

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary ROWDE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Wednesday 7th February 2024, 7.30pm, Rowde Village Hall

	PRESENT: J Dalley, C Greenwood, A Humphreys, M Somerville, L Wills, B Zaccarelli Public audience: 12 Cllr Laura Mayes	
1.	Apologies P Bryant, C Stevens, J Wills,	
2.	Register of pecuniary interests M Somerville has a standing pecuniary interest in work carried out in the village.	
3.	<p>Welcome to Lisa Gurr and Lisa Newton, from The Mind Tree Café</p> <p>L Gurr & L Newton presented information about their project, The Mind Tree Café. They are leasing the administration building in Furlong Close, and also the orchard, workshop and polytunnel. Both parties have had successful private practices in counselling and have recognised a gap in the NHS with counselling and wellbeing.</p> <p>Phase one of the project involves providing a low-cost counselling service in the administration block, either through GP referral or self-referral. There will also be work to grow produce in the orchard. The project will be inclusive for everyone, not just people in Furlong Close.</p> <p>The project wants to prevent mental health problems as well as provide counselling for existing mental health problems.</p> <p>Phase 2: the project will rent out some of the studios/classrooms. Local people can rent space if they want to do yoga, Pilates, put on clubs, etc. smaller offices for therapists, etc.</p> <p>Phase 3: there will be a community shop and a café. It will be a café with a difference, to help support people socially. There will be buddy tables, so that if you feel a bit anxious about sitting on your own, there are volunteers who can join you for a chat. It is hoped that the project will also provide career opportunities, with upskilling and confidence building, and may help people get into paid work. There will be many volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Progress so far. The lease is ready to sign. There is currently no running water in the building or heating. Damage has been done to the building due to the heating being switched off last year and the pipes bursting. Go Fund donations have been put towards solicitor's fees and getting lease ready. A further £7,000 – £10,000 is required to carry out the repairs to the building. A plea is made for volunteers who can donate some time and skills to get the building into a usable space: for example, volunteers in building works, or electrics. Some contacts were shared with L Gurr and L Newton.</p> <p>Q: How much will the office space be to rent out?</p>	
4.	<p>Public Question Time</p> <p>A question was asked on behalf of a couple of allotment holders about when the hedge in the playing field will be cut this year. The grass is currently too wet to cut the hedge. The Clerk will liaise with local contacts to arrange for the hedge to be cut.</p> <p>A further question was asked about the allotment gate. The gate needs a new part, and it will be replaced after that.</p> <p>A request was made for the item on allotments to be moved further up the agenda for future meetings.</p> <p>A resident asked again if the minutes could be posted on the Facebook pages. A Humphreys confirmed that the agenda and minutes from the last meeting had been posted on the Rowde Parish Council, and also Rowde all About it Facebook pages.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

	A request was made to speak about the Neighbourhood Plan (this was deferred until the agenda item)	
5.	<p>Wiltshire Council update – update from Councillor Mayes</p> <p><u>Planning application for land off Sands Lane.</u></p> <p>The application to build houses on land off Sands Lane has been refused by planning officers at Wiltshire Council, for reasons including the site being outside of the settlement boundary and that the number of new builds would exceed the housing target for the village; the site is in open countryside; there were highways concerns; issues with flooding and archaeological reasons.</p> <p>Wiltshire had been unable to prove that it had a 5-year land supply, which left the county open to speculative applications. Cllrs Richard Clewer, Laura Mayes and Nick Botterill have successfully lobbied central government to get this changed. In December 2023, the government announced that any local authority whose Local Plan is nearly completed only has to demonstrate a 4-year land supply. Wiltshire’s Local Plan is nearly completed, and they can demonstrate a 4 yr land supply. Thirty planning applications were undecided at this time across the county These applications now have to be considered against the new NPPF framework. The Sands Lane application has been refused in that context. There is a chance that the applicants can appeal the decision. The Local Authority would have to pay for the appeal process.</p> <p>G Clisby-White asked if Wiltshire’s four-year land supply has been proved. It was confirmed that Wiltshire has a four + year land supply. Once the Local Plan has been approved, then there is a grace period where the county does not have to keep proving that they have the supply.</p> <p>Cllr Mayes thanked R Eccles, J Grey, and G Clisby-White for all of their work behind the scenes on this complex case.</p> <p>Robin Eccles thanked Cllr Mayes on behalf of the community for all of her work to achieve this outcome on the application.</p> <p><u>Agenda item 10.3 Neighbourhood Plan update</u></p> <p>There is still a requirement for Rowde to find space for 47 houses before 2038. It was noted that the community must work together with the Devizes Area Neighbourhood Steering Group to make sure it is the outcome that everyone wants.</p> <p>A resident asked how they can become involved with the Neighbourhood Plan. Changes to the NPPF have made Neighbourhood Plans more important.</p> <p>The Clerk updated the Parish Council on the progress of the Devizes Area Neighbourhood Plan. An independent company, Aecom, has been hired to assess and recommend sites for selection in the Neighbourhood Plan. The methodology approved by the group looked at the Strategic Housing Lane Availability Assessment (SHLAA) sites and assessed their suitability for inclusion in the plan. Four sites were considered for Rowde. Two of those sites were given a green rating by Aecom and a suggestion that they could be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>If the Sands Lane development had been approved, the quota for new houses in Rowde would be filled.</p> <p>The other green site is only for 10 houses. Sites put forward must have the consent of the landowner and be proceedable in terms of development.</p> <p>Due to the Local Plan provision, the number of houses that Devizes is required to build has been filled. Devizes Town is not required to put forward any additional sites for building. Rowde still needs to nominate sites for development in the plan to cover their quota of 47 houses. A question was asked about whether Devizes Town could cover Rowde’s quota. Wiltshire Council has said that this is not possible.</p> <p>There is a meeting planned with representatives of the NHP Steering Group and a member of the Spatial Planning department for Wiltshire Council to discuss this.</p>	

	<p>A comment was made about timescales and the need to have a Neighbourhood Plan in place soon. Further comments were made about it needing to be community led development [there will be public consultation when the proposal has been formed], settlement boundary changes; whether Rowde could be extracted from the Neighbourhood Plan process [The Devizes Area including Rowde and Bishops Cannings has formally been identified as one Neighbourhood Plan Area]; that there should be building on land adjacent to the school [This is owned by Wiltshire Council and has not been designated as a SHLAA site. The Clerk was asked to request that this land is built on by Wiltshire Council].</p> <p><u>Budget:</u> Wiltshire Council is setting its budget and will have a balanced budget, when many authorities are going bust. Wiltshire Council made some tough decisions 3 years ago and plan their budget three years in advance. A lot of investment is made into early help and intervention. One example of early interventions is a project called “Pause”, which works with women who have had multiple pregnancies, where the children have been taken into care. The Council can save £1000s when children are not taken into care/foster care.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council spends 59% of their budget on people services, compared with Swindon who spend 83%, because there is less early intervention.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council children’s services have been graded as ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted. Cllr L Mayes has been the lead for Children services for the last 12 years.</p> <p>Highways are investing another £10million in repairing potholes.</p> <p>The Budget goes before the full council in the week commencing 12th February 2024.</p>	Clerk
	<p>Flood plan – moved on agenda item 9.1</p> <p>L Wills has attended a community engagement and has been in touch with Renate Malton, Wiltshire Council Flood Resilience Officer. There is a meeting of the North Wiltshire Operational Flood Working Groups taking place on 28th March 2024, 9.30am, at the Melksham Campus in March. This will discuss flood risks. It is very much a community project. L Wills has proposed that the Parish Council send out a flyer to ask for volunteers to be involved, for example 4x4 drivers, first aiders to see how we move forward in the area. Wiltshire Council will work with villages that have a flood plan.</p> <p>A resident advised the Parish Council to talk to the Chairmen/Clerks of neighbouring parishes to get advice.</p> <p>There are concerns about the Wessex Water pumping station on the Common. The data from 2021-2022 shows considerable discharges from the pumping station into Summerham Brook.</p> <p>L Wills has a copy of the ‘Living on the Edge’ booklet about flooding. A copy is available if requested.</p> <p>L Wills met with a representative from Aster at Silverlands Road to discuss the near flooding that happened on 4th January 2024. Aster have agreed to clear the ditch behind the houses in Silverlands Road before the end of February. It appears that some residents have been fly tipping waste into the ditch which has created a dam effect in the culvert. L Wills has also spoken to the owner of Furlong Close about the brambles on their side of the boundary, which has caused the Aster fence to be pushed into the culvert in some places. The owner has agreed to cut back the brambles on their side.</p> <p>The next step is to contact the Canal and River Trust to look at the capacity of the culvert and to ascertain whether the culvert is suitable for the volume of water.</p>	LW
6.	<p>Agree the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 10th January 2024</p> <p>J Dalley proposed and B Zaccarelli seconded that the minutes should be accepted. All Councillors who were present at the meeting agreed.</p>	
7.	<p>Matters arising & actions taken from 10th January 2024</p>	

	<p>The Clerk was asked to find out whether the Parish Council could make donations to the Mind Tree Café project. Under section 137(3) contributions may be made to charities and bodies providing a public service on a non-profit making basis, but only in furtherance of their work in the United Kingdom. It is unlawful for a council to contribute to a charity or a public service body operating overseas, or to a fund established to help persons outside the UK. Contributions to UK charities and bodies providing a public service do not have to bring any direct benefit to the council's area or to its inhabitants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiltshire Council has confirmed that the Parish Council is not permitted to plant trees on Wiltshire Council land adjacent to Reed Place. This area is reserved for wildflowers only. • A Humphreys has posted the minutes from the last meeting and also the agenda for this meeting on the Parish Council and Rowde Facebook pages. • M Somerville reported that it would take too long to grow our own Christmas trees at the allotments. • The Clerk confirmed that the footpath diversion order for Rowde path no. 32 (PL/2023/01643) will be a permanent diversion. This is in order for the National Grid project to move pylons underground. The National Grid will use a horizontal directional drilling method which means that many trees and much of the hedgerow can be retained. • C Greenwood has been in touch with a contractor about making bespoke noticeboards for the village. It was proposed that expenditure of up to £350 could be spent. • A report has been made to Wiltshire Council about a footbridge, off the Common, that may become dangerous as the footings are eroding 	
8.	<p>Financial Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly bank reconciliation & monthly invoices for January 2024 <p>January 2024 <u>invoices</u> (total: £3,822.73) Admin costs inc. audit fees: £1,888.96 Ground's maintenance: £932.71 Xmas tree: £45.60 SID: £92.48 Allotments: £224.54 Planters: £325.44 Sandbags: £213.00 Donation: £100 Proposed by C Greenwood, seconded by B Zaccarelli. All Councillors were in favour.</p>	
9.	<p>Community Engagement & Social Media</p> <p><u>Annual Village Meeting: 8th May 2024:</u> There was a discussion on the format for this year's Annual Village Meeting. It was suggested that Silverwood School could be invited; the Headteacher for Rowde Primary School; Representatives from Furlong Close – the Mind Tree Café.</p> <p>The meeting will take place before the annual Parish Council meeting on the same evening.</p> <p><u>Fete 2024 planning</u></p> <p>The first committee planning meeting took place on 6th February 2024. Seven people attended the meeting. It was asked whether the playing field grass (Tower View) could be rolled before the fete, as the ground is uneven. The generator needs to be serviced before the event. J Dalley will arrange for the generator to be serviced. A budget cost of £350 has been proposed by C Greenwood, seconded by J Dalley, servicing all in favour.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>JD</p>

	<p>Health and Safety concerns were discussed around fire juggling. There were also concerns about access to the playing field through the field gate as residents parked in front of the gate last year, in spite of notices politely asking for access to be kept free for the event. It was suggested that the fete is renamed the 'Rowde Summer Festival'.</p> <p>The next committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th March, at 7pm at B Zaccarelli's house. New people are warmly invited to attend. If you are not able to help, you may know someone who can.</p> <p><u>Dog owners – request for owners to act responsibly.</u></p> <p>The Parish Council has received a complaint about some residents walking their dogs off lead in the built-up part of the village. Dog owners are reminded that dogs must be under their owner's control at all times, and they are asked to be respectful of other people. The Parish Council agreed to post this on the Facebook page.</p> <p><u>Facebook posts:</u> There were no posts to update on.</p> <p><u>Flag flying:</u> The Parish Council discussed the flags on display on the Hill and whether it was appropriate to display other nations' flags. It was proposed to replace the Ukrainian flag with the Wiltshire flag (4 votes for, 3 against. Motion was carried).</p> <p><u>Police Surgery:</u> This will take place in the Village Hall on Saturday 10th Feb 2024, from 6.00pm. Everyone is invited to attend to discuss any local policing concern.</p>	Clerk /AH
10.	<p>Planning</p> <p><u>Planning Applications</u></p> <p>PL/2023/00386 Land West of Sands Lane – update. Wiltshire Council have rejected the application to build up to 50 homes on this site.</p> <p>PL/2023/07208 - Land adjacent 35 Tower View, Rowde, Devizes, SN10 2PS</p> <p>Proposal: Outline application with all matters reserved for erection of a Dwelling. Consideration of feedback from Wiltshire Council Officer. The Parish Council still wished to object to the outline planning application. It was suggested that the Parish Council objects to the application on changes in the National Planning Polic Framework (NPPF), which says that single houses should not be permitted.</p> <p>PL/2023/10888 - Stroud Farm, Rowde, Wiltshire, SN15 2JL: Consultation – Full planning permission: Change of use of agricultural building to rural worker dwelling. The Parish Council object to the application. A detached house has been built without planning permission. The Parish Council object to this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – update. Please see agenda item 5. 	Clerk Clerk
11.	<p>Highways</p> <p><u>Speed indicator Device – updates/new batteries</u></p> <p>The Parish Council has bought new batteries for the Speed Indicator Device. It is still being accessed whether this has solved the issues that have been occurring.</p> <p>Data from the Speed Indicator Device has been downloaded by J Grey, with many thanks from the Parish Council. There is a new interface for the data download, and this has been shared with the Police. J Grey reported that when drivers see the SID, they are travelling on average 29 mph, without the SID drivers are travelling on average 33mph.</p> <p>Wiltshire Police have noted on their website that a speed check has been carried out in Rowde. The majority of drivers were sticking to the speed limit. One driver was caught travelling 40mph in the 30mph zone.</p> <p><u>Community Speedwatch</u></p> <p>C Greenwood has placed a further advert asking for more volunteers for the Community Speedwatch Team. A training session will be arranged for a Saturday near the end of February. L Wills agreed to ask the school if the Community Speedwatch could use their car park for training.</p> <p><u>Sands Lane track:</u> L Wills, M Somerville and the Clerk have met with Ben Braine, a Countryside Access Officers for Wiltshire Council. B Braine stated that the lane to the</p>	LW

	<p>playing field and allotments is a bridleway maintainable by Wiltshire Council (ROWD28). Wiltshire Council is required to maintain the track to the standard of a bridleway, i.e. adequate for pedestrians and horses. Wiltshire Council does not consider that repairs are needed to the track at this time according to that criterion.</p> <p><u>Plans for Tanis footpath.</u></p> <p>A small group of the Parish Council have met to discuss plans to create a footpath at the junction of Conscience Lane. C Haywood (farmer at Manor Farm) attended the Parish Council meeting to hear about the plans. It will be lambing season soon and therefore difficult to carry out any work at this time. C Haywood confirmed that he has a grazing licence for the section of the field which is 10 metres from the road, where the planned footpath will be. There was a query on what Wiltshire Council would require with regards to fencing and a new hedgerow. G Clisby-White suggested that the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) might be able to help with funding for hedgerow.</p> <p>L Wills agreed to arrange to meet C Haywood to discuss the project further. L Wills will circulate the plans to other Parish Councillors.</p> <p><u>Speed signs:</u> C Greenwood asked for replacement speed limit signs on Marsh Lane. The sign on Broad Corner is missing.</p> <p>C Greenwood also requested a meeting with Andrew Cadwallader, Highways to discuss possible no overtaking signs on Devizes Road.</p> <p><u>Discretionary gully cleaning service:</u> Wiltshire Council will be visiting parishes on a weekly basis to clear blocked gullies that have been identified.</p>	LW Clerk /CG
12.	<p>Playing fields</p> <p>M Somerville asked about the repair work that needs to be carried out on the goal posts. M Somerville suggested that they need rubbing down, priming and painting in the summer. M Somerville will obtain a quotation for shotblasting the goalposts before they are repainted (goal posts: 21ft x 7ft). A local contractor was suggested for painting them. The benches on The Hill need to be painted too.</p> <p>J Dalley asked about the contract with idverde. Idverde are not contracted to cut the grass until March. The team can be asked for an early cut, but it was agreed that the ground is too wet currently to be cut.</p>	MS
13.	<p>Play Areas</p> <p>The tennis court needs re-lining. The Clerk has obtained three quotations ranging from £168 - £2023. It was agreed to go for the middle-priced quotation for £325. All Councillors were in favour. It was also asked if a new net could be purchased.</p>	Clerk
15.	<p>Allotments</p> <p>There were no further updates.</p>	
16.	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complaint has been received about the resurfacing of Rowde Court Road and that Wiltshire Council's money could be better spent elsewhere. • An invitation to enter the Best Kept Village Competition has been received. The Parish Council voted to enter the competition (JD voted against entering). 	
17.	<p>Date of next Parish Council meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 13th March 2024, 7.30pm, Rowde Village Hall. <p>Everyone is welcome to attend all meetings.</p>	

A reminder that all requests for work/or goods must be presented to the relevant Committee first for authorisation.

Signed: Chairman Date:

