

RISELEY

PARISH COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON THURSDAY 21st DECEMBER 2023 AT 7:15 PM

PRESENT	Chairman Mr D Jowett (DJ), Vice Chairman Mr C Felce (CF) Mr A Gell (AG), Mr William Wallis (WW), Mr P Brown (PB), Mr R Toseland (RT), Mr G Davies (GD), Mr R Cooper (RC)	
IN ATTENDANCE	The meeting was well attended by members of the public.	
Chairman's Welcome The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.		
	OPEN FORUM	ACTION
	A resident and co-founder of the Community Hub thanked the Parish Council for their kind donation at the beginning of 2023. This helped start the Community Hub and the support has been greatly appreciated. There are some new plans and ideas in place and a request was made for some continued support over the next few years. The Chairman said that this is on the agenda to be discussed. The resident who had donated the Jubilee Oak, asked if it could be moved from their drive and planted. This was acknowledged. The Chairman reminded the audience that there is no public participation whilst the Parish Council meeting is in progress, unless invited by the chair.	
2312.01	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES	
	Cllr Heather Jones	
2312.02	TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	AG declared an interest in Item 2312.12(a) as he was a trustee of the Community Hub.	Clerk
2312.03	TO APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING ON 16th November 2023	
	It was proposed and AGREED that the minutes were a true and accurate record. The Chairman requested that the wording be changed from "some positive feedback", to "significant positive feedback" regarding the CofAragon stone flowerbed.	ALL PCs
2312.04	CORRESPONDENCE – any important items received after agenda published	
	There has been a request from the Primary school for some funding towards solar panels at the school. It was AGREED to add this item to the January meeting's agenda. An email has been received regarding the overgrown brambles on the bridge and behind the CofAragon stone. Although this is the Environment Agency's responsibility, it was proposed and AGREED for RC to start on this work and RT will remove the trimmings.	
2312.05	PLANNING	
(a)	DJ informed the Parish Council that he had received a call from the new resident of 1 Bowers Close, advising that their boundary wall will be coming down within the next few weeks. 23/02514/FUL Scania House High Street Riseley	CF

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	<p>Single storey side extension to include an annexe.</p> <p>It was proposed and AGREED to approve this planning application.</p> <p>Wells Road application has been approved by Bedford Borough Council.</p> <p>No Planning Appeals</p>	
2312.06	ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE	
(a)	<p>To agree monthly report and Invoices to be paid</p> <p>It was proposed and AGREED to accept the monthly report and invoices to be paid.</p>	Clerk/All PCs
(b)	<p>To discuss protocol for emails between meetings</p> <p>To address the increasing frequency of emails being sent between councillors, it was suggested that no substantive emails should be sent, as discussions and decisions should only be taken at PC meetings, and that ALL councillors should be included in any correspondence with no omissions.</p> <p>GD was asked and agreed to formulate a draft protocol for discussion.</p>	
(c)	<p>Review of Parish Council procedures and protocols</p> <p>In response to recent complaints, it was proposed and AGREED to review and update the Parish Council's procedures, protocols and Standing Orders, including the code of conduct.</p> <p>It was AGREED that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk would prepare a draft for the February meeting.</p>	
(d)	<p>Response to complaints against the Parish Council</p> <p>Further to the recent closed meeting to discuss complaints, one of the complainants felt that his complaint was not fully addressed.</p> <p>It was proposed and AGREED to hold another closed meeting to reassess the complaint and to invite the complainant to attend in person.</p> <p>It was proposed and AGREED to ask the complainant for available dates.</p> <p>A heated exchange then developed between DJ and RC about opinion, correspondence and procedure, before the meeting was called to order.</p>	
(e)	<p>Freedom of Information Request from resident</p> <p>It was AGREED for the Clerk to circulate the answers to the complainant's questions, once they were agreed by the Parish councillors.</p>	
2312.07	RISELEY VILLAGE	
	<p>RT reported that the road signs are due to be completed in January.</p>	RT

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2312.08	RISELEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP (RNPG)	
(a)	<p>The Chairman read out the RNPG report which is available on the Riseley Village Website.</p> <p>The Chairman explained that he has contacted Electoral Services at Bedford Borough Council to explain and clarify what a Parish Councillor can and cannot do in respect of the Village plan and referendum. The Chairman will circulate this information to all Parish Councillors in due course.</p>	
2312.09	RISELEY RECREATION ASSOCIATION (RRA)	
	Nothing to report	HJ/AG
2312.10	RIGHTS OF WAY	
(a)	ROW footpath FPA16 funding FPA16 funding request for some hardcore for a slope of 1 metre. It was proposed and AGREED to allow a budget of £50.	DJ
(b)	Playing field proposal to remove vegetation. Clearance of brambles adjacent to the Old Lower School site. After discussing access to the playing field, this work was proposed and AGREED . Dag Lane has been designated a restricted byway to allow pedestrian but not vehicular access. To be used effectively, some clearance will be required to allow linking to the existing RoW network.	
2312.11	TREE WARDEN, ROSS MEADOW & ALLOTMENTS	
	<p>RC presented his new allotment plan and advised that he will be reassessing and measuring the plots before April 2024. He and the Clerk will relaunch the administration of the allotments.</p> <p>RC presented an assessment of the Tree Survey after closely looking into the trees in question. It was proposed and AGREED to obtain quotes for the tree work from Joe Heast to see if there is enough in this year's budget for the work to go ahead. RC suggested that the 3 identified trees should be felled. AG advised that one of the trees is on private land and is not the Parish Council's responsibility. The owner would need to be contacted.</p> <p>It was proposed and AGREED to accept the quote from Joe Heast for the work in Ross Meadow and in addition, to ask for a quote to be sent to the Clerk for the remedial work on the poplar tree by the High Street footbridge.</p>	RC/WW
2312.12	CHILDREN AND YOUTH	
(a)	Riseley Children's Centre and Community Hub Following some discussion and the report presented by the Community Hub, DJ explained the Parish Councils financial income from the precept is £26,000 and the regular outgoings are £19,000 leaving £8,000 to fund other requirements within the village. The Precept meeting is on 11th January 2024, when the Parish Council decides the budget for the year ahead. With the precept historically not increasing significantly, it would need to increase by 4% to cover the increase in wages, contractors and suppliers alone. It was proposed and AGREED to discuss the Hub request for £4000 at the precept meeting. The Community Hub asked for any additional funding that	RT/CF

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	can be utilised and was under the impression that there was some more funding earmarked or promised for this.	
2312.13	BROOK	
	A tree has come down and is in the brook behind Washbrook. RT will investigate. Next Flood Group meeting is 4 th January 2024.	
2312.14	HIGHWAYS & FOOTWAYS	
	The date for the police post bridge work has not been announced. DJ asked the Clerk and if Cllr Towler could chase this for Riseley so that a date can be known. The other footbridge into Ross meadow is also in need of repair. The missing 30mph sign (N end) has not been replaced as yet. The dead tree in College Drive has been reported to BBC, but the file marked as CLOSED with no action taken.	WW
2312.15	LIGHTING	
	Nothing to report.	
2312.16	VILLAGE HALL	
(a)	PB advised that the new step that has been put in is a hazard. AG advised to leave this to the village hall committee, as it is not Parish Council business. The village hall committee made the decision to instruct the work to that specification.	Clerk
2312.17	GRASS CUTTING	
(a)	Grass cutting fees for 2024 GD advised that the grass cutting contribution from BBC will be increased along with inflation. The one-off cuts have been completed and will be included next season The additional cut has been done so that the start of next season will be easier.	PB
2312.18	NEWSLETTER	
	PB reminded the PC that the Gigaclear article was missed from the last edition, but would be included in the future and uploaded to the website.	PB
2312.19	WEBSITE	
	New images would be nice and there is an idea of asking residents to send in some of their personal snaps, possibly for a competition? The Website has improved although it is a little more difficult to upload documents. There are issues with Google Calendar and iPad use.	RT
2312.20	ENVIRONMENT & VILLAGE APPEANCE	
(a)	Tree survey This item was covered in Item 2312.11	MT
(b)	To adopt The Biodiversity Statement It was proposed and AGREED to adopt the <i>pro forma</i> biodiversity policy. It needs to be submitted and available on the website by January 2024	
2312.21	BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL	
	Cllr Towler read out the updates from Bedford Borough Council, which included: -	

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	Local Plan has been rejected Universal Studios proposal may create 8000 jobs at Stewartby Huge shake-up of personnel in E/W Rail team. BBC have bought the old Debenhams building with plans to refurbish the whole block and the Corn Exchange			
2312.22	OUTSTANDING ITEMS/WORK IN PROGRESS			
Minute No	Description	Action By	Waiting For	Notes
02/22	CIL Payment	All Pcs		Cllr Daves will investigate on what CIL money can be used for.
	Jubilee Oak	RC/WW		To be planted in Autumn in Ross Meadow
	Plaque for the stone	MT		£500 ward funding is being allocated; David Fowler historian will possibly be the person to contact.
	Redesign stone flower bed			To commence when weather allows
	Field by old lower school	Mayor		Awaiting confirmation of email sent 29/11
	Handy person -more hours for special projects	All Pcs		£200 AGREED. Bus shelter treatment allocated as extra works
	Crest stickers for Riseley sign	BBC		Awaiting confirmation from BBC
	Gigaclear	GD		To Present at January's Meeting
	Repainting street name signs	RT		To be completed in January
	Footbridge by Police Station - date	BBC		Still no response from BBC
	Tulip bulbs	DJ	RT/RC	To be planted by DJ
	Pole for SID on Swineshead Road			Now up and ready to use. To be removed from Outstanding Items. Approval for A. Musket to now reposition the SIDs
	Dustbin liner	CLERK		Received although wrong size sent that could be adapted
<p>OPEN FORUM – A resident asked if the microphones can be checked as some seem to be not working. The Chairman then realised his was turned off. A resident asked if the precept meeting minutes can be viewed on the website. They can be viewed but only once approved.</p> <p>A resident asked if a mirror could be positioned on College Drive as it is a difficult road to see when pulling out. Only BBC, not the Parish Council can authorise a mirror.</p> <p>The Chairman closed the final meeting of the year at 21.07</p>				
2312.23	DATE OF NEXT MEETING Thursday 18th January at 7.15pm in The Village Hall lounge. With the Precept Meeting on Thursday 11th January at 7.15pm			

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