

ROWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD VIA ZOOM
ON THURSDAY 8 OCTOBER 2020

Present

Councillor I Henderson – Chairman
Councillor J Coles
Councillor M Daw
Councillor J Moore
Councillor B Sandford
Councillor D Weir
Parish Clerk – Nicola Everall
Warwick District Councillor G Illingworth
5 members of the public

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

268. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Parish Councillor D Lane, County Councillor J Cooke and District Councillor R Hales.

269. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

270. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 September 2020

It was proposed by Councillor J Coles and seconded by Councillor B Sandford that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2020, having been previously circulated were agreed and will be signed as true record by the Chairman as soon as practicable.

271. Questions from Members of the Public

Canal Bridge 41 - Lowsonford

Mr Richard Roberts, Bridge Maintenance Team Leader of WCC was welcomed by the Chairman of the Parish Council, who gave a brief introduction to the history of an incident at this bridge, making reference to the burst watermain and regular construction traffic crossing the bridge, including numerous axles and trailered vehicles.

Mr Roberts provided a comment on the County's response to the Parish's correspondence dating back to July 2020, when the Parish first submitted its concerns to WCC in writing, requesting an emergency weight limit, in line with the recommendations of Canal & River Trusts (CRT) Principal Inspection report dating back to 2016.

Mr Roberts apologised for his lack of response to the request of the Parish Council prior to the meeting in September 2020 and explained that the County's Bridge Maintenance team had met with CRT officers on 20 August 2020 including David Fern, Principal Engineer for the region and their Inspector of the report.

It was agreed at that meeting that CRT, in order to address the County's concerns in their assessment methodology would re-inspect the bridge structure. The report requests that a 12 tonne axel weight limit should be implemented unless resurfacing and reconstruction works of the carriageway were undertaken in a reasonable, short term, timeframe. The date of origin for this recommendation being 2016. Mr Roberts had reached out to CRT to provide updates but received no response from CRT.

Mr Roberts had stressed that plans were underway to resurface the carriageway, rebuild the stone sett kerbs and reconstruct the mass concrete verges to base of parapets, and it was agreed with CRT that this response would address the recommendation in the report that a weight limit was required. The planned works were slightly complicated and drawn out by the number of stakeholders including STW (needing to ensure watermain is repaired before WCC deliver the resurfacing works or at least attend the works dates) and WDC due to the listed building status.

Mr Roberts also stressed it was for CRT as structure owner to formally apply to WCC as the local Highway Authority in order to confirm the accuracy of the requested weight limit required (in their application rather than historic report) - or even the temporary weight limit could be deemed insufficient.

Mr Roberts also made reference to what appeared to be a detrimental strategy and precedent set by CRT leaving their highway structures to decay with WCC taking liability for assessment and control of weight limits on what is in effect 'structures owned by others' supporting the network and any decision may well set a precedent for other bridges in the region.

The Chairman had challenged that position on the grounds of 'knowing there is a potential risk at this site. The County Council should also account for the burst water main causing further damage since the original recommendation to put a weight limit in place,' and it was then at the request of the Chairman, Mr Roberts make arrangements for an emergency weight limit to be both legally put in place and signed on approaches within the next seven days.

It was confirmed that there will be sometime before the resurfacing works are coordinated, originally targeted for delivery before the end of the calendar year.

Mr Roberts offered to relay that request to senior figures, but again emphasised that the meeting and agreed actions in August 2020, with CRT would prevent the need for a temporary or permanent weight limit, however the time taken from now until the resurfacing works was again used as their area of concern.

Councillor G Illingworth was to keep County Councillor J Cooke informed of this issue.

272. 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.

273. Report from District Councillors G Illingworth & R Hales

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

274. 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	
W20/0668	Old Beams, Lapworth Street, Bushwood Erection of new dwelling and detached garage	04/06/20	Object	
W20/1268	High Acres, Nunhold Road, Pinley Application for erection of stables	28/09/20	Object	

b) The following planning matters considered and decided:

W20/1810 - The Lyons Farm House, Rowington Green

Application for outline planning permission for the erection of 3 detached dwellings

The Clerk read an email received from the applicant of this application, confirming that he was to withdraw this application and submit revised plans to the LPA.

Dr M Wade expressed concern that there was little provision for affordable housing in the Parish.

c) Old Beams, Lowsonford

The Chairman had attended a meeting of the LPA (via video link) on 7 October 2020, as representative of the Parish Council, objecting to this application for a detached dwelling. At that meeting, it was agreed that the consideration of Planning Application W/20/0668 would be deferred to a later meeting.

It was reported that Planning Officers recommended that the original application be recommended for refusal. Officers then commenced negotiations with the applicant and a number of quite significant changes were made, which represents a material change from the original application.

The Chairman understood that the appropriate way to deal with this is for the original application to be withdrawn and for the amended application to be re-consulted by all statutory and other consultees. This was the procedure followed in a previous application by this applicant.

During the Planning Committee meeting of the LPA it was also reported that the application had been referred to the Conservation Advisory Forum ("CAF") as having no objection to the proposal, but the minutes of the Conservation Advisory Forum for 1 October 2020, showed that this application was not considered by CAF.

Due to the proximity of the proposed build to the Fleur de Lys Grade II listed building, as well as its location within the Lowsonford Conservation Area, it was considered important that CAF have an opportunity to comment on the revised application and the Chairman had requested that CAF consider this at their meeting on 29 October 2020 and would also be writing to CAF with some comments.

The Chairman had asked for confirmation that the revised application will be fully re-consulted (including CAF) in compliance with the procedures normally followed. This will then enable the revised application to be considered at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 3 or 4 November 2020.

It was also noted that should it be required, WALC is able to offer two hours professional planning advice to the Parish Council.

d) Potential Enforcement Matters

Oak Trees, The Cumsey

The Clerk continued to seek updates from the Enforcement Officer at the District Council, who had confirmed that historical information was required in order to pursue this matter, and until Officers returned to the office this matter was awaiting review.

275. Playing Field

a) Outstanding Reports – None

b) Future Inspection Dates – Future Inspection Dates – 11 October Councillor B Sandford & 25 October Councillor D Lane

276. Reports from Village Halls

Lowsonford Village Hall

Councillor M Daw reported that the Village Hall was closed due to Covid- 19 and it was not expected to re-open before 2021.

Rowington Village Hall

Councillor D Weir reported that the Village Hall remained closed due to Covid-19 and a meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee was to take place on 21 October 2020 to discuss when the Village Hall might re-open.

277. Highways, Footpaths & Transport

Public Footpath – Rowington Green

Dr M Wade reported that significant improvements had been carried out to the surface of the footpath adjacent to Lyons Farm, Rowington Green, including drainage and enhanced surface and expressed his grateful thanks to Mr D Pickering of Lyons Farm.

Speeding – Old Warwick Road, Rowington

At the last meeting of the Parish Council a member of the public raised concern at the speed of vehicles on Old Warwick Road, Rowington and the Clerk sought the views of WCC. The limit is 40mph, but motorists continued 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.

The Traffic & Road Safety Group had responded and assured the Parish Council that it was committed to making roads as safe as possible through Engineering, Education and Enforcement and continued to fund a successful Road Safety Education program while working in partnership with the Police to focus enforcement at appropriate sites.

Whilst WCC would like to accommodate requests for engineering measures, resources are limited and therefore, have to prioritise work in the most cost-effective way.

Engineering measures do take a significant portion of available funding and therefore need to be focused on locations with a poor collision rate, where there are patterns of activities or behaviours that can be attributed to the collisions, and where viable solutions can be identified that can make an impact. In reviewing the evidence relating to Old Warwick Road, WCC advised that it is not currently identified as a priority site for investment.

Warwickshire County Council do not have powers of enforcement, therefore, if residents do wish to report vehicles they consider to be speeding, they may contact the Police via the non-emergency number, 101. These calls do provide evidence toward consideration of future enforcement sites. Residents are also advised to approach their Local Community Forum where enforcement priorities are agreed with Local Councillors and the Police. www.warwickshire.gov.uk/communityforums for more information and contact details.

Queens Drive, Rowington

Following concerns raised at the last meeting, regarding heavy goods vehicles using Queen's Drive, Rowington as a cut through to premises on Rowington Green, which often resulted in damage to the grass verges, due to the lack of width, the Clerk had contacted WCC.

The Clerk suggested that the most appropriate route would be for vehicles to use Old Warwick Road, turning right into Rowington Green and requested 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.

WCC had responded, stating that "HGV routes are currently under review. We are not considering the introduction of additional weight limits at the present time. However, there may be scope for provision of "unsuitable for HGV" signs if the Parish Council would be willing to fund the appropriate traffic surveys and sign provision".

Advisory signs will not be considered for use on A and B class roads. Signs will only be considered on other roads if a survey shows that more than 10% of vehicles using the road are HGV's, without legitimate access. There is currently no existing County Council funding available to carry out a survey or install new signs on the road, and therefore external funding would need to be identified by the requesting party.

Members therefore agreed not to pursue this matter.

Pothole Repairs, Lowsonford

The Clerk confirmed that WCC Highways had confirmed that these issues were now on the schedule for repairs.

278. Meetings & Training Days Attended & Forthcoming

There were none to report.

279. Parish Activities

There were none to report.

280. Correspondence

Noted.

281. Finance

a) Paid during the month:

None

b) To be paid:

Clerks Salary	£743.36
HMRC	£75.75
AMW Lawncare	£314.83
Rowington Almshouse Charity Allotment Rent	£229.00

c) Received:

Precept	£10,215.00
CIL	£41,500

Resolved unanimously that the above items of finance be approved.

282. Bus Shelter – Old Warwick Road

The Clerk had circulated details of a quotation for £430.00 for the urgent roof repairs required to the bus shelter on Old Warwick Road. The works included removal of branches from the adjacent property, replace tongue and groove roof and reclad with roofing felt.

It was proposed by Councillor I Henderson and seconded by Councillor B Sandford that the work should proceed, subject to the Clerk liaising with the adjacent property regarding the overhanging branches.

283. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Requests for CIL funding were deferred to a future meeting.

Dr M Wade reminded the Parish Council of his wish to pursue the idea of a footpath from Rowington Green to Lapworth and the Chairman confirmed that this would be considered.

284. Future Meeting Dates

- 12 November 2020
- 10 December 2020

285. Items for the Next Agenda

None of Note.

Councillor J Coles thanked the Clerk for her regular updates to outstanding matters between meetings.
Councillor M Daw thanked the Clerk for her persistence with regards to requests for repairs to potholes and poor road conditions.

The Clerk and members thanked the Chairman for his continued sterling work with regards to planning applications.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

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

Report from County Councillor J Cooke

County Council meeting agrees call for early unitary review

At the County Council Meeting on 22 September 2020, it was agreed following a long debate that the Council would write to the Secretary of State Robert Jenrick asking for Warwickshire's plans for a single County wide unitary authority be considered early on in the local government review. A number of amendments were moved and one calling for the scheme for separate North & South unitaries, as championed by the District & Borough Councils to also be sent to the Secretary of State and this was added to the motion and agreed.

The White Paper has not been published as yet and the rumour mill and so called "leaks" are saying that the publication will be delayed until the new year, and even then, the government will want to make sure that the Covid 19 measures are making progress.

Covid Test and Trace - National update

Reports on Monday this week stated that the NHS Test and Trace App has been downloaded 12.4 million times. The app's effectiveness should increase as downloads increase, so we continue to encourage its download where possible.

To download the app, visit the Apple or Android App stores and select 'NHS Covid-19'. The app can be used to scan QR codes at venue entry points to further increase the accuracy of the app's contact tracing function.

The national programme team has noted that there appear to be issues with people understanding the self-isolation rules. The main issue appears to be where people receive a negative test result during the self-isolation period and stop isolating because they think they can. Symptoms can take a number of days to appear, so people need to isolate for the full period regardless of a negative test.

Residents urged to play their part and look out for each other

Following the announcement made by the Government earlier in the week, the Director of Public Health for Warwickshire County Council is thanking residents for the sacrifices made so far, but urging them to play their part by following the new rules and looking out for each other. Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/1335/residents-urged-to-play-their-part-and-look-out-for-each-other> **Flu vaccine more important than ever during COVID-19 pandemic**

Report from District Councillors G Illingworth & R Hales

The White Paper on the future reorganisation of the local government is understood to have been delayed until next year. The Districts and Boroughs are beginning consultations and considerations. Meanwhile the County Council without consulting with the Districts and Boroughs or the public or awaiting the White Paper has put in a submission for a single Unitary Authority.

The three stands of Covid-19 activity continue:

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 in this area.

The rationalisation of lots of Project Boards and working parties into half a dozen Programme Advisory Boards has started. I am on the one dealing with Health and Community Protection.

The Government Consultation on the Planning White Paper proposing a rehash of the whole planning system supposedly speeding it up and bringing it into the 21st Century is still open until 29th October. 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.

Finally, Philip Clarke is now Head of Development Services as of 21 September 2020.