

## Ruscombe Parish Council

### Minutes of Meeting of the Parish Council

Held in the William Penn Room, Loddon Hall, Twyford

On Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 7:30pm

**Councillors Present:** Mr J May (chairman), Mr M Evans, Mr P Cassidy, Mr C Bell, Mr G Howe and Mrs C Bulman.

**In attendance:** Mrs L Jarvis (Twyford Parish Council) and one member of the public.

**Clerk in attendance:** Mrs R Reid.

Mr May opened the meeting at 7:30pm.

**100/19 Apologies for Absence:** Mrs K Robson and Mr A Wrigley.

**101/19 Declaration of interest:** Mr May, Mr Evans and Mr Bell declared that they are directors for the Campaign to Protect Rural Wokingham (CPRW).

**102/19 Minutes:** Minutes for 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 and 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019 circulated. Proposed by Mr Bell, seconded by Mr Evans, approved unanimously.

**103/19 Update from Twyford Parish Councillor:** Mrs Jarvis updated that Twyford's village fun day was a huge success and it was well attended.

Hare Hatch resident, Kim McLaren entered the meeting.

**104/19 Public Forum:** Hare Hatch Resident, Kim McLaren asked RPC to consider application number 191566 Milley Lane, Hare Hatch.

#### **105/19 Planning applications:**

**191566 Milley Lane, Hare Hatch:** This application is outside the boundary of Ruscombe Parish Council however Councillors have agreed unanimously that they would like to comment. RPC agreed unanimously on the following comment

Ruscombe parish council would like to object to this application because they are concerned about the following points:

- 1) The development is in the greenbelt.
- 2) The size of the access gates – they are too wide for personal access to the land.
- 3) Traffic and safety – The location of the gates is very close to a crossroads that regularly have accidents or near misses occurring, adding an additional access point will increase the chance of further collisions.
- 4) Heritage of the area – The Old House next door to the site, Hill House directly opposite the site and 2 other building opposite are Grade II listed, this development or any other in the area would negatively impact upon the heritage and landscape of this area.
- 5) Climate Emergency - Wokingham Borough Council have declared a climate emergency, this application goes against that policy because many the very well established and healthy trees are being cut down.

- 6) Biodiversity – RPC are concerned at the lack of clarity and consideration to biodiversity. There are many natural ponds in the area housing the Great Crested Newts, these are a protected species. The site is also believed to be home to many specialist and unusual trees, these are presumably home to many different forms of wildlife.
- 7) Procedural difficulties – there are irregularities between the consultation end date e.g. the Wokingham newspaper says the 12<sup>th</sup> September but it is understood the hearing is on the 11<sup>th</sup>, neighbours to the site were not informed of the application, the application statutory notice was only erected after a neighbour had questioned why it was not up and RPC as neighbouring parish close to the border were not invited to comment, failure to follow these procedures should invalidate the application.

Kim McLaren left the meeting.

**192028 17 Northbury Avenue, Ruscombe:** No comment

**192055 6 Hatchgate Cottages, Wargrave:** No comment

Mrs Reid will ask the planning department for clarification on when RPC should be consulted on applications close to our border and when

**106/19 Update from Wokingham Borough Councillors:** Mr Howe reported that WBC have declared a climate emergency. They are planning to install solar panels to all WBC schools, this will be on a 0% interest loan to the school, the saving incurred will be repaid to WBC until the panels are paid for. The schools that are academies will have a small interest rate to pay if they choose to have the panels. 60% of schools now have LED lights. Solar panels now have a life of 20 to 25 years usually. All future planning applications for public buildings will have solar panels but Mr Howe was unaware if the new Bulmershe swimming pool will because that was approved a while ago. Mr Howe explained that WBC Special Educational Needs (SEN) service were inspected by Ofsted and it is in need of improvement. Mr Howe explained that the service is very underfunded, staff are overworked and staff turnover is high, WBC are doing their best to make improvements. WBC have purchased the building that is used by Waitrose in Twyford, the building is leased to Waitrose/John Lewis Partnership for 20 years. WBC made this purchase because it is financially beneficial for them to invest their money in this building and gain a better interest on the money than a bank could offer.

**107/19 PKF Littlejohn External Audit:** Mrs Reid reported that RPC's external audit has been approved, with one minor mistake, £207 from WBC should have been entered into the Grants and other income box, not the precept income box. Mrs Reid will display the appropriate certificates before the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

**108/19 Neighbourhood Plan:** Mr Bell updated that the steering group meet with O'Neill Homer (Planning consultants) on the 8<sup>th</sup> August which was a very positive meeting. The steering group have received the draft Neighbourhood Plan and are meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> September to look through the actions together. Mr May informed everyone that one of the NP volunteers has passed away, Mrs Reid will arrange condolence card.

**109/19 CIL:** Last week Mr Cassidy and Mrs Reid meet with Simon Price, Assistant Director for Housing, at the old allotment land, in principle RPC can use the land for a community

orchard wither by purchasing the land or leasing it from WBC. Simon Price will help conduct consultation with neighbours to check they agree with the idea. Simon Price has also said the large tree on Pennfield's will be trimmed. Pennfield's garage doors will also be smartened up. Both the tree and garage doors will be paid for from WBC Housing budget.

Mrs Reid will ask for a quote to replace Ruscombe signs on entrance to Ruscombe.

Mrs Reid will ask WBC what we need to do to add a streetlamp, i.e. consult near by houses.

Mrs Reid will bring all information to purchase a speed indicator device to Octobers meeting.

Mrs Reid and Mr May will make an offer to WBC to buy the land opposite St James Church and explain that RPC would use the land for something nature/wildlife/green environment related, like a community orchard and/or pond to sit at.

**110/19 Public Right of Way Consultation:** Mrs Reid will email information to Mr Cassidy and Mr Cassidy will respond on behalf of RPC.

**111/19 Road layout of the crossroads:** At this time RPC do not feel that they can do anything about the road layout as it would change the rural feel of the area but this may come up again in the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **112/19 Finance:**

**Grant request – Citizens Advice:** Mrs Reid will check what RPC paid last time and a decision will be made in October 2019.

**ONeill Homer** (Neighbourhood Plan consultants) £1,320.00 Cheque # 406

**Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust** £46 Cheque #408

**Connecting Communities in Berkshire** CCB £32 Cheque #407

**PKF Littlejohn LLP** (External auditors) £360 Cheque #405

**Clerk wages and expenses** £585.30 Cheque #409

**Nest pension** £51.08 Direct Debit

All payments proposed by Mr Howe, seconded by Mr Evans and approved unanimously.

#### **113/19 Reports from Liaison reps:**

**NAG:** Mr Evans will be attending the Neighbourhood Action Group next week, unless a new chair and secretary are found, the group will close.

**Twyford Together:** Mr Cassidy reported that Dr Vivek Tandon from Perpetual spoke at Twyford Together meeting about turning plastic into clothing, unfortunately this Twyford based business is moving production to Germany because UK government were not interested in helping expand this scheme.

Mr May closed the meeting at 9:15pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chair initials \_\_\_\_\_

RPC September 2019 Minutes