

RISELEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Riseley Parish Council

Held on Thursday 16th October 2025 at 7.15pm in the Village Hall Lounge

Open Forum / Public Participation

A resident raised ongoing concerns regarding the speed of vehicles travelling through the village. Cllr Davies explained that the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) do not provide fully accurate data and should therefore only be used as an educational tool rather than for enforcement purposes.

A further request was made by a resident asking if the village handyman could clear fallen leaves from the footpaths, in particular the section from Ross Meadow to Church Lane.

Present

Cllr Jowett, Cllr Wady, Cllr Wallis, Cllr Toseland, Cllr Brown, Cllr Jones, Cllr Gell, Cllr Davies, and Cllr Felce.

In Attendance

Sam Langley (Clerk)

01. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Borough Cllr Towler.

02. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

03. Approval of Minutes

Following minor amendments, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

04. Correspondence

An email had been received from a resident regarding vehicle speeds through the village. This correspondence has been circulated to all members of the Parish Council for consideration.

05. Guest Speaker

The guest speaker from Bedfordshire Supported Housing Ltd, the new owners of Brook House, was deferred to a future meeting.

06. Planning

a. New Planning Applications

Two planning applications were considered for 124 High Street, Riseley:

25/01957/LBC – Listed Building Consent for demolition of an existing single-storey rear extension and erection of a new single-storey rear extension; internal remodelling including new side and rear access doors.

25/01956/FUL – Full Planning Application for demolition of an existing single-storey rear extension and erection of a new single-storey rear extension; internal remodelling including new side and rear access doors.

Following discussion, the Parish Council unanimously agreed to support both applications.

b. Planning Decisions

Several permitted and approved applications had been determined by Bedford Borough Council. Vice Chairman Cllr Felce provided a summary of these decisions.

c. Planning Appeals

No new appeals were reported.

07. Administration and Finance

a. Monthly Report and Invoices

It was proposed and resolved to approve the payment of invoices as presented by the Clerk. Cllr Wallis reported that an internal audit trail had been completed jointly with the Clerk, confirming all documentation was in order. He expressed his thanks to the Clerk for her work.

b. Review of Asset Register and Risk Assessment

Cllrs Wallis, Jowett, and Toseland will liaise with the Clerk to arrange a date to undertake the review. The Clerk also confirmed that Riseley has appropriate IT resilience measures in place to support business continuity.

08. Riseley Village

No specific matters reported

09. Riseley Recreation Association (RRA)

Cllr Jones confirmed that tree works on the oak tree at the playing field had been completed by Joe Heast. Cllr Gell advised that further tree maintenance is required and that Joe will be providing a quotation. It was agreed this would be included on the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

10. Rights of Way

Cllr Jowett reported that Richard Fuller had previously offered financial support to the Rights of Way group towards equipment purchases, but this offer has since been withdrawn due to budget constraints. It was proposed that a budget of £150 be allocated for repair of

the brush cutter. The expected cost of replacement parts is approximately £70–£80.

11. Tree Warden, Ross Meadow & Allotments

a. Tree Warden

Cllr Toseland advised that a fallen tree in the brook had been identified and he will arrange for its removal.

b. Ross Meadow

Cllr Wady reported that Ross Meadow is now in a tidy condition. With regard to leaf clearance, her husband has offered to assist and anticipates that a couple of sweeps should be sufficient. Cllr Brown also offered to help if required.

c. Allotments

Nothing to report.

12. Children and Youth

No updates to report.

13. Brook

Cllr Toseland reported that there is now a designated Brook and Ditch Warden. A broken land drain at the rear of the Old Five Bells field has been identified and he is arranging for it to be repaired. The issue only becomes problematic during periods of heavy rain when flooding occurs along the footpath.

a. Bedford Borough Water Management Partnership

Cllr Davies provided an update following recent discussions with Anglian Water. He noted the difficulty in convening a multi-agency meeting as each organisation tends to operate independently. The Mayor, Tom Wootton, has been approached to consider establishing a multi-agency strategic group at a local level. The Mayor responded positively, suggesting that such a meeting could be held annually to review and improve local flood management for Riseley.

It was noted that new treatment plants are being installed at the Lowsden Lane development due to limited capacity in the village's existing drainage infrastructure. The planning application for the Old Maggie B site is expected to be submitted by the end of October.

14. Highways & Footways

a. Speed Update

Cllr Davies reported that the SID data has been uploaded. However, he reiterated that the data is not always reliable due to the algorithm-based system. The 85th percentile average speed recorded was 29 mph, indicating that excessive speed is not a significant issue in Riseley. The devices are best used as educational tools rather than enforcement mechanisms. It was noted that some motorists deliberately test the SIDs to trigger higher readings. The estimated cost to install average speed cameras would be approximately £85,000.

b. Car Parking on the High Street

Cllr Davies reported that a local farmer had raised concerns regarding difficulties navigating agricultural vehicles through the village during harvest season.

While informal parking arrangements generally work well, occasional parking on both sides of the road can create access issues. As the number of vehicles in the village increases, the Parish Council may need to revisit parking management in the future.

Following resident correspondence concerning parking on the High Street, councillors agreed that the situation has improved, with some residents creating off-road parking spaces on their properties. Cllr Gell expressed strong opposition to the introduction of yellow lines. The discussion concluded with no further action, other than including a reminder in the village newsletter asking residents to park considerately.

It was also noted that a resident email had been received regarding proposed speed limit changes on Sharnbrook Road, which will be discussed at the next meeting.

15. Lighting

Approval has been given to Andy Musket to repair the damaged streetlights. The Clerk advised that there is a £350 insurance excess, and once an invoice is received from Mr. Musket, it will be submitted to the insurance company for reimbursement.

Cllr Wallis will investigate a number of “day burning” lights to identify the cause of the issue.

16. Village Hall

Cllr Brown has discussed with the Village Hall Committee the potential offer available from Gigaclear. A few queries were raised, and Cllr Brown will liaise with Cllr Davies to provide the necessary responses.

17. Grass Cutting

Cllr Davies advised that one scheduled grass cut by Graingers was skipped this year. The Hill Group requested a quotation for cutting the Old Maggie B site; Graingers’ contact details were provided, and they have since carried out the work. The playing field remains on the regular cutting schedule.

18. Newsletter

Cllr Brown confirmed that the next newsletter will be delayed until mid-November to coincide with the Christmas edition. This postponement will result in a cost saving of approximately £350–£400 for the Parish Council.

19. Website

The Parish Council discussed ways to increase engagement and visitor traffic on the village website. Members noted that recent presentation materials should be shared on social media to raise awareness. It was emphasised that no developers will be endorsed or promoted; the purpose of posting is purely to provide factual information for residents.

20. Environment & Village Appearance

The Parish Council commended Cliff, the village handyman, for his continued good work around the village.

21. Bedford Borough Council – Outstanding Items

The Clerk reported receipt of an email from the newly appointed Monitoring Officer at Bedford Borough Council. This item will be added to the next agenda for further discussion, as the Parish Council continues to align its procedures with Borough Council standards.

Cllrs Jowett, Felce, and the Clerk will work together to review and update the Parish Council's Standing Orders to ensure full compliance with Borough protocols.

Concerns were expressed regarding delays by Bedford Borough Council in finalising the lease for the Old School Field. The Mayor and Clerk will arrange an official signing ceremony, to include photographs for publicity and transparency.

Cllr Toseland has volunteered to lead the site clearance project once the lease is confirmed.

The area is currently in poor condition, and he proposed organising a community clean-up event, publicised through social media, the website, and village noticeboards.

Cllr Wady offered to explore the possibility of engaging a TikTok influencer to promote community involvement in the Old School Field project. The idea of providing free Wi-Fi on the new field was also discussed as a potential enhancement.

22. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Riseley Parish Council will be held on Thursday 20th November 2025 at 7.15pm in the Village Hall Lounge.