

RYBURGH

Parish Council

MINUTES

3rd April 2025

RYBURGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Present:- Cllr. Chris Weston, Cllr. Chris Buxton, Cllr. Rebecca Kelly, Cllr. Henry Palmer, Cllr. Emily Gould, Cllr. Glenn McCarthy, Cllr. Luke Merchant.

Phil Chapman (Clerk)

7 members of the public.

New Councillor Terry Mack.

1. APOLOGIES.

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

The Chairman declared an interest in the grants under discussion, and stated he would take no part in the debate or the vote on items 8.4 and 8.5.

3. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of *March 12th 2025* were considered and **accepted** as a true record of the business conducted at the meeting and signed by the chairman.

4. CO-OPTION.

Terry Mack who had expressed an interest at the previous parish council meeting, stated that he wished to be considered. It was **resolved** to co-opt Terry Mack as a councillor. The chair welcomed Terry, and he took his place at the table.

5. MATTERS ARISING.

5.1. **Update on Youth Club.** Cllr McCarthy had taken the lead on this project, along with support from other councillors. Sufficient volunteers had come forward to run the club but the Parish Council does not have the resources to fund it. The Memorial Hall had offered to rent out the hall at a subsidised price, and the councillors had identified a potential source of funding. It was **resolved** to ask the clerk to submit a grant application on behalf of the council.

5.2. **Any other matters from minutes.** None.

6. REPORTS.

6.1. Cllr Aquerone had sent his apologies but no report. The Clerk had been in contact to confirm the funding agreement for the PPS (item 8.2).

6.2. Cllr Hankins had sent his apologies, but sent no report. The clerk had been in contact on several matters and would update at another time.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

7.1. A member of the public raised the subject of a white van parked near the Wine Racks and which was considered to be parked in a potentially dangerous position. Cllrs agreed that it was dangerous with both members of the public and councillors reporting

near misses. It was accepted that the owner had a right to park around this location, but it was also noted that it usually blocked a drop kerb which is prohibited. Given the potential danger and likelihood of an accident it was **decided** to try and identify the owner and find a solution and ask if they could possibly park in a way that was less likely to cause injury.

- 7.2. Another member of the public raised the subject of development/construction work being undertaken near to Ryburgh House Farm, and asked if the council was aware and could provide additional information. The council was not aware of the works but suggested it was likely related to the Maltings development.

8. GRANT FUNDING.

- 8.1. The clerk had previously circulated a summary of the budget and grant policy to the councillors. Overall, the councils' finances were in a very poor state, and the council is almost £14,000 in the red in reserves terms. The grant policy, founded on statute and good practice, calls for a reserves level of over £22,000 for the council, but at the date of the meeting net total reserves (before any grants are considered) are under £9,000.
- 8.2. In late 2024 the council applied for a grant for safety improvements to the bridge farm footpath. This had received wide support from district and county councillors, and from the highways engineer. The council has been successful, and the safety improvements can be paid for by a grant from the Parish Partnership Scheme funding £2500, and an additional grant of £2500 from Steffan Aquarones' district councillor fund for the area. There will therefore be no cost to the Parish Council. It was **resolved** to accept the grant offer, and the council **authorised** the clerk and chair to sign the required acceptance form on behalf of the council.
- 8.3. Previous grass cutters were no longer available. As a temporary measure the vice chair would personally cut one of the areas of grass, but this was not a long-term plan. It was **decided** that the vice chair and Cllr Gould would put together an advert for help with the grass cutting to be placed on social media, in the shop and on the parish council website, with a follow up at the next meeting.

The chairman left the room, and the vice chair took over chairing the meeting.

- 8.4. The Playing Field Committee had submitted a substantial and detailed grant proposal, including bank statements and accounts under the grant awarding policy. The request was for a total of £4500, for the purpose of having the mower serviced and repaired, and for the replacement of a swing, as outlined in the grant proposal. The matter was considered and debated in detail, and although no budget had been allocated for the Playing Field the councils *earmarked reserves* include £2500 for grants. It was considered an important community asset to support, and although it would leave the parish council with an even larger hole in its finances councillors **resolved** by majority to award a grant of £2600 to the Playing field for the mower and swing repairs. This award takes into account all the facts of the matter and the financial position of the council.
- 8.5. The PCC had submitted a substantial and detailed grant proposal, including bank statements and accounts under the grant awarding policy. The request was for a total of £2400 for the purpose of assisting with the costs of grass cutting and other

maintenance at the Little Ryburgh Cemetery. The matter was considered and debated in detail by all councillors, who formed the general opinion that although the council had no legal obligation to fund the cemetery grass cutting, it should do so given that a budget commitment had been given. Significant debate took place, and it was unanimously **resolved** to award a grant of £1400 to the PCC to help with the grass cutting at Little Ryburgh cemetery. This takes into account the facts of the matter, the loss of burial fees previously received (and outstanding) and the financial position of the council.

9. HIGHWAYS.

9.1. No new matters were reported.

10. VE DAY.

10.1. The council received a detailed update from the steering group on preparations for the event which are being publicised on social media and around the village.

10.2. The council **resolved** to approve a budget of up to £100 for the preparations for the event.

11. MEMORIAL HALL HIRE.

11.1. It was **resolved** to approve the following payments for Memorial Hall annex hire for parish council meetings:-

Memorial Hall	Hall Hire – January 2025	18.00
Memorial Hall	Hall Hire – March 2025	27.00
Memorial Hall	Hall Hire – April 2025	18.00

12. FINANCE

12.1. **Report regarding reconciliation.** It was **resolved** to accept the reconciliation. This was signed by the reconciliation Councillor, Chair and RFO.

12.2. **To note payments made since last meeting.** The financial report was **noted** showing all payment made since the last meeting.

12.3. To note the following regular pre-approved payments.

12.3.1. N Power – None yet received.

12.3.2. To note the Clerks wages for January and February.

The council **noted** the above payments.

13. TO NOTE ANY CORRESPONDENCE.

13.1. Two members of the public had emailed about the blue plaque. One of those was present and was invited to speak about the matter. The clerk had contacted NNDC but they were not aware of a grant application being made to fund the plaque (£600-£800), even though it was reported to council by a previous clerk that an application had been

submitted. It was decided that the matter would be dealt with by the member of the public present and whom had raised the issue, with it having already been agreed in principle by the council in 2023. If any assistance from the council was needed, specifically with a grant application then it would be added to the agenda.

14. TO NOTE ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA.

AGAR, Fuel Allotments, Youth Club & Grant Application. The reserves policy and budget will have to be revisited in light of the additional spending on grant awards which exceed the budgeted amounts.

15. TO CONSIDER AND CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

It was **decided** to repeat the customary practice of having the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) in the main hall directly before the Annual Parish Council Meeting (APCM). The date for this was decided as 21st May 2025, with the APM starting at 7.00 and the APCM at 8.00. All village groups are invited to attend and contribute to the APM.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at **20:26**.