

RUFFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 20 January 2026 at 5.30 pm at the Markham Suite, Rufford Mill, Rufford

Present: Councillors:

D. Fernley (Chair)
A. Drane (until 6.25 pm)
D. Johnson
J. Ball
J. Pearce
J. Goldsborough

In attendance:

C. Wilson (Clerk)
C. Hanrahan (Parkwood Leisure)
J. Gamble (County councillor)
Members of the public x 12

	DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS	ACTION
RPC/1/26	Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Jones. Mrs Tift was again absent. There were no other absences.	
RPC/2/26	Review of Registers of Interest - Update: All reviewed and up to date.	
RPC/3/26	Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest, direct or indirect, in any items of business on the agenda.	
RPC/4/26	Dispensations: No dispensations required. For the benefit of the attending members of the public, the next item (Parkwood Leisure Report) was deferred for consideration until after item 6 on the agenda (10 minutes public speaking).	
RPC/5/26	Parkwood Leisure Report: For the reason set out at RPC/4/26 (Dispensations) this item was discussed after item 6 on the agenda (10 minutes public speaking). Ms Hanrahan reported: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A new manager had been appointed following the withdrawal of the initial appointee2. Recognising the sensitivity of the matter, the Park is working with NCC regarding a policy in relation to memorial benches. Notices will be displayed asking individuals to use only natural flowers without plastic wrapping as tributes and to contact the admin office about their individual memorial benches and their condition. If the Park is not contacted, the memorial benches affected will be removed. New memorial benches will also be covered by a policy intended to preserve the park environment for all users.3. The Park is working with Nottinghamshire County Council Registrars to secure a licence for ceremonies for the Undercroft and higher level.4. There was no grounds update as she had not been able to speak to the team manager <p>Ms Hanrahan noted a report from a member of the public that driving up Broad Ride was damaging the ground surface and a request for more bins and dog bins.</p> <p>Ms Hanrahan and two members of the public left the meeting.</p>	

**RPC/6/
26**

10 minutes public speaking time: The members of the public were in attendance to speak in relation to item 12 on the agenda (Parish environment and appearance including Rufford Ford, Rufford – Reopening to vehicles consultation and update). With this in view, Mr Gamble was invited to address the meeting with an update. Mr Gamble informed the meeting that:

- a. He was unable to disclose too much at this stage
- b. The proposed measures are looking to reopen Rufford Lane with reduced traffic and traffic speeds and measures to mitigate the impact of the river in full spate
- c. The proposals are in two parts:
 - i. Speed humps and a camera, and
 - ii. A restrictive barrier to be used when the ford levels are too high.

When asked what had changed since the last consultation on a permanent closure, Mr Gamble explained that the make up of the county council had changed following the May 2025 elections. It was drawn to his attention that, whilst the council make up may have changed, the facts had not.

A member of the public asked about a temporary re-opening whilst the Ollerton roundabout works are underway. Mr Ball responded that, were that to happen, residents would seek the same protection as that being afforded to other local lanes for the duration of the works. Members of the public went on to express the following views in particular:

1. Whether the proposed speed bumps go far enough up the road given:
 - a. the lack of pavement before the park entrance and drivers' practice of turning round to go backwards and forwards through the ford
 - b. the proximity to the lane of oil tanks in three properties' front gardens
 - c. damage to water pressures and vibration caused by speeding vehicles and associated health implications of interrupted water supplies for residents

A member of the public arrived at 17.48.

2. The lack of clarity in relation to the monitoring and management of the restrictive barriers
3. The lack of clarity regarding long term funding for maintenance of the barriers and cameras
4. A request that it be minuted that Mr Ball and Mr Goldsborough are involved in a website providing information about the Ford
5. The lack of effectiveness of speed bumps
6. The desirability of a chicane layout to slow traffic
7. The effectiveness of speed bumps and rarity of permanently closing a road because of accidents
8. The lack of clarity regarding a timeline for any works or re-opening.

Councillors discussed the new proposals noting the matters raised by the public. In these discussions, the following were raised in particular:

1. The need to take account of the wider public's use of the lane in addition to the needs of local residents
2. The road had been closed at the request of the police because of the dangers posed by anti-social driving and its promotion online. In this context, the external report commissioned by the current leaderships concluded that measures would not affect the antisocial driving because of the probability of vandalism to any safety structures to protect online content.

The chair thanked members of the public for their comments.

	<p>Noting that Mr Drane had to leave the meeting because of an emergency, councillors agreed to move to their decision in relation to item 12 and the council's consultation response. Councillors recognised that there were three possible re-opening outcomes. These were reopening with both the traffic calming and prohibition measures in place or one or the other alone.</p> <p>A resolution to support the reopening with both the traffic calming and prohibition measures in place was proposed and seconded. Councillors decided on a show of hands to support the resolution (4 in favour:2 against).</p> <p>The Mickledale Lane flood representatives in attendance offered to display notices in the council's Mickledale Lane noticeboard as required. Councillors thanked them for and accepted their kind offer of support.</p> <p>No other matters were raised.</p> <p>Mr Drane left the meeting together with six members of the public. The meeting reverted to item 5 on the agenda (Parkwood Leisure Report).</p>	
RPC/7/26	<p>Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 November 2025: The minutes of the meeting on 11 November 2025 were approved.</p>	
RPC/8/26	<p>Matters arising – for information only: There were no matters arising.</p>	
RPC/9/26	<p>Reports from district and county councillors: Mr Gamble reported that he had been appointed chair of Nottinghamshire Local Government Pension Scheme. He also reported that he had submitted documents to the Planning Inspectorate in relation to the GNR solar park proposals. These stated that Elements Green had not taken into account the best and most versatile land implications of other developments or other land and that there had been no economic impact assessment of the impact on Newark beet factory.</p>	
RPC/10/26	<p>Reports from Councillors: Nothing raised.</p>	
RPC/11/26	<p>2025 -26 changes to Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) - Update on adoption of generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain: Councillors approved ruffordparishcouncil.gov.uk as the parish council's domain name.</p>	
RPC/12/26	<p>Parish environment and appearance including Rufford Ford, Rufford – Reopening to vehicles consultation and update:</p> <p>The reopening of the Ford consultation was discussed and a decision reached at item RPC/6/26 above (10 minutes public speaking). Councillors expressed concern at the appalling condition of A614. Mr Gamble offered to meet with councillors and Via officers to inspect the parish roads. Councillors accepted.</p> <p>Councillors expressed the view that Rufford Lane, if reopened, will need protection during the Ollerton roundabout works. Mr Gamble advised that Mr K Shannon was the relevant NCC officer.</p>	

<p>RPC/13/26</p>	<p>Financial matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Financial position as at 31 December 2025: Councillors considered and noted the clerk's report showing the precise financial position as at 31 December 2025 (incorporating the 2025-26 budget figures). The chair verified the stated balances against bank statements. b. Accounts for payment: Councillors unanimously approved seven payments totalling £964.39. c. Appointment of replacement bank signatories - Next steps: The clerk explained that the initial application to change the signatories had been rejected despite being as advised by the Nat West chatbot. She will begin the process again. d. Appointment of internal auditor: Councillors unanimously approved the reappointment of Mr Jason Lee as internal auditor. e. Review system of internal control: Councillors discussed the operation of the system of internal control and agreed that it was adequate for the size and needs of the council and continued to operate effectively, subject to the appointment of an internal auditor which was in hand. f. Review 2026-27 risk assessment: Councillors considered and approved the draft 2026-27 risk assessment subject to Mr Goldsborough inspecting the Rufford Lane noticeboard and Mr Pearce the Bilsthorpe noticeboard, with all inspections to be quarterly rather than monthly. g. Consider need for interim internal audit: The clerk advised councillors as to the on-going nature of the internal audit process. Councillors considered their financial affairs for the financial year to date. They decided that an interim internal audit would be disproportionate and was not justified. h. To consider the financial information provided by the Clerk and NSDC's letter regarding 2026/27 precept estimates and to agree the precept for the year ending 31 March 2027: Councillors considered the financial information provided by the clerk and unanimously decided to retain the precept at £4000. 	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>RPC/14/26</p>	<p>Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Applications: 25/02138/OUTM Outline planning permission for mixed use development of a Data Centre and Up to 400 dwellings (All matters reserved except access): Councillors considered the application noting that the proposed development is on old Rufford pit. Councillors agreed that they had no comments. b. To note planning decisions by NSDC: 25/00961/FUL - - Residential redevelopment of former poultry complex comprising the construction of 1no. dwelling and ancillary accommodation - Kennels Farm May Lodge Drive Rufford – Approval noted. c. Great North Road Solar Park – Developments and update: See minute RPC/9/26 above (Reports from district and county councillors). d. Enforcement matters: None. 	
<p>RPC/15/26</p>	<p>Service faults: A614 condition raised at minute RPC/12/26 (Parish environment and appearance).</p>	
<p>RPC/16/26</p>	<p>Correspondence: Noted.</p>	
<p>RPC/17/26</p>	<p>Agenda items for next meeting: As above</p>	

RPC/18/26	Date of next meeting: Tuesday 17 March 2026 at 5.30 pm.	
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The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

