MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF RUSHWICK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2025 AT 7.30 PM AT RUSHWICK VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr Lowe (Chair), Cllr Hemsworth (arrived 7.40pm) , Cllr Staff , Cllr Dovey, Cllr Williams and Cllr Haywood.

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

1. Apologies: Cllr Jenkins (Personal) - Accepted

2. Councillor Resignation: Rushwick Parish Council would like to extend its sincere thanks to Councillor Griffin-Blugher who has stepped down from her role and the circumstances surrounding this. She was thanked for her valuable contribution, especially relating to Rushwick Village Hall and was wished all the very best for the future. This results in two councillor vacancies available for co-option.

3. 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

4. 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 the District Councillor was noted

5. Minutes: Having been previously circulated the minutes of The Parish Council meeting of 10.09.2025 were signed as a true and correct record.

6. Progress Reports: Matters arising None. The Action Plan was reviewed and updated.
   Cllr Hemsworth had progressed a meeting with Rushwick Cricket Club concerning the potential availability of S106 monies available. They are to compile a list of aspirations on how they would like to use this money.
   Contact has now been made with one of the bank signatories from the defunct Playscape Committee who will arrange a visit to the bank which will enable any dormant funds to be returned to the Parish Council.
   Cllr Dovey is pursuing the extension of the double yellow lines with WCC Highways in relation to Grange Lane/Bransford Road.

7. Parish Lengthsman Scheme: This month Tim has been busy attending to the VAS sign at various locations, tidying the underpass, and cutting back verges at Crown East, Claphill Lane, Bransford Road, Upper Wick and Orchard Close. Various requests identified by Councillors are to be referred to him for action on his next visit to the Parish.

8. Finance
   1. Payment of accounts as per schedule were authorised
   2. Monthly Bank Reconciliation Statement - For Information Only
   3. Budget Monitoring QTR2 to September 2025 - Reviewed.
      The Clerk highlighted there is an overspend relating to the annual insurance and external audit fees.
      Councillors were reminded that next month will be the start of the process to look at budget figures in preparation to request a precept in January 2026 for operating costs for financial year 2026/2027.

9. Proposal to investigate the supply and cost of a new Parish Council website following the withdrawal of the MyParish Web Portal from WCC - In the process of obtaining quotations. A discussion took place surrounding domain names for the new website. Cllrs confirmed to keep it simple and suggested RushwickParishCouncil.co.uk.

10. Reports from representatives: To receive an update

    1. Report from Village Hall Committee: Cllr Jenkins
       Kay Poole has now returned as Committee Chair and is seeking to arrange a meeting with the Chairman to progress matters with the solicitor.

    2. Footpath Officers report: Cllr Williams
       The Rights of Way Improvement Plan Parish Survey 2025 is in the process of completion for submission by 26th October 2025. Councillors were asked for their thoughts concerning improvements to be incorporated into the survey.
       Cllr Williams has inspected Summer Hollow footpath 513c - which needs further cutting back and the Teme footpath 517c, between the stiles, where light trimming has been carried out.

    3. Report on Play Area: Cllr Hemsworth - A few minor repairs are required.
       The under14's football team has been made aware to adhere to the rules of their contract, otherwise they will lose their rights to play on the pitch. Cllr Hemsworth to ensure the contract is signed for 2025/2026 and to advise of pitch usage for invoicing purposes.

    4. School Representative report: Cllr Jenkins - No report available

    5. Speeding Issues & Crime Prevention Update: Cllr Staff
       Speed Awareness training has been arranged for Thursday 30th October 2025 at 1.00pm at Rushwick Village for the vetted volunteers.

11. Planning: To consider any Planning Applications received before this meeting: -

    Planning Application No: M/25/01529/HP
    Location: 20 Christine Avenue, Rushwick, WR2 5SP
    Proposal: Replacement of single storey rear extension
    Comments: No objections

12. Update on the Parish Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Lowe - Cllr Lowe confirmed he needed to re-engage with Cllr Jenkins to move this forward

13. Correspondence for Information: Circulated by the Clerk
    The Clerk took this opportunity to remind councillors to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

14. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas - None

The meeting closed at 8.43 pm

Signed ……. Chairman…… Date……..

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

District Councillor – Peter Whatley

He referenced the proposal promoted by the ruling Conservative/ Liberal/ Labour group to have 2 unitary councils, in preference to 1 unitary council.

As a reminder, the timetable for future reorganisation is as follows:

- Nov 2025 - final preference from MHDC to the Secretary of State. This will be co-ordinated between the 7 affected councils if possible. It is unlikely there will be unanimity.
- By June 2026 - Secretary of State advises what form unitary councils will be. They have the final word on whether 1 or 2 for Worcestershire, or any other preferred arrangement.
- April 2027 - elections for "shadow" new unitary/ unitaries. There will be 114 councillors across Worcestershire, 2 each in the current county council divisions. Arrangements for delivery of all current Worcs CC services to be identified and schemes for implementation created/ agreed
- March 31st, 2028 - District Councils abolished at midnight. New unitary council/s take over from April 1st
- At some point beyond 2028, it's likely that the Boundary Commission will revisit the existing divisions and seek to have fewer councillors overall and/ or more balanced divisions.

SWDPR Inspectors have given a qualified finding that once the plan is adopted, sufficient development land will have been identified to be able to show a 5 YHLS.

Worcester Parkway development
New Town status for the proposed development at Worcestershire Parkway could see 'significantly more homes' built than the 10,000 currently planned.

MHDC has been warned by the Ministry of Housing that they will be placed in 'special measures' if too many planning decisions are overturned on appeal, resulting in further District Council training taking place on 13th November 2025 . Should councillors decline this training they will be unable to sit on the planning committee.