

RUFFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 15 July 2025 at 6.00 pm at the Markham Suite, Rufford Mill, Rufford

Present: Councillors:

D. Fernley (Chair)
A. Drane
D. Johnson
J. Ball
B. Bates
M. Jones

In attendance:

C. Wilson (Clerk)
J. Gamble (County councillor)
M. Cumberpatch (Parkwood Leisure)
Members of the public x 2

	DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS	ACTION
RPC/60/25	Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Pearce. It was noted that Mrs Tift was again absent. There were no other absences. Mrs Bates advised the meeting that she was resigning with effect from 16 July 2025. Councillors noted her resignation with great regret, thanked her for her many years of service and agreed that she would be much missed. The clerk will notify NSDC of the vacancy and initiate the casual vacancy statutory process.	Clerk
RPC/61/25	Review of Registers of Interest - Update: The clerk had yet to hear from Mr Drane or Mr Ball in relation to their respective reviews. Mr Fernley will resend his in a word format. Both noted that their reviews were outstanding.	AD, JB,
RPC/62/25	Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest, direct or indirect, in any items of business on the agenda.	
RPC/63/25	Dispensations: No dispensations required.	
RPC/64/25	Parkwood Leisure Report: Mr Cumberpatch, the general manager, reported: a. That there had been good footfall consequent on the fine weather, although June had been too hot b. ANPR was still in place c. Culver cleaning had been undertaken in conjunction with NCC and ARK which had resulted in the removal of 92 tons of silt, the timing of which tied into the annual dam inspection in June. Councillors noted that every Rufford Lane resident had been contacted in connection with the clearing works d. The Abbey is expected to open before the end of the month. The undercroft will remain closed and was unlikely to open for at least another year. e. The Park continues to receive positive feedback on the appearance of the grounds f. The Park is liaising with NCC on the six and twelve month plan for maintenance works and also with regard to the yellow rattle. g. Forthcoming events include the Madmog car show, time travel trail, Punch and Judy shows, White Post farm days, artisan markets, farmers' market and vintage market. He noted a report that Himalayan mistletoe is thriving in the wetlands	

	which he will follow up copying the clerk in. Councillors thanked Mr Cumberpatch.	
RPC/65/25	10 minutes public speaking time: The members of the public explained that they represented the Bilsthorpe residents who had experienced flooding. The explained that: - They were still trying to get funding to replace the steel shuttering and had met both the local MP and NSDC leader in this regard - They had met with the minister, Emma Hardy at Lowdham to discuss the flooding experienced by the residents - A meeting with the Environment Agency had taken place that day - Investigative boreholes are being drilled - Residents had raised £140,000 towards flood prevention measures which are expected to cost £300,000 - Residents are being supported by the local flood authority - Residents are on the NSDC flood signing team and are registered as flood wardens with NCC - They remained grateful to the parish council for its support and offered to share contact details in case the flood equipment were ever needed elsewhere in the parish. The members of the public also explained that the Bilsthorpe residents would be very grateful for any further support the parish council could offer. Councillors noted that, following a similar request, Bilsthorpe Parish Council had ringfenced £1,000 for a donation in the event that the residents were successful in finding other funding elsewhere. Councillors noted the request and agreed that it should be an agenda item for their next meeting.	Agenda Sept
RPC/66/25	Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 20 May 2025: The minutes of the meeting on 20 May 2025 were approved.	
RPC/67/25	Matters arising – for information only: There were no matters arising.	
RPC/68/25	Reports from district and county councillors: No district councillor was in attendance. Mr Gamble reported that: - He had been appointed chair of Nottinghamshire Local Government Pension Scheme - He would share information on the National Gardens Scheme - He was the Greenwood NCC champion - He had funding capacity via local divisional funding - He supported village gateway signs - NCC continues to have the lengthsman scheme - Road bollards are being cleaned - NCC is reviewing everything on A614 - Local nature recovery strategy meetings take place - He supports speedwatch initiatives - Everything relating to the Ford is being reviewed. Mr Gamble had no detailed information in relation to the Ford. Given that the end of the temporary traffic suspension was only five months away, councillors asked the clerk to request a formal update.	Clerk
RPC/69/25	Reports from Councillors: The chair reported on the visit that day to Feel Good Gardens by him, Mr Pearce and Mr Johnson. The meeting noted that the attending councillors commended the project to the council and that the charity was very grateful for the prospective funding.	

	The clerk explained that the insurance payment had been made in connection with the former clerk's fraudulent activities at the council and ODEF which had led to the closure of ODEF and included the use of some ODEF funds to balance the council's accounts. Feel Good Gardens was an initiative supported by ODEF which had managed to survive the financial impact of the fraud and, ODEF having been dissolved, was the closest the council was able to get to returning the monies to ODEF. Councillors considered the outcome of the visit and decided that the project was the best recipient of a sum equivalent, £5,002.10, to the ODEF monies deposited in the parish council's bank account by the former clerk.	
RPC/70/25	Parish environment and appearance including Rufford Ford, Rufford – Prohibition of driving – Developments and update: See RPC/68/25 above (Reports from District and County Councillors).	
RPC/71/25	Financial matters: a. Financial position as at 30 June 2025: Councillors considered and noted the clerk's report showing the precise financial position at 30 June 2025 (incorporating the 2025-26 budget figures). The chair verified the stated balances against bank statements. Councillors noted the need to appoint a new signatory following Mrs Bates's resignation. b. Accounts for payment: Councillors unanimously approved ten payments totalling £6,290.38, including the payment of £5,002.10 to Feel Good Gardens from the insurance monies received. c. Insurance matters – Application of insurance monies – update: See b above (Accounts for payment).	
RPC/72/25	Planning: a. Applications: i. 25/01024/ADV - Proposed Sign 1, 2 and 3 - banner placement on galvanised steel frames. Replacement entrance signs 4 and 5 (Post and panel sign) - Rufford Abbey Country Park Old Rufford Road Rufford – Councillors considered the application and agreed that, on grounds of appearance and sustainability, they would prefer wooden to metal posts ii. 25/01025/FUL - Proposed external landscaping works for 103no. existing holiday lodges to include extension of patio and paved areas and new pergolas & the removal of 18no. trees at Center Parcs Sherwood Forest - Center Parcs Ltd Sherwood Forest Holiday Village Old Rufford Road Rufford – Councillors considered the application and decided unanimously to object to the proposal on ecological grounds because of the number of trees to be removed. iii. 25/00961/FUL - Residential redevelopment of former poultry complex comprising the construction of 1no. dwelling and ancillary accommodation - Kennels Farm May Lodge Drive Rufford – Councillors considered the application and decided unanimously to object to the proposal on the grounds that it was a new residential building in open countryside. The clerk will contact Mrs Tift to ask that the application be called in if necessary. b. To note planning decisions by NSDC: None c. Great North Road Solar Park – Developments and correspondence: Noted that the project is moving to into the DCO process d. Enforcement matters: None	Clerk
RPC/73/25	Service faults: None reported.	

RPC/74/25	Correspondence: All items of correspondence noted.	
RPC/75/25	Agenda items for next meeting: As above	
RPC/76/25	Date of next meeting: Tuesday 16 September 2025	

The meeting closed at 7.35 pm

