

RATLEY AND UPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on 19th Dec 2024 in Ratley Village Hall at 7:45 pm

No	Agenda Item	Action by
	Present Cllrs. A Simpkins, A Berry, D Payne, L Hornsby, J Obbard, Clerk County Cllr. C. Mills, and one member of the public	
1.	Open Forum 1.1 – no items	
2.	Apologies Apologies were received from Cllr. Littlewood who was unable to attend due to a clash with a private appointment. Cllr. Hornsby had to leave the meeting unexpectedly after 30 minutes.	
3.	Declarations of Interest None received	
4.	Edgehill Quarry updates. Several residents have reported an increase in lorry traffic approaching from the wrong direction. – also, driving through Ratley to go in the other direction. CM to report to enforcement again.	CM
5.	Minutes of previous meeting – 17th Oct 2024 The minutes of the last meeting were proposed by Cllr. Payne, seconded by Cllr. Hornsby, agreed by all and duly signed by the Chair.	
6.	Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 17th Oct 2024 6.1 The streetlight near the bus stop is not fixed yet – this was repaired within two days of the meeting 6.2 The bus timetable at the bus stop is out of date - any chance of getting a new one? Busses come through but times aren't right. Cllr. Hornsby reported that a new timetable had been posted in the bus stop. When time allows, the existing timetable frame will be opened and the new timetable inserted. 6.3 Town Hill Steps 2. The steps are the only way up to the houses which isn't accessible - will soon need a ramp. One by No 1 Town Hill (AB) – Gwen – not suitable. Clerk to speak to Malcolm Littlewood for suggestions for raising this with Orbit. Carry forward. 6.4 The Clerk mentioned an earlier conversation with a parishioner who complained about the state of the footpath alongside Grange Lane beyond the Grange Hollow property. This was cleared by the land agent. 6.5 WCC Grant to be pursued prior to committing to purchase a new picnic bench. A WCC Grant has now been approved and the funds received – many thanks to Cllr. Mills for his support. Clerk to arrange purchase of bench. 6.6 Big swings – four plastic bolt caps are missing. Cllr. Berry agreed to source some replacements. Clerk has replaced caps.	 JO JO

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	<p>6.7 All Planning Application actions have been completed.</p> <p>6.8 Tree on triangle by pub – needs looking at as it appears to be deteriorating quickly. Can we get Lighthorne Tree Care in to have a look. Clerk had requested Lighthorne Tree Care to inspect and advise – however, tree blew down in the gale and was cleared by local residents.</p> <p>6.9 Hedge by playing field – John White was going to cut but didn't. legislation only applies to hedges alongside agricultural land but not to gardens or recreational areas. Cllr. Berry to ask John again if he is able to cut. John is not now able to carry out this work. Cllr. Berry to follow up with other options.</p> <p>6.10 Playground Inspection – This was thought to be generally good. However, there are a few items that will need addressing - Over next few weeks we will have to have a detailed look at all the issues and make plan for correction. Carry over.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">JO</p> <p style="text-align: right;">AHB</p> <p style="text-align: right;">All</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Planning Applications</p> <p>7.1 24/02018/FUL - Will England Cottage, Edgehill – Change of use plus extension. Comments due 10/01/25. Cllrs to view application and pass comments to Clerk prior to this date.</p> <p>7.2 24/02448/FUL – School House, Ratley – removal of building and window changes. This is a slight revision following Clerk's request for clarifications following the original application. Comments are now due by 03/01/25.</p> <p>7.3 24/02982/FUL – Hill View, Ratley – Extension and front elevation changes. Comments due 18/12/24 – no objections received – Clerk to comment on portal.</p> <p>7.4 24/02854/FUL – Land East of Hill View – changes to vehicle access. Comments due 17/12/24. Following offline consultation with Councillors, Clerk posted supporting comments on the SDC portal</p> <p>7.5 24/02911/TPO – Woodside, Ratley – Larch fell – Comments due 12/12/24 – no comments were received.</p> <p>7.6 – 24/02735/FUL- Battle Lodge Camp Lane – Front entrance porch and two-storey extension – No Comments due date provided. Determination date 23/12/2024 – JO follow up planning – no info available.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">All + JO</p> <p style="text-align: right;">All</p> <p style="text-align: right;">JO</p> <p style="text-align: right;">JO</p> <p style="text-align: right;">JO</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>District and County Councillors reports</p> <p>8.1 - District Council report – This had been previously supplied and is shown in Appendix 1</p> <p>8.2 – County Councillor's report – This had been previously supplied and is shown in Appendix 2. Cllr. Mills drew attention to the following items:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter challenges – the cold weather has affected people but it has not been not bitterly cold yet. • Domestic abuse – typically this increases. In an emergency, call 999, otherwise 	

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	<p>#YouAreNotAlone 0800 408 1552 can be used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide prevention – increasing trend this year - For urgent support, please call 111 (or visit 111.nhs.uk) and choose the mental health option. In an emergency call 999 • The process for reporting potholes has changed. – please refer to Appendix 2. • Child friendly festive cheer – presents to WCC • The process for SDC becoming part of a Unitary Authority is under way. This is likely to take up to two years and it is understood there will be no public consultation. 	
9.	<p>Parish Plan</p> <p>9.1 Communications Sub-Committee. Cllr. Berry reported that the recreation ground is now fully registered on the Land Registry. – Thanks from all for all the hard work involved</p> <p>9.2 Environmental sub-committee. All looking forward to seeing the wildflowers in the spring!</p>	
10.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>10.1 397 emails and 0 printed communications received since the last meeting.</p>	
11.	<p>Finance</p> <p>11.1 Invoices for Payment – 8 transactions had been approved by the signatories and paid by the Clerk since the last meeting – See Appendix 3 for details.</p> <p>11.2 2024/25 Accounts – these were discussed – See Appendix 3.</p> <p>11.3 Bank statements for both the Current account and the Savings account covering the period since the last meeting were presented for inspection. These tally with the Parish Council accounts.</p> <p>11.4 Budget / Precept for 2025. Clerk presented the 2025/6 budgeting spreadsheet. After careful consideration, the Chair proposed increasing the precept to £17,000. This was seconded by Cllr. Payne and agreed by all. Clerk to complete form and send to SDC.</p>	JO
12.	<p>Parish Maintenance</p> <p>12.1 Frenches Lane – The contract requires Thomas Fox to keep this footpath open but they have failed in this. Additionally, only one side of the lane alongside football pitch has been cleared, whereas the contract calls for both sides. Clerk to arrange a review meeting with Thomas Fox prior to the start of the 2025 cutting season.</p> <p>12.2 New Road – there have been complaints about parking on grass verges etc. and a request has been made for the erection of markers or stones to deter this. The Councillors explained that the PC can't be held responsible and this should be</p>	JO

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	<p>referred to Orbit and/or WCC Highways. The PC has no powers as it is not our land.</p> <p>It was also pointed out that preventing parking on verges would further highlight the shortage of parking facilities and would also be likely to cause congestion which may inhibit passage of emergency vehicles etc.</p> <p>Clerk to respond to complainant accordingly.</p> <p>12.3 The hole in the Baulks footpath is still there and getting bigger – Cllr. Graham to report direct to Highways.</p> <p>12.4 Edgehill to Ratley footpath – since scraping the surface this is looking a real mess. It will clearly break up and become really dangerous in due course.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AG</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Urgent Business 13.1 – No items</p>	
<p>14.</p>	<p>Next meeting. The next meeting will be held in Ratley Village Hall on January 30th Clerk to forward new dates.</p> <p>Dates of following meetings:-</p> <p>Meeting closed at 21:15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JO</p>

Signed (Chair) _____

Date _____

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Appendix I – District Councillor Report

Ward member Report to Parish Councils in Tysoe Ward.

06-11-2024

State of the District

The State of the District is reported on an annual basis and forms part of the decision and planning process for resource allocation at SDC.

Population

It is no surprise that the District has a ageing population with nearly 50% over the age of 49, 25% 65+, and only 15% under 18 of the just under the estimated 142,000.

Business

The latest figures available are for 2023 which showed just over 8,500 businesses in the Stratford District with 8.8% in agriculture.

Housing

At the end of March 2024 there were 66,405 dwellings in the District of which new were 1,435.

The Median House Price in the District is £375,000 compared to £290,000 for England as a whole, of which 71% are Owner Occupied. The median cost of Rental properties increased by 13% [£100 per month] since the end of March 2023.

Across the District it is estimated that 2,267 properties are vacant. 6% of vacant properties are owned by Housing Associations and 66% of these are long term vacant. As Social Housing is a major issue in the District, this situation needs to be addressed.

Poverty & Cost of Living Crisis

76% of all adults in the District are employed of which 23% are self-employed.

There are a number of indicators highlighting Living Poverty. They include:

- Fuel Poverty
- Receiving Low Income or Unemployment benefits
- Renting private housing in combination with either of the above.

The most up-to-date data is for 2022 which means that the numbers living in poverty in the District will have risen from the 16.5% of households. In August of this year 9,312 people were claiming Universal Credit of which 4,004 were in employment.

In Tysoe Ward in August 2024 80 people are receiving UC of which 17 are in employment.

Crime

Recorded Crimes in the District were 7,904 (to July 2024) or 60 crimes per 1,000 residents of which 24 per 1,000 residents were Violent or Sexual offences and 6 per 1,000 vehicle crime.

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Appendix 2 – County Councillor Report

County Councillor report Ratley & Upton Parish Council Meeting 19th December 2024

Support managing winter challenges

Support is available in Warwickshire to help people who might be feeling lonely, stressed or unwell due to social and financial pressures this winter. Find out more here:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5776/help-for-warwickshire-residents-to-manage-winter-challenges>

Domestic abuse and family relationships

The festive season isn't always the most wonderful time of the year. For victim/survivors of domestic abuse it can mean physical harm to them and any dependents. Domestic Abuse is a crime. Warwickshire is here to help you. For advice, please go to www.talk2someone.org.uk. In an emergency, call 999. #YouAreNotAlone 0800 408 1552

Suicide prevention

If you, or someone you know, is having thoughts of suicide or significant self-harm, help and support is available now. Visit dearlife.org.uk where you will find mental health and suicide prevention information and advice. For urgent support, please call 111 (or visit 111.nhs.uk) and choose the mental health option. Calls will be answered by a trained mental health professional who will be able to quickly assess the situation and determine whether an urgent referral is required. If there is immediate risk to life, call 999.

Improving school experiences for neurodivergent children

Neurodivergent children and young people in Warwickshire are set to benefit from a new pilot which aims to better support them in the classroom.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5801/new-initiative-to-improve-school-experiences-for-neurodivergent-children-in-warwickshire>

Becoming a childminder

Could becoming a childminder be your new year resolution?

Warwickshire County Council is encouraging residents to consider a rewarding career change that allows them to make a real difference in the lives of young children: childminding Discover more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5819/make-a-difference-in-2025-become-a-childminder->

Cabinet approves Warwickshire SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029

On Thursday 12 December, Warwickshire County Council approved the Warwickshire SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029, a comprehensive five-year plan designed to address key challenges in services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The strategy has been shaped through the collaborative efforts of the Warwickshire SEND and Inclusion Partnership Board, reflecting a diverse range of expertise and experiences. It has been developed through significant engagement with key stakeholders, ensuring the voices of those who use and deliver SEND services have been central to its creation.

New Destination Work programme

A groundbreaking new programme – Destination Work - has been launched in Warwickshire to deliver intensive employability and skills support to economically inactive people aged 25 and over. The programme will provide intensive support designed to engage some of the hardest-to-reach people in our communities. Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5806/new-destination-work-programme-supporting-people-into-employment>

Log burners

Do you have a log burner in your home?

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Using wet wood, treated waste wood, such as old furniture, or household waste can be dangerous for your health as it can emit harmful fumes and toxic pollutants into your home when burnt. Switch to Ready to Burn wood for a safer alternative and make sure to have a carbon monoxide alarm fitted for your safety.

Warwickshire Holiday Activities & Food Programme

Warwickshire County Council is thrilled to announce that a wide range of fun and free activities to children and young people eligible for benefits-related free school meals during the winter break from school. Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5793/warwickshire-holiday-activities-food-programme-offers-winter-fun-for-children-and-young-people>

Leamington Town Vision

The transformation of Leamington Spa's town centre has taken a step closer after the draft Leamington Town Centre Vision was approved by Warwickshire County Council's cabinet. The Vision is a high-level strategic document aimed at guiding the future regeneration of the town over the coming decade.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5818/warwickshire-county-council-endorses-ambitious-vision-for-leamington-spa-town-centre>

Warwickshire County Council's guide to managing potholes: how you can help keep roads safe

As we enter the colder months, Warwickshire County Council invites residents to join in the fight against potholes. Potholes form as a natural result of traffic, water, and surface wear. When rainwater seeps into cracks in the road, it freezes and expands, breaking the road surface under the pressure of passing vehicles.

Warwickshire County Council has created an efficient reporting system for residents to quickly notify the Council of potholes, track repair progress, and stay informed on ongoing maintenance. **How to Report a Pothole**

Residents can help keep roads safe by reporting potholes through the Council's user-friendly online platform: warwickshire.gov.uk/potholes.

Child-friendly festive cheer

Warwickshire residents and businesses who want to help children and young people have a happy Christmas are invited to donate presents via a Warwickshire County Council's gift appeal. Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5755/spread-some-child-friendly-christmas-cheer->



Chris Mills
County Councillor

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Appendix 3 - 2024/25 Accounts

Payments					
Date	Who	Ref	VAT	NET	Total
10/04/2024	WALC Subs	1324316673	£24.20	£151.00	£175.20
11/04/2024	Npower - Lighting charges	1327752922	£12.35	£246.98	£259.33
22/04/2024	Caloo - Swings	1331006163	£737.00	£3,685.00	£4,422.00
22/04/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 2 and 3	1331007392	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
22/04/2024	Lighthorne Tree Care - High Street Bank	1330273438		£550.00	£550.00
18/05/2024	J Obbard - Clerk fees Q1	1355034626		£453.57	£453.57
18/05/2024	HMRC - PAYE Q1	1349952711		£302.38	£302.38
25/05/2024	John Hopkins - cleaning bus shelter	1354117305		£100.00	£100.00
25/05/2024	Clear Insurance	1354216305		£382.62	£382.62
30/05/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 4, 5 & 6	1354707810	£249.45	£1,247.25	£1,496.70
01/06/2024	Well Medical (J Obbard) - Defib' pads	1359050568	£23.98	£119.90	£143.88
27/06/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 7 and 8	1331007392	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
28/06/2024	Monika Morgan - Internal Audit	1376553754		£75.00	£75.00
27/07/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 9 and 10	1384370556	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
02/08/2024	Naturescape wildflowers	1401546423	£112.00	£560.00	£672.00
02/08/2024	Claranet Web Hosting	1402960160	£12.10	£60.50	£72.60
03/08/2024	Lighthorne Tree Care - Cherry trees Town Hill	1389261671		£540.00	£540.00
22/08/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 11 and 12	1408518338	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
09/09/2024	A Graham - warning tape for wildflowers	1422139270		£9.96	£9.96
24/09/2024	J Obbard - Clerk fees Q2	1431152536		£453.57	£453.57
24/09/2024	HMRC - PAYE Q2	1432579095		£302.38	£302.38
24/09/2024	Ratley Village Hall	1427557221		£750.00	£750.00
24/09/2024	Ratley PCC	1431251103		£750.00	£750.00
25/09/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 13 and 14	1428123370	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
26/09/2024	A Berry - Glue for Barbeque	1419425884		£5.85	£5.85
21/10/2024	PlaySafety Ltd	1443318359	£19.60	£98.00	£117.60
21/10/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 15 and 16	1434079924	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
26/10/2024	Caloo - bolt covers	1437099099	£7.10	£35.50	£42.60
28/11/2024	Thomas Fox - Banks, hedges and wall	1465089386	£93.32	£466.62	£559.94
07/12/2024	J Obbard - Clerk fees Q3	1474492963		£644.29	£644.29
07/12/2024	HMRC - PAYE Q3	1474493507		£429.53	£429.53
07/12/2024	Moore & Tibbets	1470777976	£150.00	£750.00	£900.00
07/12/2024	A Berry - land registration	1474497377		£6.00	£6.00
	Year 2024/25 Total		£2,438.90	£18,164.90	£20,603.80
	Current Balance				£1,414.71