

Minutes of the Wolston Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19th February 2025 at the Brandon & Wolston Village Hall, 2 Main Street, Wolston CV8 3HJ at 7:15p.m.

Present: Cllr. T. WILLIS (Chair), Cllr. RAINEY (Vice Chair) Cllr. L. WRIGHT, Cllr. A. MILNE, Cllr. T. BALL, Cll. T. RAMSAY, Cllr. S. OSMOND, L. KNOWLES (Clerk & RFO)
6 members of the public

Meeting started: 19:15

180.	Apologies Apologies received from Rugby Borough Councillors WARD, TIMMS and POOLE.
181.	Declarations of Interest (existence and nature) on items on the Agenda – Councillors to declare any personal and/or pecuniary interest on items on the agenda. Cllr. WILLIS - any items with regard to Rugby Borough Council in particular planning. Cllr. RAMSAY – item 186 a) Cllr. BALL – item 189 b)
182.	Minutes – a). To review and if appropriate, approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2 nd January 2025 Proposed: Cllr. WRIGHT Seconded: Cllr. BALL For: 6 Against: 0 Abs: 1
183.	Co-option – To discuss and consider co-option of a prospective councillor, to receive any expressions of interest and if appropriate, vote and co-opt a councillor. No interest expressed.
184.	Finance – a). To approve payments for December 2024. Proposed: Cllr. WRIGHT Seconded: Cllr. MILNE For: 5 Against: 0 Abs: 2 b). To approve payments for January 2025 Proposed: Cllr. WRIGHT Seconded: Cllr. MILNE For: 5 Against: 0 Abs: 2 c). To note payments received. Noted d). To note the latest bank reconciliation. e). To approve the Wolston Parish Council Budget for 2025/26 and the precept requirement to deliver that. Cllr. WILLIS confirmed that the Parish Council Budget precept was approved by Rugby Borough Council at the Budget Setting Review on 13 th February 2025. Cllr. RAINEY highlighted that following the discussions of various budget options and listening to advice from different councillors, the Finance Group did not reach a unanimous proposal for the

budget as submitted. It is a majority proposal. The budget went out to all councillors and no other comments were received. The Finance Group recommends that budget as it has been prepared. Cllr. RAINEY proposed a recorded vote.

Proposed: Cllr. RAINEY

Seconded: Cllr WRIGHT

All in favour.

Cllr. WILLIS declared an interest in this item as already voted on the precept as a RB Councillor. Cllr Ball clarified that the precept is set at £107,500 compared to last year at £102,00 an increase of under £5,000 in precept for the village. This equates to 6% which is an increase of £6.49 per Band D household.

Three factors beyond our control effecting a rise of over 5%; the tax base has gone down considerably year on year (no response from RBC as to why), the rise in National Insurance Contributions and the charge for emptying of bins.

Cllr. WRIGHT identified an email received from WALC stating that the Rate Support Grant was going to be the same support as last year for councils. He asked if that made any difference the WPC precept?

He questioned the listed income items which he considered indicated a shortfall in reducing the budget setting of £128,484 to a precept of £107,500 at 6% and questioned where the shortfall would come from.

Cllr. RAINEY highlighted that costs to the village have risen considerably over the last two years. Initial calculations to provide exactly the same service indicated an increase of 11%.

This proposed budget genuinely reflects the intent to try and provide the same level of services to the village as has been provided in the past 3 – 4 years. Within the details, money will need to be moved and new decisions taken. The Parish Council is able to claim some S106 monies from RBC for maintenance. The real cost of living increase over the last year is 8.1% and the issues of cost of living have been in consideration in the preparing of the budget.

Cllr. BALL responded with an explanation for each of the items and figures listed on the income forecast sheet.

Proposal: The Budget to be recorded as accepted by this Parish Council. (recorded vote)

Proposed: Cllr RAINEY

Seconded: Cllr. BALL

Cllr. WILLIS: Abs

Cllr. RAINEY: For

Cllr. MILNE: For

Cllr. BALL: For

Cllr. OSMOND: For

Cllr. RAMSAY: For

Cllr WRIGHT: Against

For: 5 Against: 1 Abs: 1

f). To approve payment for repair (replacement of Perspex panel) to bus shelter on School Street.

Quotation

At last PC meeting it was requested that the materials and labour be priced separately on the quote. The updated quote has been received but it is no longer valid.

Proposal: Matter to be referred back to Open Spaces Group for resolution to be recommended at next meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. RAINEY

Seconded: Cllr WILLIS

For: 7
Against: 0
Abs: 0

g). To consider and make appropriate decisions regarding payment for Christmas tree lighting on beech tree outside Baptist Church.

Circumstances surrounding the work were detailed by Clerk.

Proposal for recorded vote

Proposed: Cllr. WILLIS

Seconded: Cllr RAINEY

All in favour

Proposal: The decision in respect of payment is deferred and the matter to return to Finance Group for consideration of the facts to reach a resolution and firm recommendation to be presented at next meeting taking in to account the feedback from this meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. WILLIS

Seconded: Cllr. OSMOND

Cllr. RAMSAY: Against

Cllr. OSMOND: For

Cllr. BALL: For

Cllr. WRIGHT: For

Cllr. RAINEY: For

Cllr. MILNE: For

Cllr. WILLIS: For

For: 6

Against: 1

Abs: 0

Cllr. RAMSAY offered an invitation to attend next finance meeting.

h). To make appropriate decisions regarding the Lakeside grass cutting contract for 2025/26.

A two-section quote has been received from Lakeside. The first section is the only one relevant to this decision that the Lakeside contract that covers the maintenance the grounds and parks within the community.

The quote shows a 2.5% increase for the coming year. Additional work is improving the

Cllr. RAMSAY questioned if the contract was a 12month contract last year and therefore the PC need to go out to tender.

Cllr. BALL requested a copy of the contract.

Cllr. RAINEY confirmed that within Open Spaces Group this supplier is identified as an improved supplier. Cllr. RAINEY will check on the Lakeside contract.

Proposal for recorded vote.

Proposed: Cllr. WILLIS

Seconded: Cllr. OSMOND

All in favour

Proposal: Wolston Parish Council continue the contract for the primary quote for village maintenance with Lakeside with 2.5% increase.

Recorded vote:

Cllr. WILLIS: For

Cllr. MILNE: For

Cllr. WRIGHT: For

Cllr. RAINEY: For

	<p>Cllr. OSMOND: For Cllr. BALL: Against Cllr. RAMSAY: Against Carried</p> <p>i)Finance Working Group report no further items</p>
185	<p>Presentation of feasibility study for storage of fuel onsite, with regard to additional application to store gas cannisters outside, for council consideration. (LW) Deferred awaiting further information. Cllr. BALL requested that a copy of the feasibility study is circulated prior to the next meeting. Cllr. WILLIS will contact Scouts for details of outstanding information. Cllr. RAINEY highlighted the need to improve communications with the Scout Group and thereby improve the PC relationship with this group.</p>
186.	<p>Planning – a). PROPOSAL: S 73 application for the variation of conditions 1, 2, 5 and 6 of planning permission RBC/19CM005 to extend the time limit to complete sand and gravel extraction, importation of inert materials, and restoration by 3 years; to increase the total quantity of mineral extracted from the site from 1,200,000 tonnes nett to 1,400,000 tonnes nett; and to vary the total quantity of inert infill materials from 850,000 tonnes to 800,000 cubic metres at Wolston Fields Quarry, Wolston Lane, Wolston, CV8 3ES. LOCATION: Wolston Fields Quarry, Wolston Lane, Wolston, CV8 3ES. Application has been granted. Noted Cllr WRIGHT expressed opinion that Wolston PC should write to RBC to question when the original application was submitted. Cllr BALL confirmed that it when it went back in for permission in 2023. It has been out to consultation a number of times. Wright is still PC rep and will be at next meeting.</p> <p>b). PROPOSAL: R24/0030 Proposed sand and gravel quarry including the importation of inert restoration material, restoration to an agricultural use and biodiversity enhancements. To include mineral processing plant, landline conveyor system, silt and freshwater lagoons, site office, workshop and welfare facilities, weighbridge, wheel wash, new access, operational crossing point and haul roads, perimeter soil bunds and temporary closure of Public Rights of Way for the duration of development (footpath nos. 284 R164/1 and 284 R164/2). LOCATION: Land off Lawford Heath Lane, Lawford Heath, Warwickshire Rugby Borough Councillors attended a pre meeting with Cemex. There was a presentation at Long Lawford to which all parish councillors were invited.</p> <p>Cllr. BALL wished to register concerns – a) the land is due to come back to agricultural use in 30 years' time but there does not appear to be any infrastructure involved in this development to ensure that rules are being adhered in respect of biodiversity. There may b) it is close coming into Coalpit Lane – not an area where we would want large vehicles coming in. c) Why has it taken WCC 6 weeks to publish it? Discussion of the area covered by this application. Map provided by Cllr. BALL.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY proposed that the PC submit a letter highlighting the concerns to the Planning Authorities particularly with reference to reassurance of return to agricultural use. Proposed: Cllr. RAINEY Seconded: Cllr. BALL For: 7 Against: 0 Abs:0</p>

	<p>Cllr. Ball stated she would draft a letter and circulate in next couple of days.</p> <p>c). Proposal at: R25/0030: YARDLEYS MEADOW, STRETTON ROAD, WOLSTON For: Retrospective Application - Change of use from solely paddock to allow commercial dog walking.</p> <p>Cllr WILLIS left room for duration of debate of item. He has been approached by members of public regarding concerns and will be contacting the Planning Officer.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY chaired this section of meeting. Cllr. WRIGHT stayed in meeting declaring personal interest but without a vote.</p> <p>6 members of the public were present. Cllr. RAINEY offered the opportunity to the public forum for 5minutes to express their concerns and objections which would be taken in to consideration.</p> <p>It was highlighted by members of the public that Yardley's Meadow is in close proximity to the residential houses of John Simpson Close and the dog walking has been carried out on this field for approximately 12 months. The issue for the residents of that area is the noise nuisance which goes on until the evening and impinges on their lives.</p> <p>Cllr. WRIGHT expressed his support for the residents who have to put up with the noise nuisance. The dog walking venture is not for the support of villagers, with dogs being brought from further away, it is serving Borough of Rugby and City of Coventry. The field is operational from 6:00a.m.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY summarised that the objections from the public were with regard to a commercial venture that would be developing beyond what would be expected in a village community and that the village would have little control over.</p> <p>Cllr. BALL confirmed that the application states that there will be no more than 2 dogs on the site at any one time. MOP stated that they had video evidence to challenge this claim. Cllr BALL requested that the footage be forwarded to her so that she can formulate a response.</p> <p>MOP confirmed that all the relevant information regarding the nuisance has been passed on to the local authority.</p> <p>Cllr RAMSAY and Cllr. RAMSAY requested that councillors need to see all of the supporting evidence in order to be informed.</p> <p>Proposal: Wolston Parish Council seek an extension on this planning application until after the next PC meeting, 6th March.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr. BALL</p> <p>Seconded: Cllr. RAMSAY</p> <p>For: 5</p> <p>Against: 0</p> <p>Abs: 0</p> <p>Cllr. Rainey the PC is also concerned and needs to make sure that it can present a proper and defined case.</p>
187.	<p>Gritting of pavements in village: To receive feedback and review the agreed trial gritting of pavements around village to date and make appropriate decisions. (LW)</p> <p>Not carried out due to not having any salt.</p>
188.	<p>To receive timely headlines and consider any recommendations from working groups and committees and make any appropriate decisions.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Development Plan</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY reported that Mr. Ingles, who was instrumental in getting document prepared but has now resigned.</p> <p>He has received a letter from a member of NDP steering group asking for an urgent referral to ascertain where the plan goes now. The NDP is in a powerless position and is running out of bodies.</p> <p>The NDP is not in a position to indicate any timetable for moving towards consultation. There is a number of issues within the document that need addressing.</p> <p>He has had a provisional discussion with some member of group intending to set up a wind up meeting with Mr. Ingles as to where we are now and next actions to take.</p> <p>Cllr. RAMSAY requested a behind closed doors meeting before next PC meeting to take up an idea suggested by Cllr. WRIGHT at last meeting. There is still potential to move forwards.</p>

	<p>Cllr. OSMOND highlighted the opportunity to use other council documents to inform the Wolston document. Use best practice of other parish councils.</p> <p>Cllr. WILLIS informed the PC of a Local Plan Briefing on 25th March for Borough Councillors. This should show the way forward. Cllr. Willis will endeavour to get the reassurance that the NDP will be given the weight that they currently are given in the planning regime.</p> <p>NDPs are a significant part of planning. Roles of town and parish councils will become more robust.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY will have a meeting with remaining members of the working group then a meeting with Parish Cllrs.</p> <p>Cllr. RAMSAY wished that remaining member of the NDP Group be reassured that the PC will support to get this over the line.</p> <p>Cllr. BALL highlighted that the PC should be offering support to the NDP.</p> <p>There may be a change of direction going forward, but it is not known exactly what at this point in time.</p>
189.	<p>Exclusion of Press and Public</p> <p>In accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Parish Council is invited to Resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda items owing to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and the public interest would not be served in disclosing that information.</p> <p>Reason for Exclusion – The exclusion is on the grounds that items of business to be discussed are likely to include discussions about staffing.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr. WRIGHT</p> <p>Seconded: Cllr. OSMOND</p> <p>All in Favour</p>
190.	<p>Human Resources (Staffing) – To receive any updates on any items of business that are likely to include staffing discussions and to make any appropriate decisions.</p> <p>a). To discuss, review and approve payment to previous Clerk/RFO. Clerk. (ALL)</p> <p>Discussion of the facts took place and the declaration that additional hours were authorised by a councillor.</p> <p>Discussion took place with differing opinions expressed.</p> <p>Proposal for a recorded vote.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr. RAMSAY</p> <p>Seconded: Cllr. WILLIS</p> <p>All in favour.</p> <p>Proposal: To pay the outstanding payment for additional worked hours to the previous Clerk.</p> <p>Proposed; Cllr WRIGHT</p> <p>Seconded: Cllr RAINEY</p> <p>Cllr. WRIGHT: For</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY: For</p> <p>Cllr. RAMSAY: Against</p> <p>Cllr. BALL: Against</p> <p>Cllr. OSMOND: Abstained</p> <p>Cllr. MILNE: For</p> <p>Cllr. WILLIS: Against</p> <p>For: 3 Against: 3 Abs: 1</p> <p>b). To approve recommendation of appointment of Clerk/RFO to Wolston Parish Council. (SO / TR)</p> <p>Cllr. RAMSAY suggested that Cllr BALL leave the room due to interest in the item. Cllr. BALL expressed that as she had no pecuniary interest in the item as she would not be paid for 12 months therefore she could stay in the room.</p> <p>Cllr. WRIGHT objected to Cllr. BALL staying in the room. Cllr. BALL agreed that she would not enter the discussion and would leave the room if beneficial.</p>

Cllr. RAMSAY & Cllr. OSMOND gave feedback on the interview process. 3 candidates were interviewed. One withdrew after interview. The process was robust and both candidates being considered, interviewed well. Interviewers were unable to provide the written interview documents due to concerns about secure retention in terms of GDPR. Responses were scored on a scale and supported the decision making in a subsequent discussion. References and applications were circulated to all councillors.

21:45 Cllr. RAMSAY requested an extension of 15 minutes to the meeting. Seconded: Cllr. OSMOND
6 in favour 1 abstention

Interviewers confirmed that all references were made available to them.

Cllr. RAMSAY **proposed** a recorded vote.

Seconded by Cllr. OSMOND

All in favour.

Proposal: Wolston Parish Council appoints Clare Malyon 15 hours a week as our Clerk and Tracie Ball 5 hours a week as our RFO.

Proposed: Cllr. RAMSAY

Seconded: Cllr OSMOND

Cllr. RAMSAY: For

Cllr. OSMOND: For

Cllr. WRIGHT: Against

Cllr. RAINEY: For

Cllr WILLIS: For

Cllr. MILNE: For

For: 5 Against: 1

Meeting end: 21:55