



## **ROCKBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024** in the Village Hall, Rockbourne, at **7.00pm**. (convened at 7:18pm once building opened).

**Members Present:** Cllr Kirkcaldy (Chair), Cllr Leeson (Vice-Chair) and Cllr Wise. Also present Mark Baulch, Clerk & RFO.

**Guests Present:** County Cllr Heron

The following members of the public were also present: Pippa Branagan, Bea Churchill, Simon Churchill, Jen Cole, Nat Cole, Nigel Daly, Ed Olivier, Sara Pierrepoint, J. Potter, Liz Potter, Chris Whyton and Frances Wise

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Carmichael, Cllr Wallis, District Cllr Richards

#### **2. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. Correspondence received**

E-mail from Hampshire County Council on future services consultation. The County Council are asking for ideas to assist in the balancing of the Budget for 2025/6. Consultation is open until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and Parish residents are urged to respond.

E-mail from Rockbourne Cricket Club with regards to nets, which will be dealt with later in the Agenda.

#### **4. Public participation time**

Nigel Daly asked about the river walk which had occurred with the Environment Agency at short notice and without him being asked to participate. Mark Baulch replied that it had not been with the Environment Agency but with the Wessex Rivers Trust. The appointment had been received at short notice and invitations sent out, with the lead Councillor of the Bourne Working Group unable to attend, as was Nat Cole. However, Jeannie McGraghan, another Member of the Working Group was able to be there. A report has been received and this will be covered later in the Agenda.

#### **5. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council, held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman, with one small amendment to Agenda point 13 asked for by Cllr Wise. This referred to '20 is plenty' and was amended to Speedwatch.

#### **6. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

Cllr Wise asked about the Bourne Working Group Meeting and the action to find out about sandbags and funding. The former is in the Agenda and the latter was carried forward.

#### **7. Chairs Report**

Cllr Kirkcaldy read out his report. [Copy attached (separate link on website)]

## 8. Wessex Internet proposed works

There has still been no response on the positioning of the line. Cllr Leeson had seen them and offered to chase if necessary.

## 9. Reports by the Downlands & New Forest Ward Councillor and representatives on outside bodies

Cllr Richards had said that she had nothing to report this time when she sent her apologies.

Cllr Heron reiterated that Parish residents should complete the budget consultation referred to earlier. The County Council has now received an additional £9.9m from Central Government. This is good, but transport costs alone are expected to rise by £26m. Adult Social Care and Children Services costs form the greatest part of the budget. The full budget is to be discussed on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. They will request the maximum increase in Council Tax. They are taking £84.7m out of reserves to balance the budget.

Cllr Wise asked about being more efficient? Cllr Heron said that since 2010, they have taken £716m out of the budget. They have considerably less managers etc. than the private sector. They always welcome suggestions on efficiencies. He also said that he was happy to talk about potholes.

Nigel Daly thanked him with regards to discussing potholes. He said that they hope to be able to do this soon. Cllr Heron confirmed that he can ask for a review.

Chris Whyton asked about means testing for transport? Cllr Heron said that they cannot. If someone from outside the 3-mile catchment area asks us to transport children to school, we have to. Cllr Kirkcaldy asked if County Council had to get child to school? Cllr Heron explained that they do not have to pay if the parents choose a non-catchment area school.

Cllr Heron went on to say that they may have to close the Somerley Recycling Centre. We wanted to charge for DIY waste but were unable to. Cllr Wise asked whether it was not counterproductive with fly tipping? Cllr Heron replied that most fly tippers were never going to take it to the Recycling Centre anyway. We have more centres than most County Councils. Nigel Daly asked what will influence which ones will close? Cllr Heron replied that the three centres in the New Forest were really in the wrong places, but the cost of building a new one, not to mention finding a location, made this impossible. The chances are that the three will have to go to one. People really need to answer the consultation. Cllr Wise said that if only one though, people would have to travel, creating worse air pollution. With the continuation of building of houses in Alderholt and Fordingbridge, Somerley seems to be in the right place? Cllr Heron said that the problem was that they would have to take money from elsewhere, which does not seem sensible. We are looking at the least worst option.

## 10. Payment of outstanding creditors

The Clerk presented the latest invoices to the Councillors, including the invoice for the June election, which was for nearly £1,700. The budget will now need to be re-considered, as this was not included and we now have a second election later this month. Also, the speed reduction gate at the North end of the village has been damaged and will need to be repaired. Whilst it is hoped that this will be paid for by Highways, it may be necessary to budget for this. Finally, the five hours per week currently in the budget for the Clerk may be insufficient due to the volume of e-mails being received and the level of detail being asked for. The Clerk estimated that three full days of work would be needed to respond in full to the requests, equating to over a month of wages. Copies of the current budget were passed to all Councillors in attendance with a request to review. A grant application had also been received from the Church for maintenance of the Churchyard. £1,000 had been budgeted for this. However, Cllr Wise felt that a decision should be deferred on this and he PROPOSED that a whole budget consideration was necessary before agreeing, which Cllr Leeson SECONDED. Cllr Kirkcaldy ABSTAINED from this decision. It was therefore RESOLVED not to make the grant at this point.

## 11. Planning Matters

New Forest District Council is the local Planning Authority and consults Rockbourne Parish Council on planning applications received for Rockbourne Parish.

### 11a. Planning Applications

<b>Reference</b>	23/11262
<b>Alternative Reference</b>	PP-12634753
<b>Application Received</b>	Mon 4 Dec 2023
<b>Application Validated</b>	Mon 4 Dec 2023
<b>Address</b>	SPRINGBOURNE FARM, ROCKBOURNE SP6 3NS
<b>Proposal</b>	Demolition of existing barn consented for conversion to 3 dwellings; replacement new barn to provide terrace of 3 dwellings with parking

Cllr Kirkcaldy stated that this was no problem. Cllr Wise said that we should object. We objected to the conversion and there is some disquiet over the access with a substantial increase of traffic. We should oppose as we previously opposed the conversion scheme. Cllr Leeson agreed. It was therefore RESOLVED to respond with a PAR4: We recommend REFUSAL, for the reasons listed.

<b>Reference</b>	24/10058
<b>Alternative Reference</b>	PP-12748941
<b>Application Received</b>	Mon 22 Jan 2024
<b>Application Validated</b>	Mon 29 Jan 2024
<b>Address</b>	MARSH FARM, ROCKBOURNE SP6 3NF

*Construction of a single-storey side extension to provide therapy pool room; alterations to existing single-storey side addition; change of external finish from cladding to render on the dwelling*

Cllr Kirkcaldy said that this was a development for a disabled person and would be covered under the disability discrimination Act. Cllr Wise pointed out that the appeal listed against this was actually for another property. All agreed to RESOLVE to recommend PAR1: We recommend PERMISSION, for the reasons listed, but would accept the decision reached by the District Council's Officers under their designated powers.

*Please note that Rockbourne Parish Council is a Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications and as such does not make the final decision on any Application. The decisions and comments this Committee make will be fed into the planning process and added to reports by Planning Officers. New Forest District Council is the Planning Authority and will issue the final decision notice (Planning Determination) once their investigations into the application, consultation period and decision-making process have been completed.*

## 11b. Planning Decisions

<b>Reference</b>	23/11240
<b>Alternative Reference</b>	PP-12635641
<b>Application Received</b>	Tue 28 Nov 2023
<b>Application Validated</b>	Mon 11 Dec 2023
<b>Address</b>	2 YONGES COTTAGES, ROCKBOURNE SP6 3NJ
<b>Proposal</b>	Two storey side extension; demolish existing lean-to
<b>Status</b>	Decided
<b>Decision</b>	Granted Subject to Conditions
<b>Decision Issued Date</b>	Thu 01 Feb 2024

## 12. Children's Play Area

The Clerk has received some new quotes and is now awaiting a decision on the grant application which is due back from New Forest District Council at the beginning of March.

## 13. Users of Recreation Ground and Pavilion

Ed Olivier from the Rockbourne Cricket Club was present at the meeting and explained that they now have a quote for the netting and the concrete. The budget is £6,000 + VAT and the Club has the £6,000. The Club would also grub out the bramble and plant new hedging on the boundary with the road. They are also suggesting a temporary fence. Cllr Kirkcaldy clarified that it would be temporary. Ed Olivier suggested a stock fence. They could also tip the spoil into the hedge line to create a bank. He proposed a meeting to progress this conversation. Cllr Wise asked why a fence was needed? Ed Olivier said that they were thinking about security and the new asset is a stealable commodity. Cllr Leeson pointed out that there is a Working Group for the Recreation Ground and they need to meet with the Cricket Club about some other matters, so a combined meeting would be useful.

## 14. Working Groups (LGA1972 s7.48)

In the absence of Cllr Wallis, Cllr Leeson gave an update on the Recreation Ground Working Group. Three of us met and the next meeting will now be as discussed in previous Agenda item. We have a basic outline for the group. Possible separate website, linked to Village Hall etc. Want to promote as a venue. Offset cost with business sponsorship, Sara is looking at website. £7 per month, with free domain for a year and will accept payments for hiring the venue. We need to see the Public Liability insurance for the Cricket Club. Cllr Wise said that we now have a Working Group, the Parish Council and the Rockbourne Recreation Ground Trust for this. Who is looking after what? The Trust is supposed to manage the ground. Cllr Kirkcaldy said that the management of the ground is the Trust and that the Parish Council is the Trust. Nigel Daly said that the Trust is

the Trust. Cllr Kirkcaldy added that the Parish Council subsidises the Trust to run it. Nigel Daly suggested that is part of the budget conversation. Cllr Kirkcaldy said that the Parish Council were going to disband the Trust some time ago but were advised not to as the Trust has more chance of getting funds. Nigel Daly agreed that this is because the Trust has charitable status. Cllr Wise said that the Trust owns the recreation ground. The Title of the ground is not registered with the Land Registry. Pre-1925, you had a deed. As the property has never been sold, it is not on the Land Registry. The deed is the only legal document. Cllr Leeson asked whether, when the pavilion was built, was there a registration? Cllr Wise said that there would not normally be. We should protect our position and register it. Nigel Daly said it will cost money. Mark Baulch asked how much? Cllr Wise replied around £1,000. Cllr Kirkcaldy said that he cannot find a copy of the 2015 document referred to on the Charity Commission website, so he has challenged them on this. Cllr Wise said that the Charity Commission website was asking for accounts? Mark Baulch explained that he had not had access to the site but believed that he had been granted this as of the day before this meeting.

Cllr Kirkcaldy opened the report on the Bourne Working Group by reading out the report from Alex Deacon of Wessex Rivers Trust. Cllr Kirkcaldy has spoken to a local company that will provide ideas on how to restore river. There will be a meeting of the Group within the next few weeks. Nigel Daly said that Hemlock is an invasive plant and that 'Do nothing' is not the approach. We all like to see the trout and ducks. Chris Whyton asked whether riparian owners would be invited to the meeting? Cllr Kirkcaldy said that a letter will be going to them all and Mark Baulch confirmed that the Wessex Rivers Trust report would accompany that.

Cllr Wise then spoke on the Traffic Working Group, saying that they had met with the School Headteacher, which had mainly been a fault finding meeting. Details had been circulated to Councillors. They also met with the local Police Community Support Officer and a number of locations suitable for Speedwatch had been identified. The Police are reasonably supportive of the Speedwatch scheme. Also contacted Council with Speed Indicator Device. Need Police to sign off to use it. Next meeting later this month.

Unrelated to the Working Group, Cllr Wise added that he had attended a meeting in the Hall with Environmental Engineer. If we want him to speak at a Parish Council meeting in future, he will do so. In short, septic tanks can be replaced with water treatment plants. Burrow Environmental replace leaking tanks, potentially for nothing.

A question was asked on flooding and Cllr Kirkcaldy confirmed that Carl Broadbridge is to be a flood warden.

Cllr Leeson returned to promoting the Recreation Ground and that side of things. Is the Working Group for the Parish Council or the Trust? Can costs be drawn from the Trust account? Cllr Wise agreed that we need clarity on the responsibilities of the Trust and the Parish Council. Governance needs sorting. Cllr Leeson will carry on with the basics. Cllr Wise asked when the last meeting of the Trustees was? Cllr Kirkcaldy was not sure when, probably about five years ago. Cllr Wise said that we need to sort that out. Ed Olivier believed that it used to be twice per year. **ACTION:** Cllr Kirkcaldy to call a Trustees meeting.

#### **15. To arrange the date for the next meetings –**

The next meetings will be Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 @ 7pm, in the Village Hall, Rockbourne. Also, Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May @ 7pm, in the Pavilion, Rockbourne Recreation Ground. Those wanting to join the meetings are asked to please contact the Parish Clerk: [rockbourneclerk@outlook.com](mailto:rockbourneclerk@outlook.com) for details.