MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF RUSHWICK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 7.30 PM AT RUSHWICK VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr Jenkins (Chair), Cllr Lowe, Cllr Hemsworth, Cllr Staff and Cllr Haywood.

In Attendance: Mrs Sharon Dunn (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer)
County Cllr Chris McSweeney and District Cllr Peter Whatley.

1. Apologies: Cllr Williams (Personal) and Cllr Dovey (Personal) - Both accepted

2. Declarations of Interest
   1. Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interest.
   2. To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature - None
   3. To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature - None

3. To Consider written requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of The Localism Act 2011) written requests to be with the clerk prior to the meeting - None

No Questions for Public Question Time
Report from County Councillor McSweeney was noted
Report from the District Councillor Whatley was noted

4. Minutes: Having been previously circulated the minutes of The Parish Council meeting of 08.10.2025 were signed as a true and correct record.

5. Progress Reports: Mo matters arising from previous minutes. The Action Plan was reviewed. Cllr Dovey reported that he had pursued WCC regarding extending the double yellow lines along Bransford Road/ Grange Lane. WCC had reported that having made numerous site observation visits, in the last six months, which indicated both speeds and traffic flows were low and no further restrictions are deemed necessary, at this time.

6. Parish Lengthsman Scheme: Update
   A very productive month. Tim has been busy cutting back verges and siding out footpaths and cleaning gulley grates at Upper Wick, along the Bransford Road, Summer Hollow, Orchard Close and Claphill Lane.
   He continues to keep the underpass clean and tidy and takes care of the VAS sign.

7. Finance
   1. Payment of accounts as per schedule were authorised
   2. Monthly Bank Reconciliation Statement - For Information Only
   3. Preliminary Budget setting 2026/2027 - Discussions are underway to help formulate the budget and precept for FY 2026/2027. To be finalised in January 2026.

8. Progress update - The Parish Council had investigated the supply and cost of a new Parish Council website following the withdrawal of the MyParish Web Portal from WCC to ensure compliance by the financial year end.
   RESOLVED: To accept proposal from INL Group Ltd to design and develop a new website for Rushwick Parish Council at a cost of £2295 plus VAT including website maintenance and management of £195 + VAT per month thereafter.

9. Reports from representatives:-

    1. Report from Village Hall Committee: Cllr Dovey
    Cllr Jenkins had confirmed the status of S106 monies, explaining that any proposals need to be submitted to MHDC for approval. This adds further urgency due to the Government re-organisation. A meeting is to be progressed with a solicitor to seek advice on how the Parish Council can seek to become a Trustee to the Village Hall with any implications.

    2. Footpath Officers report: Cllr Williams
    Several footpaths have been inspected during this wet spell, but the general issue is mud not vegetation.
    Summer Hollow: This has been trimmed back by the Lengthsman but is still rather narrow.

    3. Report on Play Area: Cllr Hemsworth
    Cllr Hemsworth confirmed the football contract for 2025/2026 is to be signed next week and confirmed dates of pitch use for invoicing purposes.

    4. School Representative report: Cllr Jenkins - Nothing to report

    5. Speeding Issues & Crime Prevention Update: Cllr Staff
    Speed Awareness training took place on Thursday 30th October 2025 at Rushwick Village for the vetted volunteers. The project is now up and running with further training sessions. are to be organized.

    Cllr Staff had received an email from WCC Highways confirming the two locations to place poles to house a new vehicle activated speed sign had been agreed. The two locations identified were on the grass verge at Broadmore Green and in front of Whitehall Close.
    Once these are in place, the next step will be to purchase a new vehicle activated speed sign.
    A call to permanently reduce the speed limit to 30mph at the Greens to the bridge is to be pursued by Cllr Staff.

    a. Safer Neighbourhood Team Parish Contract - The following three policing priorities for the upcoming quarter were identified: -
        - Illegal/inconsiderate parking outside the school and village hall, especially from parked vehicles from the Kier Development and vehicles parked on the Bransford Road obscuring visibility.
        - Anti-Social Behaviour at the underpass
        - Reckless driving from the A4440 roundabout and speeding from A4103 to the Village Hall.

10. Planning - No planning applications to consider for comment.

11. Update on the Parish Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Lowe - No progress update.

12. Correspondence for Information: Circulated by the Clerk throughout the month.

13. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas
    Agenda item for January 2026: a. Parking restrictions at the junction of Minett Avenue and Bransford Road

The meeting closed at 8.48 pm.

Signed ……. Chairman…… Date……..

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

County Councillor - Chris McSweeney

- Councillors expressed anger after members of the Reform UK Administration decided to leave a marathon eight-hour Worcestershire County Council meeting before it was finished.
- Plans to scrap the building of a £63 million secondary school in Worcester are in disarray. Reform says Worcestershire County Council can't afford to build a school on the Newtown Road site. Opposition councillors voted down the minority administration's plan to remove the scheme from the council's capital programme completely.
- Veterans to get free bus travel in Worcestershire
- A request was made by the Parish Council in respect of Cycle routes from Rushwick to Worcester and Malvern. Cllr McSweeney to circulate information in respect of Worcestershire County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan

District Councillor - Peter Whatley

1. SWDPr final comments from the Inspectorate and/or sign off are not now expected before the end of 2025. The new date is "early 2026", whatever that may mean in practice. I don't think that this will amend any conclusions, but MHDC will be having a further meeting on Dec 16th regarding updates.
2. Funding will be provided from MHDC for Local Neighbourhood Plan development or updating. This is intended to replace the funding withdrawn by Westminster. It'll be on a first come, first served basis, so move swiftly if you are looking for funding.
3. The formal submission by MHDC and 4 of the other 5 District Councils (Wyre Forest is the exception) for Local Government Reorganisation with 2 new Unitary councils was approved by a majority of councillors. As a reminder, Wyre Forest, Worcs CC and our local MP all support a single unitary. I think it's fair to say that the mood last night was fairly glum, reinforced by those MHDC Councillors who are also Worcs CC Councillors. They presented a particularly grim picture of WCC's current position. It is agreed across the board that whatever proposal is adopted by Westminster, Council Tax is likely to rise steeply from 2028 onwards as the new unitary/ies will have to have their finances "rebaselined" to avoid immediately going bust. Whether there are meaningful savings down the line (2030 at the earliest - more likely 2033 onwards), Council Tax will certainly not be reduced as a result of reorganisation.