



ROCKBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 12th March 2024** in the Village Hall, Rockbourne, at **7.00pm**.

Members Present: Cllr Kirkcaldy (Chair), Cllr Leeson (Vice-Chair) Cllr Carmichael, Cllr Wallis and Cllr Wise. Also present Mark Baulch, Clerk & RFO and nine members of the public from the parish and a record of their names is held.

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Branagan, District Cllr Richards

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Correspondence received

E-mail from New Forest District Council offering us a free framed portrait of the King, which the Clerk has applied for.

E-mail from New Forest Mowing Services offering to mow the Recreation Ground once per month for free. Clerk has responded, they will now visit the site and then confirm their offer. In the meantime, we have also received an e-mail from New Forest District Council offering seven full cuts and nine outfield cuts for £4504.75. This is considerably more than the 2022 cost of £1342.68, the 2023 budget of £1409.10 and the 2024 budget of £1476.95.

E-mail from Fordingbridge Parish Council with new contract for Lengthsman to commence on 1st April 2024. **ACTION:** Clerk to check on number of days that are allocated to us.

Cllr Kirkcaldy had received a message from an elector with regards to the Planning Application for 1,700 homes in Alderholt and the attempt to raise funds via Crowd Funding for a Barrister to represent the Parish Council at the Appeal. Cllr Wise felt that we should demonstrate support. The elector will post the details on the village WhatsApp group and **ACTION:** Cllr Kirkcaldy to post Council support on this group and encourage support from Village. Cllr Kirkcaldy **PROPOSED:** pledging £100 to the Crowd Fund under S137 payments and Cllr Carmichael seconded this with all Councillors present in agreement. **ACTION:** Clerk to make the pledge and send a note of support.

4. Public participation time

An elector spoke about the application for a grant for the maintenance of the churchyard. The discussion had been deferred to this month. The Council should be aware of the overall picture. The Church receives nothing from the Church of England. It does receive donations from the Parish, but these are diminishing. Currently running at £4,000 deficit each year, which is not sustainable. When not maintained, we receive many complaints from the residents. We need help. Within the village, over 50% have descendants in the churchyard and expect it kept in a decent condition. This is the background of the grant. Cllr Wise asked about the deficit. What is the total running cost? The elector replied that their only income is from collections on Sundays, which are around £120, with two services per month, so £240 per month. Then they have GiftAided donations from the village. We have to pay the Vicar. Our share was £14,300 this year. This does not include running expenses of around £18,000 per year. That is without repairs or maintenance of the building. Cllr Carmichael agreed that it is an important building. He asked why there were no funds from the Church of England? The elector

explained that the Parish owns St. Andrew's, not the Church of England. Cllr Carmichael asked if we should not be trying to make more use of it? The elector said that there were no access regulations when it was built! Cllr Carmichael asked whether we could hold fundraisers in the Village Hall? Is that something that we could do? Even if we grant £1,000, that will not do it. The elector said that will pay for the cutting of the grass. Cllr Carmichael asked if we could get younger people on a rota basis? The elector explained that they do have two work parties per year, very few answer the call for help. Cllr Wise said general goodwill in that regard. Cllr Kirkcaldy added that we have tried working parties in the past. The elector said that they would like to put sheep in there, but people do not like animals walking on the graves. Cllr Kirkcaldy thanked the elector and said that this would be voted on when we reached the budget discussion. Cllr Wise asked whether the elector was on the Village WhatsApp group and he replied that he believed the Church Warden was on there.

5. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting held on 13th February 2024

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council, held on 13th February 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman, after Cllr Wise asked it to be Minuted here that he did not say that the Title of the [Recreation] ground is not registered with the Land Registry.

NOTE: Cllr Leeson had to leave the meeting at 19:40.

6. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on 13th February 2024

Only action was to call a Rockbourne Recreation Ground Trust Trustees meeting. Cllr Kirkcaldy said that he had looked into this and it was not required. Cllr Wise said that a Trust cannot just sit there, it needs to meet. Cllr Kirkcaldy said that as there had been no income and the account had been audited every year it was not necessary. Cllr Wise said that he wants to know the responsibilities of the Trustees. Cllr Kirkcaldy stated that he was taking this personally now. He told Cllr Wise that he has just the same access to the Charity Commission site and could find the information himself. Cllr Wise said that he had been looking and that he was concerned that the new Councillors do not know their responsibilities. At this point, Cllr Kirkcaldy indicated that Councillor Wise was being argumentative and disruptive, and it was not productive to the meeting and if his attitude did not change then he would adjourn the meeting. Cllr Carmichael asked whether, as Trustees, should we have a Governing document? Cllr Wise said that he was correct, we need one. We need to clarify responsibilities. Cllr Carmichael suggested that this could be part of the Working Group role.

7. Wessex Internet proposed works

Cllr Kirkcaldy said that he had received a letter from Wessex withdrawing from the proposed contract. Cllr Wise had spoken to Will Hudson and he had said that they will bring the route down the track now. Cllr Wallis added that we need it in the Pavilion and that Josh Goodchild was looking into this. Cllr Kirkcaldy said that the contract was not right. The Clerk had responded to Wessex with queries and then not had a reply. **ACTION:** Clerk to chase again and copy Josh Goodchild in to message.

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

Cllr Richards had given her apologies and sent the following report in advance:

District Councillor Report for Rockbourne Parish Council Meeting – 12th March 2024

Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan – Midgham Farm

The Hampshire Minerals & Waste plan has just finished the final stage of consultation. You may remember that Midgham Farm (just south of Fordingbridge) is included for sand and gravel extraction. NFDC's proposed response to the consultation did not include an objection to the Midgham Farm site. I, along with six other Councillors, called in this decision, as we think that NFDC should object, based on the impacts on local people and the environment, and because the Council should be supporting the almost 900 local residents who objected to the site. It will now have to go to a full Council meeting for a decision.

20mph Speed limits

Hampshire County Council have now revised their policy on 20 mph speed limits to make it easier for Parish Councils to request them, so long as the Parish Council pays the implementation cost. More information on how to apply will be available soon.

9. Payment of outstanding creditors

The Clerk presented the latest invoices to the Councillors. The Clerk re-iterated that unexpected costs of elections of over £3,400 and additional time meaning that more funds needed to be allowed for Clerk wages, the budget needed to be adjusted by £4,000. Cllr Wallis suggested that this meant that the CCTV has to wait. Cllr Wise said that the cricket ground running costs are roughly £6,000. Whilst this is not purely for the cricket ground, there is no income coming from the ground. The Cricket Club are paying us £600. We should be asking the Cricket Club for more. Cllr Carmichael queried the £6,000 figure. Cllr Wise said this included grass cutting, fire extinguisher servicing, play equipment, tree work etc. Cllr Wallis said that we still have to cut the grass. Cricket Club are helping with this. Cllr Kirkcaldy stated that we, as the Parish Council, have to maintain it. Cllr Wallis added that the playground is nothing to do with the Cricket Club. Cllr Carmichael said that some of the expenses were ongoing costs. Cllr Wallis asked what Cllr Wise suggests? Cllr Wise said that the Cricket Club should pay a more meaningful contribution. Cllr Wallis pointed out that Marcus [from the Cricket Club] puts so much effort in. Cllr Carmichael added that they pretty much paid for the pavilion. Cllr Wise stated that he was concerned at the huge amount of Parish Council money going into the Recreation Ground. Cllr Wallis said that it would cost even more if the Cricket Club were not there. Cllr Wise said that there had been no other lettings and no other income. Cllr Wallis added that she has the invoices from the person that kitted out the pavilion [Mike Castle]. This is all being sorted including the building regulations which Cllr Kirkcaldy confirmed had already been paid for. Cllr Wise asked why they had not been signed off? Cllr Wallis replied due to COVID and Cllr Kirkcaldy added and New Forest District Council dragging their heels. Cllr Wise asked who acted on behalf of the Parish Council and Cllr Kirkcaldy replied the Clerk. Cllr Wise asked if we would lose potential lettings if it was not sorted? Cllr Wallis said we will not lose lettings. Cllr Wise said that it will need to be sorted before it is occupied. Cllr Carmichael **PROPOSED:** removing the £4,000 from the budget for CCTV. Cllr Kirkcaldy seconded this and Cllr Wallis agreed. Cllr Wise voted against, due to the huge number of break-ins etc. in the Village. It was therefore **RESOLVED** by a majority of three votes against one that the budget be amended to remove the CCTV expenditure and pay for the two elections and an increase in the hours available to the Clerk. Cllr Carmichael felt that we need a wider consultation with the village on the CCTV. Not everyone may want it. Cllr Wise said that it was no different to SpeedWatch areas etc. Cllr Carmichael added that £6,000 is not the right figure for the Recreation Ground. Cllr Kirkcaldy stated that the Parish Council has been giving money to the Church for 5-6 years and **PROPOSED:** that we should grant the £1,000 maintenance request. Cllr Wise seconded this and all Councillors present agreed. The Church grant will be made in accordance with Section 137 of the 1972 Local Government Act (as amended).

10. Planning Matters

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

10a. Planning Applications

Reference	24/10152
Alternative Reference	PP-12826366
Application Received	Fri 23 Feb 2024
Application Validated	Fri 23 Feb 2024
Address	INWARDLEIGH COTTAGE, ROCKBOURNE SP6 3NL Conversion of garage into studio / home office
Reference	24/10153
Alternative Reference	PP-12826366
Application Received	Fri 23 Feb 2024
Application Validated	Fri 23 Feb 2024
Address	INWARDLEIGH COTTAGE, ROCKBOURNE SP6 3NL Conversion of garage into studio / home office (Application for Listed Building Consent)

Cllr Kirkcaldy stated that this was no problem. 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.

10b. Planning Decisions

Reference 23/10307
Alternative Reference PP-11982977
Application Received Thu 16 Mar 2023
Application Validated Thu 16 Mar 2023
Address SPRINGBOURNE FARM, ROCKBOURNE SP6 3NS
Residential dwelling and garage/store; demolition of existing agricultural barn, stables and dilapidated outbuilding.
Status Decided
Decision Granted Subject to Conditions
Decision Issued Date Mon 12 Feb 2024

Reference 23/11053
Alternative Reference PP-12507946
Application Received Thu 05 Oct 2023
Application Validated Mon 23 Oct 2023
Address WOODBINE COTTAGE, ROCKBOURNE SP6 3NH
Proposal Proposed front gates at access to house. New hedge planting.
Status Decided
Decision Refused
Decision Issued Date Wed 21 Feb 2024

10c. Planning Appeals

Reference 23/10726
Alternative Reference
Appeal Received 14 Nov 2023 – awaiting start date
Address MARSH FARM COTTAGE, ROCKBOURNE SP6 3NF
Conversion of garage/workshop to ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling
Original Decision Refused

11. Children's Play Area

The Clerk has received a message from New Forest District Council on the timing of a decision on the grant application which was due back at the beginning of March. Decisions on all Community Infrastructure Levy grants have been deferred until 1st April.

12. Users of Recreation Ground and Pavilion

Cllr Kirkcaldy said that this had been covered previously.

13. Councillor E-Mail Addresses

Following on from a Hampshire Association of Local Councils recommendation at a training session, Cllr Wise had proposed the provision of specific Outlook addresses for all Councillors. Cllr Leeson had agreed to the idea ahead of this meeting. Cllr Wise said that it addresses the concerns on the Freedom of Information Act and Cllr Kirkcaldy agreed that it solves the issue of using personal e-mail addresses. Cllr Wise therefore formally **PROPOSED** the setting up of Councillor Outlook e-mail addresses and Cllr Kirkcaldy seconded this, with all Councillors in agreement.

14. Working Groups (LGA1972 s7.48)

Cllr Kirkcaldy reported that the first meeting of the Bourne Working Group would be held on Thursday. [14th March 2024].

Cllr Wise then spoke on the Traffic Working Group, saying that they had met again. They have been identifying locations for SpeedWatch. This is mainly people's driveways. He has also followed up on 20 is Plenty and there are quite a lot of hoops to jump through. He is working on an active group as well as wider community support and Police support. Cllr Carmichael asked whether we could use County Cllr Heron's e-mail towards the 20 mph limit? Cllr Wise confirmed that he had

already been asked to get County Cllr Heron along to a meeting. Cllr Kirkcaldy had recently written to the local Member of Parliament, Desmond Swayne MP about the state of the roads and had received a reply which had been circulated. We now need to take this to the next level. Cllr Wise said that we want to deter through traffic. He is still trying to get the Speed Indicator Device back as well.

15. To arrange the date for the next meetings –

The next meetings will be Tuesday 9th April 2024, Tuesday 14th May 2024 and Tuesday 11th June 2024 @ 7pm, in the Pavilion, Rockbourne Recreation Ground. Those wanting to join the meetings are asked to please contact the Parish Clerk: rockbourneclerk@outlook.com for details.