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# RUSPIDGE & SOUDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the MEETING held on Tuesday 12th September, 2023**

*(These minutes remain in draft form until approved at the next meeting of the Council)*

**Parish Councillors Present:**

Cllrs. Jo Smith Chairman, Norman Snell, William Acland, Tony Matthews.

**County Councillors Present:**

Cllr. Beki Hoyland, Graham Morgan.

**District Councillors Present:**

None Present.

**Parish Council Clerk** – Roland Dowding

**Apologies:**

Cllrs. Helen Medcraft, Bernie O’Neill.

**Standing Declarations of Interest**

A) Ruspidge Memorial Hall - Insignificant personal interest by Cllr. William Acland.

**Public Present:**

Michael Amey, Nicky Packer, Bernadette Bell, Derek Bell, Phil Willett, Adrian Peacey.

**RUSPIDGE WELFARE TRUST (RWT)**

Members were mindful that these items were considered and determined as trustees to the RWT.

9.1 There were no matters arising from the minutes.

9.2. No other business.

**Public Participation**

**Michael Amey** – How can Clarke Telecom put in a planning application for a telecom mast on land they do not own? Cllrs. Matthews confirmed that YES a planning application can be submitted on land not owned by the applicant. Michael Amey also expressed concern that Clarke Telecom had suspended their application but had not withdrawn the application. Clarke Telecom is currently surveying alternative locations in the village of Soudley, the question then asked, is what happens after Clarke Telecom completes the survey. Cllr. Smith responded if any proposed site survey proved suitable it would be assumed Clarke Telecom would submit a new proposal to the PC.

**Phil Willett** – Requested confirmation of the proposed location for the mast, if sited on Village Hall land. Michael Amy responded that the location would be on the right-hand side as you enter the car park from the bridge, where the old recycling centre used to be. Cllr. Smith also confirmed said location. The public present and PC expressed any loss of space at SVH car park is of great concern, it

is believed vehicles attending SVH would obstruct Lower Rd and cause obstruction to the access of any emergency service vehicles that might require access to the area.

**Derek Bell** – informed Council it was his understanding that the SVH Committee is opposed to the Clarke Telecom proposal for SVH Car park. Cllr. Smith confirmed that this was also her understanding of SVH stance on the current proposal. Derek Bell also stated that it was his understanding that a location opposite Bradley Hill might also be under consideration for the installation of said telecom mast.

**Public unknown** – (names unable to be taken for the minutes). Concern was raised that should Clarke Telecom be successful in their planning application for land owned by SVH, then this would obstruct SVH Committee in any future development of the land. Caution and concern were advised by the public present and PC in the case of any further action being taken by Clarke Telecom regarding the land at SVH. Cllr. Smith advised the public present, that any further proposals received by R&SPC from Clarke Telecom would be made public via the notice board in Soudley and the PC website and social media.

Cllr. Matthews made the point that the SVH site does not have an appropriate power supply for said mast and the bridge from Lower Rd cannot accommodate the vehicles necessary for any installation. Making the point that SVH car park is unsuitable for said proposal.

The PC advised that it is not opposed to having a telecom mast in the village of Soudley but believes the current proposed location of land at SVH is an inappropriate location and remains opposed to the current proposal from Clarke Telecom.

Members of the Public present questioned when the Ruspidge to Soudley Rd would be reopened and what information was currently known. Cllr. Hoyland informed the public and members present that Highways are currently waiting on a survey/advice from Geotechnical. Cllr. Hoyland will consult further with Highways and Streetworks.

The Chairman of the meeting Cllr. Jo Smith ended the public participation due to the PC standing orders **NOT** being observed and the public speaking time limit being exceeded.

9.1. **Apologies** received and recorded from absent members.

9.2. No declaration of prejudicial interest was declared by members present.

9.3. **Minutes** - The minutes of the council meeting held on the **11th of July, 2023** were **ACCEPTED** as a true record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

9.4. **Matters Arising** – There were no matters arising from the minutes.

9.5. **District Councillor Reports**

*Report is attached as an Appendix to these Minutes.*

9.6. **County Councillor Reports**

*Report is attached as an Appendix to these Minutes.*

9.7. **Planning** – The completed schedule for **August** and **September** is attached as an Appendix to these Minutes.

- 9.8. **Financial Matters** - Following a report by the Treasurer the council **APPROVED** the accounts presented for the **September** payment totalling **£5,224.30** this figure is inclusive of confidential expenditure. Due to no meeting being held in **August** and following a report by the Treasurer the council **APPROVED** the accounts presented for the **August** payment totalling **£8,404.98** this figure is inclusive of confidential expenditure.
- 9.9. **Ruspidge Memorial Hall** – Grant request **£6,000.00** for repairs to the roof of said hall. After a presentation by Nicky Packer, representing Ruspidge Memorial Hall, PC members conferred with the PC RFO (Roland Dowding) who informed Council that the current S.137 grant budget balance was £1,000.00, but unallocated reserves were available. Upon further deliberation, the members present decided to move **£3,500.00** from the unallocated reserve into the grants budget and awarded Ruspidge Memorial Hall a **GRANT of £3,500.00** upon the provision that match funding be secured. If match funding is not secured the grant will be revoked and the funds requested to be returned to the Parish Council.
- 9.10. **Clarke Telecom** – Proposal received for the installation of a radio tower on land owned by Soudley Village Hall to be located within the car park area. Please refer to the debates, under minutes for Public Participation above, The Chairman, Cllr. Jo Smith summarised the PC's position on the issue: The PC in support of the public and Soudley Village Hall remains opposed to the current Clarke Telecom proposal. The PC is, however, not opposed to a radio mast being sited within the village of Soudley, but only if a suitable location can be agreed upon by all concerned. Should any further proposal be brought to the PC, by Clarke Telecom it will be made publicly available via the PC website, social media, and parish notice boards.
- 9.11. **Blue Rock Trail** – General update. Members were informed that the recent attendance of BRT by the Community Payback Team had been of limited success, due in part to the logistics of the team attending the BRT site and staffing SVH. Cllr. Jo Smith reminded the members present that the Council had previously already identified that there is an issue with the banks along the BRT at the Ruspidge end of said trail and had agreed and approved the recruitment of the services of a suitably qualified engineer to inspect the site. Cllr. Jo Smith went on to advise, that regardless of any dispute over ownership of said banks, the attendance of an engineer and inspection of the site means the PC is required legally to undertake due diligence and action to protect the public from any known risks. Concerns raised by the engineers' visit are now, **KNOWN RISKS**. Cllr. Jo Smith stated that in the event of the PC not owning the bank research is necessary to ascertain in law what action is required to mitigate the PC's liability and ensure the PC meets its responsibility to the public. Cllr. Jo Smith advised the members, that should any member put themselves forward as an expert/competent opinion and advise the Council regarding the subject of the bank, in law, they will be judged by the standard of a competent, suitably qualified expert and held accountable as such. Cllr. Jo Smith stated that she would not personally desire to undertake such a responsibility and advised the members that they carefully consider the information provided before putting forward a vote on ownership of said bank. To summarise Cllr. Jo Smith highlighted the responsibility in law that the PC must undertake all reasonable actions to mitigate the risks highlighted by the Engineers' assessment of the bank at the BRT. Cllr. Norman Snell (Treasurer) put forward that he agrees with Cllr. Jo Smith's summary and advised that with the limited finances available ownership of the BRT is becoming increasingly unviable. 'Cllr Tony Matthews advised that he has looked at the BRT Deeds and is sure that, in his opinion and experience in reading these types of plans, the banks do not belong to the PC. Cllr. Tony Matthews advised that a suitably qualified person read the BRT

deeds to ascertain the ownership boundaries. Cllr. Tony Matthews stated members of the public who traverse the BRT trail do so at their own risk and that the PC should put up disclaimer signage at the entrances to the trail to this effect. Cllr. Jo Smith informed members, that disclaimer signage does NOT mitigate any PC liability. The members present agreed that it would be prudent to consider approaching Forestry Commission England with the aim of transferring ownership of the BRT to the Commission. The Clerk Mr. Roland Dowding is instructed to contact Forestry Commission England to ascertain what requirements/demands would be made by FCE for a transfer of ownership to take place. The Clerk advised that a formal vote should be held by the PC and said vote should be publicised via October's agenda to inform the public of R&SPC's intention. Members present agreed to this course of action. Voting and further discussion are deferred until October's meeting.

- 9.12. **Hod Boy Sculpture** – Due to recent damage to the Hod Boy sculpture, the members present unanimously agreed to relocate the sculpture. The Clerk Mr. Roland Dowding is instructed to contact the Dean Heritage Centre to enquire if the sculpture can be sited on their land.
- 9.13. **TRO reference 5227 – 49 Buckshaft** – The mapping used does not reflect the development currently taking place (**P2073/21/FUL**) between the junction of Buckshaft Road and St White's Road and the access to St White's School, specifically, that parking would not be prohibited between the development (**P2073/21/FUL**) and the proposed 'No stopping on School entrance markings'. The members present were in support of the query put forward by Mr. Steve Hardcastle and supported the action taken by Mr. Hardcastle in writing to the GCC & FoDDC Councillors. Cllr. Graham Morgan has informed the Highways officer for Ruspidge Mr. Andrew Middlecote and R&SPC will remain updated on the situation.
- 9.14. **Play Area Inspection Reports August** – Members acknowledged receipt of August's KOMPAN play area inspection reports. It is to be noted, that Cllr. Tony Matthews raised concern over KOMPAN's culpability considering a recent incident that took place at Ruspidge Park on the inclusive roundabout. Cllr. Jo Smith pointed out that the inspection in question is a visual-only inspection and the inclusive roundabout in question would have required to be taken apart to reveal any greater concerns. The Clerk Mr. Roland Dowding made members aware that, under the terms & conditions of the R&SPC inspection agreement with KOMPAN, KOMPAN would accept no liability. Members present agreed unanimously to have the inclusivity roundabout removed by KOMPAN and the area made safe.
- 9.15. **Remembrance Day** – Cllr. Jo Smith confirmed her attendance for this year's Soudley Remembrance Day ceremony. The members present were unable to confirm the availability of a Councillor to attend the Cinderford. Two wreaths are to be ordered from the British Legion.
- 9.16. **Correspondence** - The council **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the following correspondence: The Parish Councillors accepted all relevant correspondence has been forwarded via email to all members.
- 9.17. **Next Meeting** - the next meeting of the council is to be held in the **Soudley Village Hall** at **7.00 p.m. Tuesday, 10th October 2023**. The agenda deadline is **Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> of October, 2023**.

9.18. **Exclusion of the Press and the Public** - The council **RESOLVED** that for any remaining business of a confidential nature, the press and the public should be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 10.xi (2020).

**The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.**

Signed:.....Chair.

Dated:.....

## APPENDIX

### Ruspidge & Soudley Parish Council Planning Schedules for August and September 2023.

NO MEETING IN AUGUST 2020			
<u>Planning Reference</u>	<u>Parish</u>		
<u>Site Address &amp; Detail</u>	<u>Comment</u>		
<b>P0823/23/FUL</b>	No Objection		
Glanville, Lower Road, Soudley, Cinderford. Erection of porch with additional window and associated works.			
<b><u>Decisions notified by the Planning Authority</u></b>			
<u>Planning Reference</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>District</u>	
<u>Site Address &amp; Detail</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>P0056/23/DISCON</b>		Consent	30/08/2023
St Whites Farm St Whites Road Cinderford Gloucestershire GL14 3BS Discharge of condition 08 (drainage) relating to P0818/20/PQ3PA			
<b>P0595/23/LD1</b>	No Obj	LDC Issued	31/07/2023
Brook Farm Tramway Road Soudley Gloucestershire GL14 2UG Application under Section 191 to establish that the erection of shed and stables is lawful			
<b>P0391/23/FUL</b>	Objection	Refused	31/07/2023
Land Parcel East Of 40 - 43 Edmunds Way Cinderford Gloucestershire GL14 3FD Erection of a pair of 3-bedroom semi-detached houses with associated access, parking and amenity area.			
<b>P0915/23/EIA</b>		EIA Required	27/07/2023
Proposed Development At Adjoining Sneyd Wood Road St Whites Farm St Whites Road Cinderford Gloucestershire EIA Screening request - The proposal would comprise up to 400 homes of mixed tenures, including affordable homes at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. The proposals also include the creation of a new naturalised country park with increased access to the wider community incorporating wetlands, woodland, species rich grassland, hedgerow trees and scrub. In addition, it is proposed to provide new footways and cycle routes to connect with off-site routes to other community facilities nearer the town centre			

<b><u>Planning Schedule September, 2023</u></b>			
<u>Planning Reference</u>	<u>Parish</u>		
<u>Site Address &amp; Detail</u>	<u>Comment</u>		
<b><u>P0792/23/FUL</u></b>	Objection		
Land To West Of 9 Hewlett Way Ruspidge Road Ruspidge Gloucestershire GL14 3AN Erection of detached dwelling with associated works			
<b><u>P0684/23/FUL</u></b>	No Objection		
Brook Farm Tramway Road Soudley Cinderford Gloucestershire GL14 2UG Erection of a steel framed storage garage and workshop with associated works, Demolition of existing workshops.			
<b><u>P0811/23/FUL</u></b>	No Objection		
1A/1B Ruspidge Road Ruspidge Cinderford Gloucestershire GL14 3AD Erection of third storey level to allow for creation of third flat with associated works			
<b><u>Decisions notified by the Planning Authority</u></b>			
<u>Planning Reference</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>District</u>	
<u>Site Address &amp; Detail</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b><u>P0823/23/FUL</u></b>	No Obj	Consent	29th Aug 2023
Glanville Lower Road Soudley Cinderford Gloucestershire GL14 2TZ Erection of porch with additional window and associated works.			

## County Councillor Reports.

### Cllr. Graham Morgan

County Council Business is starting to take off again after the Summer Break, so the report will be a little light due to the summer Recess.

The big issue still facing the Forest is the speed that a lot of drivers are travelling at, this is one of the main reasons for asking for a lower speed limit in the Woodland Area of the Central Forest, with animal collision rates far too high.

The major road closure between Ruspidge and Soudley continues to cause severe issues for the residents of these two villages, it's probably going to need a very serious repair job to get this road back operational.

We have a meeting of the Forest of Dean Road Safety Liaison Group on Wednesday the 6th of September at Coleford Fire Station where we will discuss a number of these issues.

Anti - Social behaviour continues to be a major issue in parts of Cinderford with noise into the early hours of the morning taking place, people driving up a one-way section of Seven Stars Road, with people urinating in neighbours' gardens, the Forest of Dean District Council Community Safety Partnership takes place on Friday 8th September where we will raise these issues further.

The Bus situation continues with Ruspidge & Soudley being void of public transport, a solution with alternative routes has been requested, this will need to be Solved as the new Forest Hospital opens early next year, and people will need to access the new facility.

### Cllr. Beki Hoyland

#### SEPTEMBER REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO GET IN TOUCH, I WILL DO MY BEST TO HELP. [Beki.hoyland@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Beki.hoyland@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
07815660013

#### ROADS

HERE IS A LINK TO WHERE TO FIND OUT ABOUT ROAD WORKS <https://one.network/public>

HERE IS A LINK TO WHERE TO REPORT PROBLEMS ON THE ROADS SUCH AS POTHoles AND OBSTRUCTIONS  
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/roads/your-highways-report-it/>

RUSPIDGE ROAD UPDATE: THIS IS WHAT THE WEBSITE SAYS, "OBSTRUCTION IN CARRIAGEWAY, ROAD COLLAPSING INTO A LARGE VOID -FOLLOWING GEOTECHNICAL SURVEY THE ROAD WAS CLOSED TO MAKE SAFE." I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE



CAVES UNDER THE ROAD ARE INTACT ON INSPECTION BUT I HAVE ASKED HIGHWAYS FOR MORE INFORMATION THAT I HOPE I CAN BRING TO YOUR MEETING.

11<sup>TH</sup> -22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER THERE WILL BE THREE WAY TEMPORARY TRAFFIC LIGHTS ON THE A48 THROUGH BLAKENEY WHILST HIGHWAYS MAINTAINS THE WALLS THAT THE BROOK FLOWS THROUGH. THIS IS ROUTINE WORK THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO PREVENT LARGER PROBLEMS IN THE FUTURE.

#### **TELECOMS MAST IN SOUDLEY.**

I HAVE BEEN IN COMMUNICATION WITH CLARK TELECOM AS WELL AS THE PARISH AND VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE ON THIS AND THE LATEST UPDATE I HAVE IS:

“JUST TO CONFIRM THE CURRENT APPLICATION IS SUSPENDED. WE NEED TO SUBMIT A REPORT FOR RADIO TO SELECT A NEW OPTION , THEREAFTER WE WOULD HOLD A SURVEY AT THE NEW LOCATION AND PREPARE A DESIGN ETC.

This will be at least 4 weeks so I would ask for you to bear with us. We will endeavour to update you as we go.”

I will continue to stay in the conversation and am very happy to hear your views so that I can represent them.

#### **OTHER**

- WE HAVE A FULL COUNCIL THIS WEDNESDAY WHERE MOTIONS ON FOSTERING, FOX HUNTING, FLOODING, REFUGEE HOSTS, AND TRAIN TICKET PRICES WILL BE DISCUSSED.
- I HAVE A QUESTION IN ON BEHALF OF WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL ABOUT VAS SITING POLICY. DO LET ME KNOW IF YOU EVER WANT TO ASK A QUESTION OR WOULD LIKE ME TO ASK ON YOUR BEHALF OF THE CABINET MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ISSUE.
- OTHER CONVERSATIONS I AM HAVING IS AROUND SPEED REDUCTION IN VARIOUS COMMUNITIES AND WORKING WITH THE ROAD SAFETY LIAISON GROUP LOOKING AT A 40MILE AN HOUR LIMIT IN THE STATUTORY FOREST. I WOULD BE INTERESTED IN YOUR VIEWS ON THIS.
- I HAVE ASKED FOR SOME EXTRA HEDGE CUTTING TO HAPPEN IN EARLY OCTOBER TO PUSH HEDGES BACK SO THAT REGROWTH IS LESS INTRUSIVE ON HIGHWAYS NEXT SUMMER, IF THERE IS ANY WHERE IN YOUR PARISH THAT YOU WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE THIS DO LET ME KNOW.
- ON GOING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT BUSES, IN PARTICULAR BETWEEN CINDERFORD, SOUDLEY AND BLAKENEY. BUT ALSO MORE WIDLEY IN A TASK GROUP THAT HAS BEEN LISTENING AND QUESTIONING STAGECOACH AND OTHER BUS OPERATORS AS WELL AS THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT. THE REPORT FROM THAT SHOULD BE OUT BY NOVEMBER.
- WORK ON A REPORT INTO THE COUNTY FARM ESTATE IS NEARING COMPLETION AND WILL BE SENT TO CABINET IN NOVEMBER, LOOKING AT HOW THE COUNTY FARMS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE WIDER AIMS OF GCC.

#### **HAVE YOUR SAY ON GLOUCESTERSHIRE’S ECONOMY**

Residents and businesses are being invited to give their views on what priorities they would like to see included in a new economic strategy for Gloucestershire.

It covers both priorities for the next five years and longer-term up to 2050. A Gloucestershire Economic Strategy public engagement document has been produced by the county council and GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), to provide an overview of the county’s economy and develop priorities and actions.

A seven-week public engagement period, giving residents the chance to comment on the draft

proposals, has started and ends on 15 September 2023.

Find out more and share your views [here](#).

All feedback will be considered when shaping the final strategy, which is due to be brought back to the county council's cabinet for approval in early 2024.

### **ADULT SOCIAL CARE FAIRER CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY ENGAGEMENT**

TO HELP INFORM A REVIEW OF ITS FAIRER CONTRIBUTIONS CHARGING POLICY, THE COUNCIL WANTS TO HEAR THE THOUGHTS AND VIEWS OF THOSE WHO CURRENTLY USE IT. THE COUNCIL WOULD ALSO LIKE TO HEAR FROM THOSE WHO MAY USE THE POLICY IN THE FUTURE TO MAKE SURE THE COUNCIL'S POLICY WORKS FOR PEOPLE NOW AND FOR YEARS TO COME.

Adult Social Care services are paid for by the county council with contributions from care users. Care users can be charged for their care and asked to make a contribution in line with their financial circumstances.

The council is keen to understand how the current charging policy supports individual choice, control over their care and how it could be better. It will be seeking views on the policy in terms of how accessible and fair it is, and whether it achieves its aim of empowering users.

People will be able to have their say by taking part in an online survey and by attending focus groups. These groups are being facilitated by Evolving Communities, who specialise in stakeholder engagement and insight linked to health and social care, throughout August. This feedback will then be analysed before it is published in October.

There will be no changes to the fairer contribution charging policy, and therefore no changes to how residents are assessed to pay for their care, until feedback has been received and the public has been consulted on potential changes.

To find out more and to take part in the survey visit [WWW.GLOUCESTERSHIRE.GOV.UK/CHARGING-POLICY](http://WWW.GLOUCESTERSHIRE.GOV.UK/CHARGING-POLICY)

(HARD COPIES OF THE SURVEY ARE ALSO AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST)

### **Tree projects this winter**

Do you have an idea for a tree planting project this winter?

From orchards to hedgerows we have funding that could make your dream planting project a reality.

Find out more on our land use webpages and submit an expression of interest to get trees planted.

The big beach clean

The Severn Estuary Partnership are running their annual Severn Estuary Big Beach Clean event around the Severn Estuary (and surrounding catchments) from the 15th to the 24th September, aligning with the Marine Conservation Society Great British Beach Clean event.

Actions we take in the Severn Estuary catchment will ultimately impact on the estuary as a whole, removing litter in the catchment will reduce the flow of litter into the estuary and our ocean; and encouraging groups to record their litter with the Marine Conservation Society ([beachwatch](#) or [source to sea litter quest](#)).

Ride a bike this September and you could win a £4,000 holiday, plus lots of other prizes!

It is not too late to get involved in Cycle September:

[https://www.lovetoride.net/uk/pages/info?locale=en-GB&page=1\\_challenge](https://www.lovetoride.net/uk/pages/info?locale=en-GB&page=1_challenge)

Cycle September is a fun, free, and friendly biking challenge for you, your friends and co-workers. You can ride anywhere, anytime in September to participate.

## Free bike workshops

As part of our campaign to celebrate all things repair this September, Gloucestershire Recycles are running some free bike maintenance sessions. The workshops are 90 minutes long and cover brakes, tyres and chains - everything you need to know to maintain your bike.

Various dates and venues around the County, including Cinderford, from Monday 18 September - Friday 29 September. 90 min sessions. To book a place follow this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/guided-bike-maintenance-sessions-2524779?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=creatorshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=odclsxcollection&utm-source=cp&aff=escb>

## **Can we make more use of repair cafes? Are we advertising them to the parish?**

If you need new items turning up, small holes patching or anything else, visit the repair cafe to find out how you could mend your broken ..... anything

You can find all the details of the repair cafes in Gloucestershire on our website, there are 16 cafes across the county, if you haven't visited one before make it your mission to go this year.

<https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/reduce/repair/repair-cafes/>