

<b>RODINGTON PARISH COUNCIL</b> <b>Council Meeting</b>
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Minutes of Rodington Parish Council meeting held at 7.30 pm in Rodington Village Hall on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

**Present:**

Cllr Janet French (Chairman), Cllr David Johnson (Vice Chairman), Cllr Brian Ashton, Cllr Claire Broderick, Cllr Tim Osborne.

Borough Cllr Jacqui Seymour.

**In attendance:**

No members of the public were in attendance.

**Clerk:**

Michael Ward

**1010/00 Chair's Welcome and Announcements:**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and a particular welcome was extended to Cllr Seymour for finding the time to attend in a very busy schedule following the change of administration at Telford and Wrekin Borough Council. Because Cllr Seymour had another appointment at 8.15 pm it was agreed that she should report on agenda item 15 **Reports on Meetings Attended by Members and Ward Councillors** at the conclusion of the Chairman's announcements.

**1010/01:**

The Chairman asked Councillors to give attention to their voting procedures. It was not necessary to record a unanimous vote on every item and abstentions and votes against a motion were in order when a Councillor thought it was necessary. The Chairman also asked members to speak out freely, particularly when they had misgivings about an issue or were against a particular proposal, and avoid contrary feedback in the days following the meeting.

**1011/01 Reports on Meetings Attended by Members and Ward Councillors:**

Borough Councillor Seymour was invited to report to the Council regarding events following the recent Borough Council elections. She apologised for failing to attend the last three Parish Council meetings and confirmed that at the Borough elections the Conservative Party had emerged as the party with the largest number of seats but with no overall majority. A coalition had been agreed between the Conservative Party and TAWPA and the new administration had appointed a cabinet of 6 members, with Cllr Seymour taking on the brief for Adult Social Care. Each cabinet member would have two assistants. The Scrutiny Committee was to be filled by members of the opposition only. It emerged that there had been a poor distribution of election materials in the Rodington Parish area and Councillor Seymour apologised for this shortfall and promised to look into the matter. The new administration was intending to spread funding across local centres of the Borough rather than concentrate it on a single town centre and give more priority to the rural areas. Conservative policy was to move powers and functions away from central government to local authorities and it was against regionalisation. To this end a rural officer was to be appointed within the next few weeks and Cllr Seymour was also keen to see the Dial-a-Ride scheme extended to the rural areas. The budget was to extend over a 3 year period and be subject to a 3% cut which would hit adult social care in particular.

Cllr Broderick raised the question of the Thomas Telford aqueduct and there was widespread agreement that a change to a weekly refuse collection should not be considered as was happening in other parts of the country.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Seymour and Cllr Blackwell for their support while recognising that Cllr Blackwell's work in Sheffield and imminent house move made things especially difficult for him. At this point Councillor Seymour left the meeting.

**1011/02:**

Cllr Johnson reported on a meeting of the Wrekin Area Committee he had attended. A new Chairman had been appointed and the Treasurer had resigned. An email was being circulated with a view to finding a Vice Chairman. Subscriptions would be £25.00 for smaller councils and £40.00 for larger councils.

The meeting had heard a presentation by Di Rogers, Child Protection Officer, about a register of approved martial arts instructors.

**1011/03:**

Cllr Osborne reported on a meeting with Andrew Careless relating to local footpaths but progress was slow and funding for improvements was very limited.

**1012/01 Public Session and Matters of Concern:**

No matters of concern were raised.

**1013/01 Apologies:**

Apologies were noted from Cllr Perkin who was on holiday and Cllr Tudor who was preparing for an imminent City and Guilds examination. Noted and accepted.

**1014/01 Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr Johnson declared an interest in the payment for the last newsletter. No other interests were declared.

**1015/01 Royal Mail Post Boxes:**

The Clerk reported that he had written to Mr Bennett at Royal Mail, Shrewsbury about the moving of the post box at Rodington Heath. He had also included a reference to the serious cracks in the wall containing the post box in Longdon upon Tern. No reply had been received. He had also received an email from Cllr Perkin containing the name of Mr Bennett's manager, Mr Jason Evans, together with the suggestion that he write to Mr Evans enclosing past correspondence asking for the re-siting of the post box at Rodington Heath in the position previously suggested by the Parish Council. This suggestion was fully supported by the Council and the Clerk will report back to the next meeting.

**1016/01 Thomas Telford Aqueduct:**

A meeting had taken place between Cllr Osborne and Richard Bifield from Telford and Wrekin who had visited the site. The situation regarding the aqueduct has been placed on the agenda of the next steering group meeting and any developments will be reported to the next Parish Council meeting. The Council also noted that Wellington Chamber of Commerce were organising an event in fields adjacent to the aqueduct on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August in support of the Severn House Hospice. The Chairman suggested that the Canal Trust be notified of this event as they could use it to draw attention to the issues surrounding the aqueduct and the need for support and funding for the future. The Clerk agreed to get in touch and inform them of the event.

**1017/01 Traffic Calming:**

Cllr Broderick informed the meeting that the car that had recently crashed into a property at Longdon upon Tern causing damage to the cottage had not been insured. The Clerk was asked to contact Telford and Wrekin to ask for data strips to be installed at the beginning of the village when approaching from High Ercall. The Excessive speed through the two villages remained a problem and the Clerk introduced the traffic data collected in Rodington Heath during June which had been made available by Telford and Wrekin. The information regarding traffic speed and the volume of traffic through the village was discussed but Councillors needed to know what the Borough Council intended to do with the data and whether any traffic calming measures were being discussed. The Clerk promised to contact

Telford and Wrekin and find out any plans the Borough were considering following the data collection exercise.

**1018/01 Minutes:**

To confirm the minutes of the Rodington Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2007. The minutes were proposed as an accurate record by Cllr Johnson, seconded by Cllr Broderick and unanimously accepted.

**1019/01 Finance:**

The Clerk distributed the spreadsheet of current spending and balances. A bank reconciliation statement was not available as the outgoing Clerk had not been able to produce one.

**1019/02:**

The Chairman signed cheques for outstanding invoices. Two late invoices to Rodington Village Hall and IT Solutions for £28.00 and £454.97 respectively were presented. Cllr French proposed that the cheques should be signed, seconded by Cllr Ashton and it was unanimously agreed.

**1019/03:**

The report from the internal auditor was read to the meeting by the Clerk. A small number of cheques which had been dated in early April 2007 beyond the 31<sup>st</sup> March deadline was identified by the auditor and he suggested the dates on the cheque stubs and in the Cash Book should be amended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007. The Chairman proposed that both amendments should be made in line with the auditor's recommendation and it was seconded by Cllr Johnson. The motion was unanimously approved.

A query from the external auditor was read out by the Clerk relating to a difference in Total Other Payments greater than 10% compared to the entry for the previous year. This variation had been explained in a covering letter to the auditor and concerned an outstanding invoice from Telford and Wrekin regarding a Parish Council contribution to traffic calming measures carried out at Longdon upon Tern. The Clerk was asked to contact the auditor to go over this matter again.

**1019/04:**

The Clerk informed the Council that he was ready to register for the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) but there was a registration fee of £70.00 with a further £60.00 training cost. He reminded Councillors that it had been made a condition of his Contract of Employment that the Clerk should gain this certificate within one year. Councillors were unanimous that this should remain as an objective and agreed that both associated costs should be funded by the Council. The Clerk was encouraged to register on the course as soon as possible.

**1020/01 All Planning Matters:**

No new planning applications had been received. Cllr Broderick informed the Council that the Borough decision to reject the planning application on Wharf Cottage had gone to appeal but the Parish Council had not received any correspondence on this matter or asked to respond in any way to this development. The Clerk was asked to contact the Borough to investigate the situation further and report back to Councillors.

**1021/01 Clerk's Report:**

The Clerk distributed a written report which covered all aspects of the work he had undertaken over the previous month. He went through the report adding extra detail as required and answering questions. The report was thought to be informative and provided a suitable model for the future.

**1022/01 Parish Council Website:**

The website was up to date but one of the links planned for the previous month still had to be activated. Cllr Johnson promised to set up the link to longdonvillage.net as soon as possible.

**1022/02:**

The cost of advertising in the quarterly newsletter was discussed and a fee of £30.00 for an A5 insert produced by the advertiser was mentioned as being paid previously. Some Councillors thought that this was expensive and suggested that the Clerk be given scope for negotiation. Any advertising material would have to be approved by the Council. The current circulation of the newsletter was 340 households.

**1023/01 Cemetery:**

An interment of ashes to an existing grave had taken place on 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Work on hedge laying and planting had proceeded with the support of members of the Worthy Causes Group. Because the responsibility for the upkeep of the cemetery lay with the Parish Council Councillors were anxious that the Worthy Causes Group should not over extend its support for the cemetery. The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr Tudor in order that the Group could be encouraged to ask for a financial contribution and put the request in writing.

**1024/01 Environmental Maintenance Issues:**

Two potholes were reported, one at the entrance to Rodington Village Hall and one on the bend between Rodington Heath and Somerwood. A fly-tipping site on Sugden Lane between Longdon upon Tern and Rodington previously reported to Telford and Wrekin had not been cleared. The Clerk was asked to contact the Borough Council and ensure that all of the deficiencies were dealt with.

**1025/01 Correspondence:**

Notification of possible funding from The Big Lottery Fund for extending or providing play facilities had been received. The Clerk informed Councillors of some of the details and agreed to contact Telford and Wrekin Council to pursue the possibility of improvement to the play area adjacent to Rodington Village Hall. A letter from Cllr Eades, the new leader of the Borough Council, had been received suggesting the formation of a Rural Parishes Forum. The Chairman pledged her support providing the views of the Parishes concerned are listened to and given serious consideration. All other items of correspondence had been covered under other agenda business.

General correspondence was circulated in the black bag for individual Councillors to consider.

**1026/01 Date of Next Meeting:**

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2007. An invitation to Richard Bifield to address the meeting is to be made and if he is available the meeting will begin at 19.00 hours in Longdon upon Tern Village Hall. If he is unable to attend the meeting will begin at 19.30 hours.

As the business of the meeting had been completed the meeting then concluded at 9.40 pm.

**Signed.....Dated.....**  
**Chair**

