

MINUTES of the Ordinary ROWDE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 10th February 2021, 7.30pm, Virtual Meeting operated and recorded by Zoom.

Minutes of this meeting will be published, not this recording.

	<p>PRESENT: I Whittaker-Axon (Chair), P Bryant, J Hawkins, J Dalley, D Pullen, D Revell, C Stevens L Wills PRESENT: Cllr Laura Mayes (for items 1- 4) ABSENT: Cllr Anna Cuthbert</p>	
1.	<p>Apologies & Acceptance of Apologies All Councillors were present</p>	
2.	<p>Register of Members' Interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No business interests were recorded. 	
3.	<p>Chairman's Five minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair asked the Parish Council if they wished to revisit the vote at the Parish Council meeting in January 2021 to pollard the oak tree. The Parish Councillors voted five against three to not discuss the pollarding vote again [the situation regarding work to the oak tree has changed subsequent to the meeting]. 	
4.	<p>Wiltshire Council update with Cllr Mayes Cllr Laura Mayes is the Wiltshire Councillor for the parish of Roundway but has been attending Rowde Parish Council meetings over the past two years in the absence of Rowde's elected member.</p> <p><u>Covid-19</u> The infection rates of Covid in Wiltshire are coming down. There were 704 new cases in the last week. The case rate is currently 140 people infected per 100,000 (10/2/21). In the previous week, the figures were 182 per 100,000 people. The average rate for the UK is 222 per 100,000 people.</p> <p>The capacity of our local hospitals is being monitored closely. The RUH in Bath is at 90% capacity; GWH in Swindon is at 85% and Salisbury is at 80%.</p> <p>Generally, it is thought that Wiltshire residents are complying with lockdown regulations.</p> <p><u>Silverwood School (formerly Rowdeford School).</u> There is a community engagement webinar on developments at Silverwood School on Wednesday 3rd March at 6.00pm. It is necessary to register at specialschools@wiltshire.gov.uk if you would like to attend. The Clerk will share the details of the webinar with the Parish Council and to L Wills for inclusion on the Facebook page.</p> <p>The plans for the new school have advanced. The three schools; Rowdeford, Larkrise, and St Nicholas have all been renamed 'Silverwood School' now. They have one governing body and one school uniform.</p> <p><u>Furlong Close</u> Please see separate update – attached below.</p> <p><u>Caen Hill</u> The Parish Council asked if there is any news on the traffic management plans for Caen Hill. Cllr Mayes agreed to look into this for the Parish Council.</p> <p>P Bryant, on behalf of Rowde Parish Council, thanked Cllr Mayes for everything that she is doing for residents of Rowde and for regularly attending Rowde Parish Council meetings.</p>	Clerk

5.	<p>HfT – proposed closure. No further updates were available at the time of the meeting.</p>	
6.	<p>Public Question Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A question was raised about the decision to pollard the oak tree. There was concern raised that the correct procedures had not been followed [the Parish Council will follow all procedures set out by Wiltshire Council before any work commences] A question was asked about whether planning permission had been sought and who was putting in the planning application. • A question was asked about why the planned work for the oak tree differs from the recommendations in the PICUS report [on the condition of the oak tree] The Parish Council responded that the PICUS report showed a critical issue with the tree and that there was a risk to allotment holders. The Parish Council wants to protect the tree whilst trying to make it safer for allotment holders. The Parish Council needs to assess the risk posed by the tree. • A copy of the correspondence with Wiltshire Council was asked for by Y Pullen, and G Clingsby-White. The Clerk will ask consent from the Wiltshire Council tree officer before circulating the correspondence. • It was asked whether a bat survey has been undertaken. [No bat survey has been undertaken at this point]. <p><u>Footpaths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Piggott family were thanked for all of the work that they have done on the footpaths on their land. D Pullen was thanked for her role in discussing the issues with the local landowner. • D Revell was thanked for carrying out repairs to the bridges along the permissive footpath opposite the Rowdey Cow. <p><u>Bunnies Lane</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was concern about the condition that Bunnies Lane has been left in now the construction traffic has left. It is reported that there are lots of potholes and mud banks. 	Clerk
7.	<p>Agree the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 13th January 2021. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record: proposed by C Stevens, seconded by Dalley. All Councillors who were present at that meeting accepted them as a true record.</p>	
8.	<p>Matters arising and actions from meeting on 13th January 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quotations have been received to pollard the oak tree to 18ft from the ground. • A risk assessment has been carried out for our Litter Collector. • Allotment holders have been notified of the intended increase in allotment rents. • A green waste bin has been delivered for use by the allotment holders. • Quotes for minor repairs to the play area in Tower View have been delayed due to the pandemic. 	
9.	<p>Grounds Maintenance Contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grounds maintenance contract for the parish is due for renewal on 1st April 2021. The Clerk will identify suitable contractors to bid for the contract. • There will be new areas added to the schedule of work this time due to the proposed asset transfer of various strips of land from Wiltshire Council. 	Clerk
10.	<p>Highways & Parking <u>Springfield Road</u> A local resident has contacted the Parish Council to complain about intolerance shown by some residents on Springfield Road to people parking on the road there. It is reminded that no resident owns the road or can say who parks there. This matter has been referred</p>	

	<p>birth rate, therefore it is an unrealistic number of new homes to find. The Clerk was asked to respond to the Draft Local Plan and ask Wiltshire Council to revise their projection of what housing we should have and to suggest a total of twenty houses instead.</p> <p>A small group of Parish Councillors has met to discuss possible development sites in the village. It is agreed that there should be some criteria for assessing location, for example Devizes' town plan will not favour building houses that are more than a twenty-minute walk to the town centre.</p> <p>The area being looked at in Rowde is Devizes Road; from Manor Farm to 12 Devizes Road; and from 1 Devizes Road towards Tanis. The Clerk will speak with Wiltshire Council about these two areas.</p> <p>P Bryant agreed to contact the Self-Build company in Swindon to discuss what might be possible with regards to self-builds in the village</p> <p><u>National Grid</u>: Project to site pylons underground across Roundway Down.</p> <p>There are two free webinars, at 1pm on Tuesday 16 February and 6pm on Thursday 25 February, where members of the public can sign up and hear their plans. Please log on to the following address to register your interest in attending. northwessexdowns.nationalgrid.co.uk/news-events/sign-up-to-our-project-webinar/</p> <p>It was noted by a member of the audience that National Grid have been removed from the base site until certain issues are resolved. The track that they will install to carry out the work will be 60 metres wide. It is estimated that there will be an acre of concrete visible from Roundway Hill.</p> <p>It was noted that National Grid had planned to submit a planning application by mid-2021, with construction starting by 2023.</p>	Clerk
13.	<p>Allotments update</p> <p>The oak tree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parish Council discussed three quotes to pollard the oak tree. The cheapest quote was agreed on. [This has now been superseded by changes in advice] • Rowde Primary School was donated an oak tree from an allotment plot last year. L Wills will ask if this can be replanted at the allotments. <p>Plot sign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J Dalley has arranged for new allotment numbers to be made. L Wills will look at painting the numbers on. 	
14.	<p>Social events and social media update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L Wills updated that Aster has not carried out the work to clear the ditches behind houses in Springfield Road. L Wills will follow up on this. 	LW
15.	<p>Financial Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments were approved for the following, proposed by P Bryant and seconded by J Hawkins. All Councillors were in favour. <p><u>January invoices</u> (total: £1,807.96) Admin costs: £1,236.92 Grounds maintenance: £571.04</p>	
16.	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed correspondence was received by Y Pullen with regards to the oak tree. This was circulated to the Parish Council before the meeting. 	
	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Parish Council meeting [Precept setting]: Wednesday 10th March. •  2021, 7.30pm. <i>This will be a virtual Zoom meeting. Please contact the Clerk for a code to join the meeting, at least the day before the meeting.</i> <p>Everyone is welcome to attend all meetings.</p>	

A reminder that all requests for work/or goods must be presented to the relevant Committee first for authorisation.

Signed: Chairman Date:

STATEMENT FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

Furlong Close

There has been a great deal of interest around the future of Furlong Close and I thought it would be helpful to share latest information and how we're keeping in touch with our residents on the site.

Background

Hft is the owner of the site at Furlong Close. In October 2020 Hft announced its plan to close Furlong Close in June 2021. Residents were informed by letter and meetings were held on the site in November. Hft then announced in November that they would not be closing Furlong Close in June.

Wiltshire Council has a number of residents living at Furlong Close, making up two thirds of those living there, while other residents are from other local authority areas.

Residents

For some of the residents Furlong Close has been their home and they do not want to move. Families and the wider community have understandably raised concerns and it is important that questions and concerns are listened to and responded to.

We will work with residents, their carers and family members to understand how we can continue to best meet their care and support needs.

Most importantly, the wellbeing of the residents at Furlong Close is our main priority and we want to ensure the best outcomes for those who are currently living there.

Current situation

We know this is a difficult time for our residents. We have been in regular contact with Hft and while there has been a number of discussions, no concrete decisions have been made by Hft regarding the future use of Furlong Close. There is an application to judicially review Hft's decision to close Furlong Close which is currently ongoing which is affecting what can be said at this stage.

Our focus has always been on supporting our residents as they consider their future options and what works longer term for them. We have been meeting with the residents, carers and families and we will continue to do this, for as long as they wish to engage with us, as it is important to ensure that, wherever possible, we can provide them with latest information when we receive it and listen to their views and try to answer any queries they may have.

We want to continue an open and ongoing dialogue with everyone so they are very clear about future options. For Wiltshire Council this has always been about the best future options for residents. An early draft copy of a Hft newsletter erroneously suggested this was about money. This is not the case and the draft newsletter was updated but wasn't published. Wiltshire Council's commitment to funding its residents is very much evident both at Furlong Close and across other sites.

Engagement

We welcome questions on Furlong Close and both Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of Wiltshire Council and Cllr Simon Jacobs, Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection are ready to respond to any queries. Cllr Jacobs is the cabinet lead with responsibility for Adult Social Care so is the ideal person to be contacted and to respond to any questions regarding Furlong Close.

Separately from this, a general email was sent out asking all our councillors to be mindful that officers are busy with the council's COVID-19 response and the budget, and for any requests for information to go to the relevant cabinet member who can co-ordinate a response. This is the same across all areas. We are happy to take questions but we have asked for them to go through the cabinet member responsible for that area to help manage workloads.

We know there are many people anxious for a decision to be made regarding Furlong Close. We will continue to meet with Hft to do what we can to move this forward all the time taking into account how we can best support residents for the future.

Submission document

There is a document which shows the potential future use for Furlong Close which was submitted in 2015 to Wiltshire Council as part of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). This is when a landowner/developer is seeking to promote a site to the council as being potentially available for development.

The council has to ask for these submissions as part of the statutory process; however, it carries little weight for future planning decisions or applications – it just provides an indication of where there is interest. It is not a planning application.

We are currently consulting on a series of documents that set out how much and potentially where development may be built in the future in Wiltshire as part of the Local Plan review.

The consultation documents at this stage, refer to our Principal Settlements (Trowbridge Salisbury and Chippenham) and Market Towns (such as Devizes), but no decisions have been made yet as to which sites will go forward for inclusion in this draft Local Plan.

It is important to note that while consultation materials do include indicative housing requirements for large villages such as Rowde, such requirements will involve wide community planning including through the neighbourhood plan process.



