears CIL traffic calming proposals would strangle local business
- Difficulties for fully loaded vehicles to get up momentum from stopped position to get through traffic calming measures
- Other highways issues should be addressed instead, e.g. signage and visibility at Standwardine junction, using mobile phones whilst driving etc.
- Temporary traffic lights on Olden Lane – More vehicles (6-8 vehicles) are coming through in one go at times.
- More ought to be done to educate children about being safe around the roads, rather than changing the roads

The following comments were made in favour of the proposals (in no particular order)

- Fed up with atrocious speed of traffic through the village

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- Serious concerns about safety of parents and children walking to school. Many cars don't respect pedestrians, cyclists, etc.
- CIL project is about the whole community, not individuals. Safety is so important.
- The Primary School and Corbet in Baschurch take road safety extremely seriously. They have to make sure infrastructure allows children to be safe
- Yellow lines would have a negative impact on school
- Risk of serious collisions at Quillets roundabout between speeding vehicles from Brownhill and wagons and trailer drivers that reverse onto and turn around at Quillets every week (roundabout does not slow vehicles down at all)
- Only way to make pedestrian crossing/Talbot area safer for pedestrians is to narrow the carriageway with a priority system
- May be some congestion at school drop off times etc., but do not see it being possible that traffic will queue up as much as people fear. Traffic levels are much lower outside the peak times
- Concerns about numbers of vehicles driving on footpaths, which damages pavements and puts children and pedestrians (especially those with hearing difficulties) at serious risk

Comments raised by Cllrs:

- Not all Cllrs are in favour of priority system proposals
- Construction traffic might be for local building work rather than passing through
- Long diversions for vehicles deterred from going through Ruyton will end up being worse for the environment
- Measures might slow down vehicles, but may also lead to more drivers turning around and causing more problems and risk
- Potential issue of bunching while vehicles get out of priority system, which could make it difficult to get around parked vehicles on Church street
- Concerns over traffic flow data from the modelling for the proposed priority system, worst case scenario could be 57 – 90+ cars
- There would be some delays but these should hopefully be outweighed by benefit to pedestrians and people who live and work in parish
- Hope that the info provided by SC experts will reassure the majority of residents that the changes are necessary for the safety of pedestrians and children etc. The community and SC have to weigh up what the most important thing is.
- Whatever happens with the proposals, it's not going to suit everyone.

The following matters were clarified:

- Resurfacing timetable - now separate to CIL traffic calming proposals, to take place 14th August – 8 Sept (*NB. After the meeting, these dates were pushed back to 21 Aug – 15 Sept*). Platt bridge repairs will start once resurfacing work complete.
- The CIL traffic calming measures – work expected to start Oct half term if it goes ahead as proposed.
- Resurfacing and traffic calming measures were meant to be completed simultaneously with one road closure, but PC asked SC to delay the traffic calming measures to allow more time for community engagement.
- Priority system - priority would be for vehicles heading west, so should have less impact on properties to east of pedestrian crossing.
- Concerns are valid and can be taken back to SC to ask for examples of how this has worked elsewhere and how they adapt in similar environments.

- Proposals are not set in stone, there will be more opportunities after this meeting for the public to share their views on the proposals.
- Info sessions - School is preferred venue, hopefully 2-3 open evenings/afternoons and/or a Saturday morning. Hope that drawings etc. will be displayed at Cafe XI as well. Flyers will be delivered to notify residents of the info session(s).

2 members of the public left the meeting at 19.05.

Other issues raised during the public sessions:

- Fallen tree on School Road - luckily no pedestrians were around at the time. Took several hours for SC to clear road and for Scottish Power to sort out power cables. Streetlight lantern on the utility pole has been damaged. Landowner has been warned previously about need to inspect trees. Member of the public asked that the PC communicate with the landowner to ensure they will sort out trees and hedging every year. It was **NOTED** that this was a sycamore tree, but there there could also be ash trees in the vicinity so these need looking at asap.

7 x members of the public left the meeting at approx. 19.10

Councillors discussed whether to consider the CIL proposals at this point in the meeting. The Chairman felt it was more appropriate to wait until the requested info from SC becomes available, especially as there is now more time before the traffic calming measures would be due to be installed. There is also a need to allow time to engage with the community. Cllr Eyles felt the default position should be to make no changes.

3 x member of the public left the meeting 19.21.

42/23: Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm that the [Council meeting minutes dated 6th June 2023](#) were an accurate and true record.

43/23: Casual vacancy

Council to receive update and consider any applications received

After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to defer a decision until the candidate can be present at a meeting (i.e. 5th Sept 2023).

44/23: Policies to review and approve

It was **RESOLVED** to defer the following until the next meeting:

- a) Action Plan quarterly update

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and re-adopt the following policies:

- b) Complaints Procedure
- c) Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures
- d) General Reserves Policy
- e) Cllr-Clerk Protocol

45/23: Reports – Council to consider and agree actions

- a) Shropshire Councillor Nick Bardsley (appendix A)

The report included the following:

- **Safer Roads Group and CIL project**

As a courtesy, SC Cllr Bardsley and Cllr Lister had visited some of the properties on Church Street (up to the shop), and on School road to share information about the proposals. Opinions were mixed, but most people were generally in favour of proposals, or at least prepared to see how things go. One or two were against, and one person was specifically against the priority system. This was not a scientific survey, and not the only extent of community engagement. Access and drainage was discussed with everyone they spoke to. Feedback will be most appropriately gathered at the SC info sessions. Residents need to have time to consider the plans as they may change their minds when they go to public info session.

Cllrs asked if they were now allowed to share the images and drawings from SC with others. The Clerk advised it would be best to wait until info sessions as there were some concerns about possible inaccuracies, but if Cllrs wanted to share anything sooner, they should make it clear that they are not the final versions and may be subject to change.

- **Housing Options and StaR Housing**

Moving forwards, only families (no single males) will be housed in temp accommodation properties in Birch Grove/Birch Close, which is good news for Ruyton, but not good news generally. SC Housing officers rely 100% on police and probation service risk assessments as to whether placement will be appropriate. SC seem unwilling to question the judgements of those risk assessments, despite the incidents of winter 2022-23. There are serious concerns this will happen again, and SC will be blamed if someone is seriously hurt. PC need to have serious discussions with police to make sure that information shared with the latter is taken seriously, even if the police can't reciprocate and share info with the PC/community. SC Cllr Bardsley will go direct to Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion if there is no progress with local police force.

- b) Local Police Report/Rural crime

The police report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was **NOTED**. It was **FURTHER NOTED** that the fallen tree had also damaged a PC-owned streetlight (lantern only). This was being dealt with through the PC's maintenance contractors, and insurers have also been notified. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk will ask the landowner to pay for the damaged lantern rather than going through insurers.

- c) Safer Roads Group

The SRG report was **NOTED**. Clerk will tidy up notes from CIL Zoom discussion and send to Cllrs and SRG, but it was **NOTED** these notes were not a verbatim record or intended to be formal minutes, rather a note of questions asked and matters for SC to follow up. Cllr Denyer noted that the standard response to some questions seemed to be that "experts have looked at it". SC will need a coherent and consistent response to similar questions from the public, and need to be able to back up those answers with evidence.

- d) Planning working group

Nothing to report.

- e) Climate Emergency working group

Nothing to report. It was **NOTED** that no one had as yet agreed to Chair this group.

- f) Countryside Working Group

It was **NOTED** that:

- **The Spinney –** It was **NOTED** that local businesses (Wykey Farm) had already done the work to cut back the paths on the Spinney. SC do not have a problem with volunteers doing the path cutting work but have stressed that volunteers will need to follow SC's H&S guidance and risk assessments when undertaking work on land for which SC Environmental Maintenance are responsible. It was **AGREED** to defer a PC decision on path cutting. Re. a larger project to manage the wild areas in between the paths, SC did not have any budget to lead or supervise any projects though they seemed supportive of the concept.
- It was **NOTED** that Cllrs have not had chance to discuss leadership of this group.

- It was **AGREED** to speak to Ellsemere and other Councils to get names and look at costs for consultants for help with Cliffe project and Spinney projects.

g) Clerk's update report (appendix B)

The clerk's report was **NOTED**, and will be available as an appendix on the PC website. In addition it was **NOTED** that Hedgehog signs had been ordered and delivered to Cllr Denyer.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk will report overgrown trees at Stanwardine junction to SC. It was **NOTED** that Clerk had asked SC to add a sign for Dairy-Pak to the Standwardine signpost when it is repaired.

46/23: Parish Matters – Council to receive updates and agree actions

a) Council assets

i. Stone Cross damage – Council to receive update

At the last CIL project meeting on 21.06.2023, SC reported that there was currently no infrastructure funding available for relocating the Cross, and SC's anticipated costs were around £100k. SC officers have submitted it as a project to the draft Place Plan for consideration in autumn. Clerk had shared the structural engineer's report on the Stone Cross with SC Officers to see if anything else could be done internally in terms of funding for junction improvements. No further actions at present.

ii. War Memorial leak - Council to receive update and consider actions

Clerk had contacted SC contacts re. similar structures and inspections, but was awaiting a response. Cllrs believed trees are not mature and are self-seeded. It was **AGREED** that PC should speak to a structural engineer and possibly an arborist about managing the trees above the cave.

It was **NOTED** that there is another section of cracked rock ten metres west of the cave (towards Church Street) that Cllrs were concerned about. This is not related to War Memorial Cave and will be SC Highways responsibility, but will be worth pointing out to expert just in case it poses any immediate risk.

iii. War memorial name and info plaques - Council to receive update and agree actions

The LBC planning application has been validated and is now in the consultation stage. As the PC is the applicant it should not comment on this application. Cllr Lister mentioned that a member of the public who does flowers for the Memorial Cave may allow stonemason to park at their house during the works.

b) Birch Grove matters

Council to receive update on concerns raised by residents and agree actions.

It was **AGREED** that Cllr Lister will email Inspector Claire Greenaway to ask about the male currently on remand.

The Council **NOTED** the recent reports of dog damage to Birch Grove play area which had been passed to SC. No further actions.

c) Shropshire Housing Options and StaR Housing Association

Council to receive update on tenancy housing decision-making process and agree actions.

This was covered under SC Cllr Nick Bardsley report (item 45/23a) and Clerk report (item 45/23g). It was **AGREED** to wait for discussions with police.

d) St John the Baptist donation request for outdoor shelter

Council to consider donation request

SC Cllr Bardsley gave his apologies and left the meeting at 20.35.

A request for £3000 donation to finance an outdoor shelter had been received. After discussion it was **AGREED** that the PC would make a donation to Friends of St John's School charity of £1500, using surplus from General reserves. It was **FURTHER AGREED** that the clerk will contact the Village Hall Committee to establish any financial support needs. The PC can then make a decision on the remaining £1500 requested.

e) AED checks over summer holidays

Council to agree arrangements for completing checks over school holidays

It was **AGREED** that Cllrs Bibow, Lister, and Coldwell will arrange to make the AED checks amongst themselves.

f) Trees in parish

Council to receive update on project to have old trees assessed and added to national register
Cllrs Penton and Kynaston gave an update. There is one possibly ancient tree opposite Ruyton Hall by temporary traffic lights (estimated 500+ years old). That, and another neighbouring tree with lots of dead branches, will be SC responsibility.

The Cllrs will attempt to measure trees on Grug Hill next, but they are not as large as the one on Olden Lane. Cllr Lister had written to a contact at Forest Nurseries to ask if they were interested in helping identify and establish age of old trees in the parish, will chase to make sure they received the email. It was **AGREED** that Cllrs Penton and Kynaston will continue with this throughout the year.

Cllr Bibow apologised for the temporary traffic lights and explained that builders are ready to make the wall safer, they should receive a second quote by end of this week. They shared the frustration with the situation and were very keen for a return to normality as soon as possible.

g) CIL Road Safety Scheme for Ruyton XI Towns

i. Council to consider proposals and decide whether to support these proposals

As further information was needed from SC e.g. safety audit report and resurfacing plans, it was **AGREED** to defer this decision until Sept meeting, on the proviso that the PC will have another opportunity to make a decision on whether it supports the proposals or not before the works start.

ii. Council to agree arrangements for public information sessions

It was **NOTED** that SC was planning to prepare info leaflets and that the PC may need to help with distribution. It was **AGREED** that PC set up zoom/Team meeting with Emma Walker at SC to plan consultation/info session and when info will be available for public to view. Cllrs suggested evening of 17th/18th July and morning of 22nd July for info sessions. The PC hoped there would be online and paper questionnaires for comments. Arrangements will need to be agreed as soon as possible due to summer holidays and next PC meeting on 5th Sept. There was the possibility that the PC may need to contribute towards printing costs of flyers so Clerk will obtain quotes from SJF Print.

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders 3(x) to allow the meeting to continue beyond 2.5 hrs.

47/23: Planning applications– Council to consider and agree/ratify responses

1. [Ruyton Manor Olden Lane, ref: 23/02409/FUL](#) – Council to agree response

Proposal: Installation of new solar panels in adjacent field from Ruyton Manor.

Deadline for comments: 20.07.2023

After consideration it was **RESOLVED** to support the application with the following comments: The Parish Council supports the uptake of sustainable energy technology, and as the proposals are for domestic use only, and will not be visible to anyone else, there should be no negative impact on other parties. Therefore, there are no objections to the plans, and the Parish Council supports the application.

48/23: Shropshire Council Planning decisions

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the following:

1. [North West Relief Road Scheme, 21/00924/EIA](#) – Pending consideration
2. [Ruyton Hall, Olden Lane, ref: 23/00562/FUL](#) - Pending consideration
3. [New access, Ruyton Hall, Olden Lane, ref: 23/01632/LBC](#) - Pending consideration

1 x member of the public left the meeting at 21.06.

49/23: Consultations – Council to consider and agree responses

a) **West Mercia Police Town and Parish Council survey (deadline 14.08.2023)**

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It was **AGREED** Clerk will send round survey and previous responses and ask Cllrs for responses.

- b) **Community Governance Reviews** – Council to consider parish boundary anomalies and feedback from residents, and agree comments to send to SC

It was **NOTED** that Great Ness & Little Ness PC are meeting tonight and will consider the suggestions made by Cllrs Spicer and Allison. Cllr Spicer has also written to Knockin and West Felton PC for feedback on suggested changes. Cllr Spicer has reported that almost all residents living on the border who have been contacted are happy with the proposed boundary changes. The only exception is Mount Cottage on the Cliffe which is currently split equally between Great Ness & Little Ness and Ruyton XI Towns parishes and the owner doesn't want that boundary to change. It was **AGREED** this will be added to Sept agenda.

- c) **Place Plan Priorities (deadline for additional priorities 07.08.2023)** – Council to consider priorities and projects for submission to SC

It was **AGREED** to submit the following projects to the Place Plan for consideration:

- A5 Shottaton junction improvements (incl. extra lane for turning left to Nesscliffe bypass)
- Baschurch surgery parking
- Cliffe Local Nature Reserve and maintenance
- Spinney restoration and wildlife habitat improvements
- Accessible walking routes round parish
- Parking improvements Little Ness Road
- War Memorial renovation – plaques, structural inspections (leak), dry steam cleaning
- Doctors Meadow playing field improvements, incl. reinstatement of hard track and links to Grove Court, Spinney bridge, and car park
- Improvements to Village Hall – incl. step-free access and energy efficiency/decarbonisation
- Broadband provision and enhancement
- Maintain wildflower meadow on Bridge Inn field
- Repair Stone Cross monument
- Maintain Mill lane Arboretum paths and wildlife habitats
- Widen Low Bank Lane to a double track from entrance opposite Ruyton Manor to Gibraltar Lane at Wolfshead roundabout
- Drainage improvements in Elbridge and other rural settlements in parish
- Improvements to pavements in village
- Repairs to wall on Church bank
- Electricity supply and capacity

50/23: Finance – to consider and approve

- a) Receipts & payments June 2023
b) Bank statement June 2023
c) Bank reconciliation June 2023

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the above items 33/23 a-c.

It was **NOTED** that £10,000 of PC funds had been moved to savings account, and Clerk would share recommendations for any additional transfers to savings to balance income from interest with cashflow.

- d) Budget monitoring report Q1 (appendix C)

It was **RESOLVED** to note the above report.

It was **AGREED** that Internal controls checks report will be added to Sept agenda.

51/23: Payments – Council to consider and approve

- a) **Invoices/reimbursements to be authorised**

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It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the following payments.

- Clerk, July staffing costs, £855.95 (of which £7.08 VAT, £2.60 unrecoverable)
- HMRC, July PAYE and NI contributions, £135.09 (no VAT)
- NEST (Direct Debit), July emp'ee and emp'er pension contributions, £66.83 (no VAT)
- Clerk, Aug staffing costs, £805.15 (no VAT) – To be paid 25.08.2023
- HMRC, Aug PAYE and NI contributions, £134.89 (no VAT)
- NEST (Direct Debit), Aug emp'ee and emp'er pension contributions, £66.83 (no VAT)

b) Urgent invoices to approve after publication of agenda

None received, but it was **AGREED** that if an invoice from Flowerscape for hanging baskets is received between meetings, that this will be paid as soon as possible. The cost (£496) had already been budgeted for previously and specifically agreed at April meeting (min ref: 170/22c).

52/23: Correspondence received

It was **RESOLVED** to note the following:

- a) National Highways update re. trees at Shottaton crossroads – Clerk to chase.
- b) Oswestry Rural South police newsletter
- c) Roadworks: Cefn-y-Wern jct to Haughton Farm jct (3-4.07.2023)
- d) Roadworks: Church Rd, Baschurch (10.07.2023 to 20.07.2023)
- e) Roadworks: Park Bank 24-28.07.2023)
- f) Roadworks: Station Road, Baschurch level crossing (21-24 and 28-31.07.2023, night time closure only)
- g) Roadworks: Ruyton Rd, Baschurch, (01.08.2023 – 13.08.2023)
- h) Roadworks: Newtown, Baschurch, (24.09.2023)

It was **NOTED** that Platt Bridge will be closed during school term, so school buses and 576 will need diversions. This will need to be addressed asap.

53/23: 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.

- CIL road safety proposals
- It was **NOTED** that Talbot Inn has been sold and will be a free house. It was **FURTHER NOTED** that if new owners offer B&B in Ruyton this could increase traffic movements. Cllr Lister will speak with new owners/landlord once they're in place. It was also **NOTED** that current landlord has said brewery could supply smaller vehicles for deliveries if needed which would help with any potential traffic movement issues.
- Two mirrors on Old Post Office – Clerk has reported these to SC.

54/23: Next Council meeting – Council to agree

It was **AGREED** that the next ordinary meeting would be held Tues 5th Sept at 6.30pm at Victoria Rooms.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting at 21.24pm.

Confirmed as accurate: _____Chairman. Date: _____