

**ROWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD VIA ZOOM
ON THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2020**

Present

Councillor I Henderson – Chairman
Councillor J Coles
Councillor D Lane
Councillor B Sandford
Councillor D Weir
Parish Clerk – Nicola Everall
Warwick District Councillors – G Illingworth & R Hales
3 members of the public

Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic – this meeting was held via Zoom

247. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Parish Councillor M Daw and County Councillor J Cooke.

248. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

249. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 July 2020

It was proposed by Councillor J Coles and seconded by Councillor D Lane that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2020, having been previously circulated were agreed and will be signed as true record by the Chairman as soon as practicable.

250. Questions from Members of the Public

Mr G Hames raised concerns regarding heavy goods vehicles using Queen’s Drive, Rowington as a cut through to premises on Rowington Green and this often resulted in damage to the grass verges, due to the lack of width. The most appropriate route would be for vehicles to use Old Warwick Road, turning right into Rowington Green.

It was agreed by members that the Clerk should contact the County Council Highways Team to request that suitable signage be installed to prevent this, by way of a ‘weight restriction’ or ‘no heavy goods vehicles’ unless vehicles were delivering to premises on Queen’s Drive.

251. Report from County Councillor – Councillor J Cooke

In the absence of Councillor J Cooke, The Clerk had previously circulated Councillor Cooke’s report, which is also appended to these minutes.

252. Report from District Councillors G Illingworth & R Hales

The Clerk had previously circulated Councillor Illingworth’s report which is also appended to these minutes.

253. Planning Matters

a) The following planning matters were reported.

Application Number	Application Details	Comments required by	PC Decision	WDC Decision
W19/1746	Field at Haywood Lane and junction with Case Lane, Mousley End, Rowington Application for a new access track accessed of Haywood Lane, provision of temporary mobile proprietary cattle shed, feed store and farm equipment store, installation of post and rail fencing and field gate	04/12/19	No objection	
W20/0388	Land Adjacent Kingswood Farm, Old Warwick Road, Lapworth Erection of one detached dwelling and garage together with associated parking and landscaping	27/04/20	Object	Granted
W20/0668	Old Beams, Lapworth Street, Bushwood Erection of new dwelling and detached garage	04/06/20	Object	

W20/0721	Barn, Oldfield Hill Barn, Old Warwick Road, Rowington Application for Prior Approval under Part 3, Class Q (a) and (b) for proposed change of use of agricultural building to a dwelling house (Use Class C3)	27/07/20	No objection	Refused
W20/0867	Downlands, Mill Lane, Rowington Prior Approval under Part 11, Class B for the demolition of a block of stables	13/07/20	No Objection	Prior Approval Given
W20/0858	Cocks Close, Old Warwick Road, Rowington Prior Approval application for proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to dwelling house (Use Class C3) under schedule 2, part, class Q of the GPDO 2015	30/07/20	No objection	Prior approval not required
W20/1065	Downlands, Mill Lane, Rowington Demolition of existing agricultural building and erection of replacement agricultural building	19/08/20	No objection	Granted
W20/1268	High Acres, Nunhold Road, Pinley Application for erection of stables	28/09/20		

b) There were no applications to consider

c) Old Beams, Lowsonford

A recent WDC report to the Extended Delegated Decisions Meeting, due to Covid-19, related changes explained that face-to-face meetings of the Planning Committee were not taking place.

Instead, the Chair of the Planning Committee together with the Head of Developmental Services make decisions based on papers from planning officers.

Warwick District Councillor, George Illingworth, reported that WDC has decided not to continue with this procedure. This change was welcomed by all Members.

Members were concerned regarding the new procedure and in particular the lack of transparency and the reduced opportunity for democratic decision making based on representations from members of the public and statutory consultees and failed to understand how a rational decision can be reached in the conclusion in the paper, when faced with such overwhelming objections. The paper was wrong on a number of points and overlooks the objection from WCC Landscape Team, relating to the application at Old Beams and it was agreed that the Chairman, take this up with the LPA.

d) Pergola at the Fleur de Lys PH, Lowsonford

Following the recent appeal decision regarding the pergola at the Fleur de Lys, members agreed that whilst it was not possible to challenge the Inspector's decision, the Chairman, suggested that the Parish Council, seek to establish what can be done to reduce the impact of the decision, which is a requirement to remove the pergola and restore the land and building to its former state. This is particularly unfortunate in the light of Covid-19 safety requirements.

Members agreed that the Chairman contact the LPA asking for sympathetic consideration to any future application for a replacement structure.

254. Playing Field

a) Outstanding Reports – None

b) Future Inspection Dates – Future Inspection Dates – 13 September – Councillor J Moore & 27 September Councillor M Daw

255. Reports from Village Halls

Rowington Village Hall

Councillor D Weir reported that the Management Committee is looking at re-opening the Village Hall. The new Government legislation does not prevent village halls opening, halls may still host events that are attended by more than 6 people, village halls being in the same category as workplaces and education settings, alongside other exemptions, and the Committee will be meeting in October 2020 to progress putting measures in place with a view to re-opening the Hall in the New Year and hopefully no further restrictions will be imposed.

256. Highways, Footpaths & Transport

The Clerk continued to press the County Council and the Canal & River Trust for responses regarding the issues relating to an assessment carried out in 2016, from the Canal & River Trust, on the canal bridge (41) in Lowsonford. A member of the public raised concern at the speed of vehicles on Old Warwick Road, Rowington.

The Clerk receives regular emails from parishioners regarding this and there are often posts on ' Next Door Rowington' relating to the lack of respect of the speed limit along this road.

The limit is 40mph, but motorists continue exceed that limit most of the time, and whilst there are speed flashing signs, these are overgrown with vegetation and often not working. The issue is very much from the St Laurence Church bend, once the road begins to straighten out, right through into Lapworth. But, even before the bends near the Church, drivers approach too fast often crossing the white line on the approach to the village.

WCC Highways had previously responded negatively, by referring to lack of fatalities not making this road an issue.

It was agreed by Members of the Parish Council, that the Clerk contact Highways with an urgent request to carryout speed surveys at various points along that road. If necessary, the PC would make a financial contribution.

Councillor J Coles raised concern regarding the recent land slip, which had occurred following heavy rain on Narrow Lane, Lowsonford. This had also resulted in gravel and debris being on the road surface and this was in need of attention. The Clerk was requested to contact WCC Highways Team.

Furthermore, the road surface in Mill Lane, Lowsonford is desperately in need of pothole repairs.

257. Meetings & Training Days Attended & Forthcoming

There were none to report.

258. Parish Activities

There were none to report.

259. Correspondence

Noted.

260. Finance

a) Paid during the month:

Clerks Salary (August)	£743.36
HMRC (August)	£75.75

b) To be paid:

Clerks Salary	£743.36
HMRC	£75.75
AMW Lawncare	£243.50 & 133.66

c) Received:

None

Resolved unanimously that the above items of finance be approved.

d) Payments by Cheques

The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council gives consideration to change from the current payment method to BACS. It was agreed to address the matter in the future.

261. Representatives on Outside Bodies

The Clerk reported that the Jane Ryland Charity has 5 trustees, two of whom are appointed by the Parish Council.

Mr Stephen Williams is one of the Parish Councils appointees and his four-year term was due to expire in September 2020.

Furthermore, Messrs M Wade & S Williams and Mrs J Hames were appointed by the Parish Council as Trustees to the Rowington Almshouse Charity.

It was proposed by Councillor J Coles and seconded by Councillor D Lane that the above Representatives continue in Office for a further four years.

262. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Requests for CIL funding were deferred to a future meeting.

263. Rural Crime Initiative

The Chairman was pleased to report that there had been no increase in crime figures of late, but the car key burglaries were a worrying concern.

264. Emergency Plan

The Clerk had circulated the draft Emergency Plan and it was agreed to adopt the Plan following minor amendments.

265. Defibrillator at Lawsonford Village Hall

Councillor M Daw had received a report giving details of a recent Police Authority inspection which has been conducted at Lawsonford Village Hall following the recent refurbishment. In that report the Police Authority had recommended that restricted access to the car park be put in place by way of re-installing the gates and this would mean relocating the defibrillator.

The Clerk was requested to investigate an alternative location and likely costs.

A decision about possible re-location will be made when further information is available.

266. Future Meeting Dates

- 8 October 2020
- 12 November 2020
- 10 December 2020

267. Items for the Next Agenda

None of Note.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Signed..... Designation..... Date.....

Report from County Councillor J Cooke

County Council presses for County Wide Unitary Authority

The government's decision to recommend changes to the structure of local government for the first time since 1974 has already seen a flurry of activity in the County even before the publication of the White Paper which is expected to be published at the end of this month.

First out of the blocks was Warwick & Stratford Districts pushing for a merger into a so called "Super District." But this was swiftly followed by the County Council Cabinet moving to press for a takeover of all Warwickshire Districts & Boroughs to form a County Unitary Authority. I suspect that the two options which will be most closely fought will be the formation of two unitary authorities, one in the north and one in the south and the County Council's unitary bid. I think it is going to be an interesting autumn. The County Council will debate the matter on September 22nd.

Station Road Kenilworth to remain closed for now

The decision to close Station Road because of the pandemic was welcomed by some but not by all. Some of the traders were concerned that servicing lorries kept on blocking off parking and easy access to their businesses.

The County Councillor for the division Alan Cockburn visited the traders and contacted the officers at WCC and following several discussions and onsite meetings decided to install some bollards paid for from his small safety improvement budget to ease the parking situation. This closure is not permanent and will be reviewed at a later date.

School meals will be back on the menu thanks to Educator's.

School kitchens have re-opened as pupils return to school for the autumn term – and Warwickshire's school caterers, Educators, will be serving up a delicious selection of hot and cold meal options with well-loved favourites that children can look forward to when they get back to the classroom.

Free school meals and universal infant free school meals will be provided as usual for children that are eligible.

Educators are working with individual schools to help them be Covid-19 safe during lunchtimes. Some schools will be asking pupils to eat their lunches in their classrooms or specific areas of their school, rather than in the usual dining room or school hall, so hot and cold 'deli bags' are on offer to help with these arrangements where appropriate. Please check with your child's school for more details.

Parents of 'lockdown babies' reminded to get their births registered

Warwickshire County Council's Registration Service is reminding the parents of babies born during lockdown to make an appointment to get their births registered if they haven't already done so. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown earlier this year, registration services across the country, including in Warwickshire, had to temporarily close.

This meant that, at the time of their birth, many families were unable to register their babies who were born in March, April, and May. Now the birth registration service is up and running again, Warwickshire's registrars are urging these families to get in touch and make an appointment to officially register their children.

All of Warwickshire's registration offices are now open for pre-arranged appointments and are Covid-19 secure.

Youth Workers supporting young people during the pandemic

Warwickshire County Council staff are out and about meeting young people across the county to offer them support with any issues or concerns they may have, and to help them to stay safe during the pandemic.

The Council's Targeted Youth Support (TYS) service has a team of dedicated, qualified youth workers that use their knowledge, skills, and experience to build strong relationships with young people to help them make positive futures.

The service has seen an increase in demand during the Covid-19 pandemic and youth workers have gone above and beyond to support young people during this difficult time on a range of issues.

For many young people, this time has been extremely challenging. Periods of isolation from friends and more time at home has had a negative impact on mental health and placed strain on difficult family relationships. Other issues are also present, such as, dealing with the negative effects of social media, a lack of formal education and increased risk of exploitation, making this a time where they are more in need of something to do and someone to listen than ever.

Help is available for people who may be struggling to cope

Warwickshire County Council's hotline on 0800 408 1447 remains open for people who need urgent help to access food and well-being support during these difficult times.

The hotline was set up in March 2020 to provide rapid response to people extremely vulnerable to Covid-19 and isolated without support. Despite the pausing of the Government shielding programme, and relaxing of some measures, the hotline remains a vital point of contact for people in need of help to support themselves and their family.

The council's welfare scheme, is accessible via the hotline, or online at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme and can also assist people in crisis by providing short term support to manage the needs of their households. To qualify for support from the scheme people need to be a UK resident, aged 16 or over, and have no other financial means to access food or fuel. Anyone facing serious hardship is invited to get in touch to find out more.

In addition to the welfare scheme, the hotline can direct callers to other food and well-being solutions, as well as council, health and community sector support available locally, so people can find out how to protect themselves and address any issues they may face.

Report from District Councillors G Illingworth & R Hales

The White Paper on the future reorganisation of the local government has not yet been published and I am not privy to the details. Without consultation with those affected the County have already proposed a County-wide unitary. This is a possible solution but there are other possibilities such as a North-South division. The Five Boroughs and Districts are jointly investigating the whole picture.

The District Council has been pursuing three strands of the Covid-19 pandemic

1. Helping retail and businesses get back into operation
2. Getting used to new ways of working and returning staff to normal duties after redeployments
- 3 Planning and preparing should the second wave happen

Pubs and pavement licences have raised some concerns for the spread of Covid-19 if the rules are not properly followed.

At the recent Council meeting an attempt to extend the delegated decision powers which have deprived parish councils and residents of their democratic part in decisions was withdrawn.

The Government has recently rejigged the Use Classes so that many more changes of use, such as shops to cafes, are possible without requiring planning permission. The idea is to create flexibility to support town centres but small shops more than 1 km from the next nearest will be protected as local community uses.

The Government currently has two consultations on Planning. One is for short term tweaks, but the other is a White Paper proposing a rehash of the whole planning system supposedly speeding it up and bringing it into the 21st Century. However, it demands very detailed Local Plans leading to an assumption of approval for faster implementation. The devil is no doubt in the detail and some aspects are a real cause for concern.

Neighbourhood Plans remain part of the system but unless these are revised as well it is not clear how the two will work together.