

Annual Village Meeting

Wednesday 11th May 2022, 7.00pm, Rowde Village Hall.

Agenda

- 1. Review of the minutes of the last Annual Village Meeting, held on Wednesday 19th May 2021**
- 2. Presentation of the Annual Village Accounts for 2021/22**
- 3. Annual reports**

**Parish Council – Philip Brown
Wiltshire Council
Rowde Primary School
Silverwood School – development project.**

- 4. Looking forward - 2022/23 Precept – priorities for the Parish Council for the coming year.**
- 5. Question Time**

Reports

Rowde Primary Academy School

The meeting welcomed the new Acting Headteacher at Rowde Primary Academy School, Miss Alice Simpson. Miss Simpson reported that she has worked at the school for 18 months.

It was reported that the school is doing really well. There are challenges, however, with the amount of children who are attending the school, which affects the amount of funding that the school receives. One class has been shrunk to reflect this: 6 classes have gone down to 5.

Ofsted has not visited since 2019.

It was noted that the swimming pool is looking tired and sad. It can no longer be used for key stage 2 children. The school are undecided about the future of the swimming pool.

Miss Simpson said that permission had been obtained to install a MUGA on the school grounds. It is anticipated that the work will be carried out in September this year.

Silverwood School

Mr Anthony Dixon, Senior Project Manager, attended the meeting and presented a report on 'Silverwood School Build Project Transport and Access Report for Rowde Parish Council'.

Concern has been raised by some Parish Councillors about not having a permanent second access to the site. A Dixon explained that the transport access to the school has been carefully considered and vehicles should not be queuing on the A342 to access the site. There is a planned waiting space for vehicles on the school site.

A Dixon explained that the Council has carried out a lot of work with their Highways colleagues since the conception of the project in 2018/2019. The project team have had to apply for planning permission in same way as everyone else but as it is a Wiltshire Council application, they have no right to appeal. This meant that they had to get the proposal right on the first application.

Wiltshire Council officers have visited a number of special schools and looked at how they manage traffic on their site. It was noted that Highways colleagues were originally worried about a single access to the site but the work that has been carried out to produce the current model has satisfied Highways that it will work. It was noted though that any further expansion after this project to the school which will increase pupil number further, would impact on the Highways and would have to be reviewed accordingly.

The Council officers are satisfied that a single-entry approach will be suitable. The driveway will be widened by 2.5 metres. Work will be carried out at the bus stop and to the pavements to install raised kerbs. They will try to improve the footpaths.

Currently there are 30 designated car parking spaces on site: 20 in a car park and 10 in front of the main building. The new car park that has been designed will have 209 parking spaces.

Wiltshire Council has designed a car park which can accommodate 70 minibuses on the road infrastructure around car park. The area in front of main entrance will accommodate 16 minibuses. This will be a holding area where pupils will dismount and be met by their member of staff. It is estimated that it will take 10 minutes to dismount 300 pupils.

Currently most of the pupils are transported by taxi. There is only one minibus being used at the moment. The model used will accommodate 40 minibuses, each carrying 6 pupils each. A Dixon noted that the number of taxi operators are declining, and they are struggling to recruit driver to transport children to school. The minibus drivers may be Council drivers.

A question was asked about how individual cars will be managed. A Dixon responded to say that staff will act as marshals. It will be the responsibility of the school to manage. There are 290 members of staff and a lot of these come in single vehicles. The Council will promote travel car share. If the Council uses a minibus model, they are confident that it will work. A lot of it will be down to the school to manage.

C Greenwood asked for an analysis of postcodes of predominate areas from which the children will be transported from. A Dixon responded that when they held a focus group, most children would be coming from Trowbridge and Chippenham direction. There is concern that drivers will be using Marsh Lane.

It was commented that residents have concerns now about traffic through the village. A Dixon responded that the new plan should bring less individual number of cars through the village.

The speed limit outside of the school will be looked at. Wiltshire Council are appointing a traffic consultant and will put in an application to extend the 30mph throughout the whole village. This could not form part of the planning application.

There was a discussion about a second access. The cost to install a temporary access was £20/30K. If the road was to be made permanent, this would increase to £500k. A Dixon said that this would go over prime arable land. It was considered an unnecessary cost to increase the parking spaces.

A Dixon reported that in May/June 2021, his colleague received a phone call from a local farmer saying that he would like to support the project. A Dixon called the farmer. The second access had already been dismissed at this point due to it being prime arable land and its location.

When Wiltshire Council heard of Parish Council's concerns, they reached out to the farmer. Colleagues were talking with the crown estate. They had a meeting with Saville's who said it was their policy not to sell any land, but they would talk about an agreement of access over the land. Wiltshire Council could not justify spending £500k for something that they don't think they need or believe is required.

If the school was to expand further, then Highways colleagues would insist probably on a second entrance.

C Greenwood noted that the land was not prime arable land, but poor to intermediate grassland.

A Dixon confirmed that they had looked at all of the maps.

The school will have to take responsibility for the traffic plan.

A Dixon was thanked for attending the meeting. He confirmed that he provides information about postcodes of current pupils.

Minutes from last Annual Village Meeting on 19th May 2021 were approved.

Presentation of Accounts for 2021-22.

The accounts were presented to the meeting. The Clerk provided a financial analysis on variances in income and expenditure between this financial year and the previous financial year. Please see copy attached to these minutes.

Reports

Parish Council – Philip Brown.

The following was noted:

- There has been a full Council for most of the year, with a small gap for a while.
- The fencing in the Tower View Play area has been replaced.
- Small maintenance jobs have been carried out: the toddlers' picnic area has been revamped; work has been carried out at the skate park; trees been taken down.
- The Parish Council has created a new website.
- The Parish Council is still working with Devizes and Bishops Cannings on a new Neighbourhood Plan
- Future events: the Jubilee celebration is coming up soon.
- A footpath maintenance team has been formed, headed by D Pullen.
- The Parish Council will take ownership of the Silverlands Play Area soon.
- The Parish Council are still planning to build a footpath at Tanis.
- The Parish Council will invest in a Speed Indicator Device.
- There are plans for the Youth Club to restart.

Wiltshire Council

Cllr Laura Mayes

Cllr Mayes thanked the Parish Council and the village for being so supportive this year, a year after her election.

Some of the issues that Cllr Mayes has worked on for Rowde include:

- overhanging trees, smoke issues, junction improvements.

The main issues have involved Silverwood School and Furlong Close. Laura noted that it would have been a tragedy if the school had closed.

Furlong Close

Laura has regularly updated the Parish Council on developments at Furlong Close. Wiltshire Council and Laura Mayes have worked closely with the Friends and Families' group.

They have now found a care provider and partner who will run that facility. There will be a key change to the model of care provided. This had to change as it was an outdated model that was being used. The new model encourages more independence and tailored support. CQC registration is still needed for the care model.

The Friends and Families have asked Laura to be the Community Liaison representative. It was suggested that this role could be taken on by a member of Rowde Parish Council.

Reed Place

The advice for people wishing to live in one of the new properties on Reed Place, when they have been built, is to make sure application that they are registered with Homes4Wiltshire and that they make their connection to Wiltshire clear and their need to be a priority.

CATG

The Community Area Transport Group has now been reconfigured to become the Local Highways and Footpath improvement group (LHFIG).

Essentially the budget has been doubled and it will be able to cover a wider range of issues. It will be possible to apply for help to improve existing infrastructure. Residual funds will roll over and form part of substantial funding.

Ukraine

2800 Wiltshire households have offered homes. This is one of the highest rates in the country.

375 households have been matched with just over 1000 refugees including 102 children.

Only 221 refugees have arrived so far. Matching families and visa applications have taken some time.

Devizes Town Council has reformed the Covid support group to become the 'Love Ukraine Devizes' group.

If anyone is a host, please contact Laura and she will be able to put them in touch with the group. If people are not able to offer housing, they could offer something else for example help with language skills, English food teaching, Sunday dinner.

Richard Clewer, Leader of Wiltshire Council has been on ITN news recently to discuss the disused military houses in the county.

The Council will prepare a backup list of pre-approved families in case the original placement breaks down and to avoid homelessness.

Public questions

It was asked what the Parish Council is doing to stop speeding through the village.

P Brown noted that people who are speeding in the village are being stopped by police. A member of the audience noted that there will no longer be the Traffic Control person to help children cross the road.